Exploring lifelong learning motivational ecologies through the narratives of senior language users

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EXPLORING LIFELONG LEARNING MOTIVATIONAL ECOLOGIES THROUGH THE NARRATIVES OF SENIOR LANGUAGE USERS

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ABSTRACT

In the context of an ageing and increasingly more independent learning population, a narrative inquiry into the life stories of highly motivated senior language users remains a promising yet relatively unexplored area. The literature review shows there have been no attempts to understand language learning in third age and lifelong motivation in L2 all combined, let alone to theorise around them from an emic and narrative perspective. More particularly, the study of older learners' life decisions, learning beliefs and motivational predispositions to successful language practice in light of their own timeline, remains an uncharted area.

This doctoral dissertation approaches motivation in foreign language learning as a lifelong individual process that evolves along a narrative continuum, developing over the course of life, personal experiences, choices and events. As such, the study embraces a complexity approach to researching the history of self-constructs and motivational patterns across life. In this thesis, I aimed to investigate the motivational life trajectories of three highly motivated foreign language senior users through their personal self-accounts.

This research reviewed the existing gap in the age-related and lifelong language learning research agenda, and the niche to explore third age language learning in light of the theories of Complex Dynamic Systems (CDST), L2 Motivational Self-System (L2MSS), and Directed Motivational Currents (DMC). As such, I proposed cross-disciplinary connections, locating third age L2 learning experience in the wider spectrum of L2 motivation, lifelong learning and geragogy. The study examined seniors' L2 commitment across nested time scales and within self-defined intensity, reflected in the chronological investigation of attractor states, and more particularly DMCs and High Peaks of Motivation (HPMs). Not only did the study aim to assess what *generated* seniors' motivation in a situated manner, i.e., in each self-assessed pivotal turning points, but also what *sustained* it all throughout their lives.

A triangulated and multimodal approach was adopted in order to collect data by means of two semi-structured retrospective interviews with three French senior learners of English aged between 65 and 80 years old, who commonly participated in regular language conversation exchange during coffee meetings in Nice (France). Multiple instruments were used, including photos, email exchanges, phone text messages, books, letters, academic records, questionnaire, and drawings. Their lifelong stories with language learning were recorded in a chronological order, from childhood up to their current practice and learning experience.

Results show that all three learners experienced several cued DMCs and HPMs in language learning across their lives, and through flows of self-integrated and autonomously generated energy and drive. Upon retirement, they incorporated language learning into their daily routine, making language practice as a default trait that was part of their broader sense of self. A hybrid L2 self emerged in later years, drawing from the combination of ought-to, ideal and anti-ought-to selves that prevailed with different degrees of intensity according to life periods. The accumulation of L2 motivational peaks and DMCs not only helped shape an evolutive motivational self system, but also grow a self-directed L2 learning ecology and motivational reservoir that today keep flourishing through the search for sustained wellbeing. The insights that were drawn from the present investigation could hopefully not only debunk folk wisdom related to age-related cognitive decline in additional language learning, but also help optimize foreign language education quality for senior learners through better appreciation and anticipation on the autonomous third age learning experience.

RESUMEN

En el contexto de una población de aprendices que envejece y que es cada vez más independiente, el análisis narrativo sobre las vidas de gente mayor con un alto grado de motivación hacia el aprendizaje de lenguas es un área especialmente interesante y, a la vez, poco explorada. La revisión de la literatura muestra que el aprendizaje de idiomas en la tercera edad no se ha estudiado en relación con la motivación a lo largo de la vida. Este tema tampoco se ha tratado desde una perspectiva émica y narrativa. En concreto, sabemos muy poco sobre las decisiones que este alumnado toma en distintos periodos de sus vidas, sus creencias sobre el aprendizaje y sus motivaciones hacia la L2.

Esta tesis doctoral analiza exhaustivamente el desarrollo de la motivación hacia el aprendizaje de idiomas a lo largo de la vida a través de la narración, desde la infancia hasta la madurez. El trabajo adopta la teoría de la complejidad para la investigación del Yo y tiene como propósito final explorar las trayectorias motivacionales de tres aprendices mayores con un alto grado de interés hacia los idiomas, a través de sus propias narraciones.

Esta investigación responde a la falta de estudios sobre el aprendizaje de idiomas a lo largo de la vida, tema que se aborda a la luz de las teorías de Sistemas Dinámicos Complejos L2 (TSDC), el Sistema Motivacional del Yo L2 (SMY), y las Corrientes Motivacionales Dirigidas (CMD). Como tal, se proponen conexiones interdisciplinares y se ubica la experiencia de aprendizaje en la tercera edad en el marco de la motivación hacia la L2, el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida y la geragogía. En el estudio se examina el compromiso de las personas mayores hacia el aprendizaje L2 a través de escalas de tiempo anidadas y con grados de intensidad autodefinidos. Esto queda reflejado al examinar los estados atractores de forma cronológica, concretamente las CMDs y los picos altos de motivación (PAMs). El estudio no solo tiene como objetivo identificar, de forma contextualizada, el origen de la motivación en personas mayores (es decir, en relación a puntos de inflexión personal), sino que también explora qué es lo que sostuvo esta motivación a lo largo del tiempo.

El estudio adopta un enfoque multimodal, para lo que se recabaron a lo largo de tres años de investigación datos de tres personas entre los 65 y los 80 años que todavía aprenden inglés a partir de dos entrevistas retrospectivas y una serie de instrumentos que incluyen fotografías, cuestionarios, correos electrónicos, mensajes de texto, cartas, libros y dibujos. Estas personas se caracterizaban por la búsqueda de intercambios de conversación en inglés. En las entrevistas, los participantes narraron sus historias vitales en relación con la L2 en orden cronológico, desde la niñez hasta sus experiencias de aprendizaje actuales.

Los resultados muestran que los tres alumnos experimentaron varios CDMs y PAMs a lo largo de sus aprendizajes de la L2 y que en la actualidad han incorporado el aprendizaje de idiomas a sus rutinas diarias y a sus propias identidades en un sentido amplio. También se detecta un Yo L2 híbrido que surge en una edad adulta y constituye una combinación del Yo de obligación, el Yo ideal y el Yo rebelde. La acumulación de PAMs influye en la evolución de la motivación del Yo, lo que contribuye al desarrollo de una reserva motivacional que en la actualidad constituye una fuente de bienestar. Finalmente, se espera que las conclusiones de este estudio no sólo desmienten la sabiduría popular relacionada con el deterioro cognitivo en personas mayores, sino que también ayuden a optimizar la calidad de la educación en idiomas extranjeros dirigida a estudiantes de la tercera edad.

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Declaration

I confirm that this thesis has been composed by myself alone and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree at another university.

TABLE OF CONTENT

INDEX OF TABLES

INDEX OF FIGURES & MAPS

INDEX OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

BS	BRIEF SUPPLEMENT TO FRENCH INTERVIEW
CDST	COMPLEX AND DYNAMIC SYSTEMS THEORY
CEG	CRITICAL EDUCATIONAL GERONTOLOGY
CFLG	CRITICAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE GERAGOGY
CR	COGNITIVE RESERVE
DAS	DEEP ATTRACTOR STATE
DC 1	DATA COLLECTION CYCLE 1
DC 2	DATA COLLECTION CYCLE 2
DMC	DIRECTED MOTIVATIONAL CURRENT
DS1	DURING SESSION 1
DS2	DURING SESSION 2
EC	EUROPEAN COMMISSION
EFL	ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE
EST	ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THEORY
FL	FOREIGN LANGUAGE
FLL	FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING
G	GEORGES
HPM	HIGH PEAK OF MOTIVATION
IC	INITIAL CONDITIONS
ID	INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCE
INT_1	INTERVIEW 1
INT_2	INTERVIEW 2
J	JOSETTE
L2	SECOND FOREIGN LANGUAGE
L2MSS	L2 MOTIVATIONAL SELF-SYSTEM
LE	LEARNING ECOLOGY
LL	LANGUAGE LEARNING
LLE	LANGUAGE LEARNING ECOLOGY
LOTEs	LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH
MDAS	MODERATELY DEEP ATTRACTOR STATE
P	PATRICIA
POS1	POST-SESSION 1
POS2	POST-SESSION 2
PS1	PRE-SESSION 1
PS2	PRE-SESSION 2
RQ1	RESEARCH QUESTION 1
RQ2	RESEARCH QUESTION 2
RQ3	RESEARCH QUESTION 3
RQM	RETRODICTIVE QUALITATIVE MODELLING
SAS	SHALLOW ATTRACTOR STATE
SDMR	SELF-DIRECTED MOTIVATIONAL RESERVOIR
SDT	SELF-DETERMINATION THEORY
SLA	SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION
TEA	TRAJECTORY EQUIFINALITY APPROACH
TOEIC	TEST OF ENGLISH FOR INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATION
UNIA	UNIVERSITE NICE INTER-ÂGES
WSI	WALL STREET INSTITUTE

Storytelling reveals meaning without committing the error
of defining it.

Hannah Arendt (1968, p. 115)

Language learning helps people be in touch with others
and with their own inner being. It is a catalyst for staying
fully human, alert, awake and involved as long as possible.

Oxford (2018, p. 15)

Late Summer. Sunshine. The eucalyptus tree.
It is a fortune beyond any deserving
to be still *here*, with no more than everyday worries,
placidly arranging lines of poetry.

I consider a stick of cinnamon
bound in raffia, finches
in the grass, and a stubby bush
which this year mothered a lemon.

These days I speak less of death
than the mysteries of survival. I am
no longer lonely, not yet frail, and
after surgery, recognise each breath

as a miracle. My generation may not be
nimble but, forgive us,
we'd like to hold on, stubbornly
content – even while ageing.

Elaine Feinstein, "Long Life", *Cities* (2010)

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

It is no secret that societies are ageing probably as fast as concerns are growing regarding life management, personal development and wellbeing after retirement. Never before in human history have so many people enjoyed such long, healthy and socially active lives, including after work life. As a matter of fact, predictions foresee that by 2060, one in three Europeans will be over 65, and therefore whether retired or about to be. In the last fifty years, life expectancy has increased by about 10 years for both men and women in Europe, which is by no means the only continent with an increasingly ageing population.

In Europe, 'more people than ever remain active for longer, extend their work careers and participate in social activities after retiring' (European Commission, 2021, p. 10). Thanks to healthier lifestyles and medical progress (mainly due to improved systems of disease prevention, diagnosis and treatment), more retirees are fit both physically and cognitively. Upon retirement, an increasing number of seniors reach a certain degree of affective and social stabilities. Their liberation from professional obligations, and even sometimes the reduction of their family commitments and feelings of responsibility, enable them to choose at their own pleasure how to spend their time, including what to learn, and which skills to improve. This is clearly corroborated by most recent research in gerontology, which claims that 'life gets better with age and that older adults are happier than midlife cohorts' (Smith

& Ryan, 2016, p. 314). In response to this new social paradigm, second language (L2) learning is no exception, and should be explored under the lights of the unprecedented expectations and behavioural (r)evolutions of the elderly learning community.

Concurrently, the green and digital transitions have helped increase the popularity of distance, hybrid and e-learning, further stimulated by the COVID-19 outbreak. The traditional stages and forms of learning and training have been re-defined with more flexibility in light of the changing socio-economic landscape. The same ageing societies mentioned above have been given higher IT access, enabling them to consume knowledge with an increasing degree of connectivity, autonomy and velocity, while multiplying learning interfaces and structures, whether in formal or informal settings.

On an institutional level, these realities have growingly captured the imagination of policy-makers across the world, who are not only rethinking the design of our current healthcare and pension systems, but also the shape of educational patterns in the long run. At present, one of the key threads of the European Commission is to empower seniors with lifelong learning opportunities. A recent Green Paper "On ageing" (European Commission, 2021), which highlighted the relation between well-being in third age and lifelong learning, also indicated how lifelong learning could more generally increase third agers' contribution to society and economy, and more extensively achieve 'successful ageing'.

My interest to make sense of these phenomena took root in my own experience as a language teacher, and developed over the last 5 years of private English teaching with retired senior learners outside traditional language schools. Coincidentally, my journey into third age English teaching started in 2017, with the encounter of my first L2 retiree student, who was learning English. Through him, I heard of the recent mushrooming of national

learning centres for seniors to develop and practice foreign languages among other skills, including the University of the Third Age in Europe (U3A in the UK and *Université du Troisième Age* in France), and its American counterparts, such as the US-born Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), the skilled nursing facility (SNF), the assisted living facilities (ALF) or the independent learning facilities (ILF) (Oxford, 2018), to name but a few.

Before I even officially initiated this doctorate, my curiosity grew through the numerous informal conversations I had with Georges, my first senior L2 student during our private English tuition classes together. Sessions would largely consist of chats, which naturally led to anecdotal storytelling and would often take the form of short stories. In every session we had together, my student would usually take five minutes to tell me about the myriad of new ways and opportunities he had found to improve his language skills aside of our sessions of practice. In this particular context, he was the one who first introduced me to the concept of language café groups for seniors, and more particularly pointed out at the one he was involved in at *Brasserie Félix Faure*, in Nice, South of France.

Since I was unconsciously carrying with me the popular beliefs in typical ageing and social stereotypes then, I first mistakenly – and quite naively – thought my student's profile and motivational patterns were rather exceptional and unique *for his age* and for his social status as a retiree. While I initially envisaged a single case study on his English learning habits and assumed that exploring his successful motivational trajectory would sufficiently feed my wish to delve into further study, I soon realized that other similar enthusiastic senior L2 profiles (with L2 being English) would also take part in those venues, and also proactively look for new ways of using their foreign language skills outside any formal and traditional learning structures. This was the case of my two other candidates, Josette and

Patricia.

I then noticed that Georges, Josette and Patricia would commonly show patterns of L2 motivation, which Dörnyei and Ottó (1998, p. 65) generally define as:

> *the dynamically changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates, and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby initial wishes and desires are selected, prioritised, operationalised and (successfully or unsuccessfully) acted out.*

Fascination for those lifelong motivated learners, and especially for their sustained motivational behavioural patterns over a lifetime, shaped the contours of my inquiry, and led me to further consider this micro phenomenon of motivated FL senior users under a retrospective longitudinal prism, i.e., via the retrospective reporting of past events (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021).

Why was it that some senior L2 learners were able to consistently commit themselves to challenges of language learning (LL) – and experience quite uninhibitedly pure pleasure in the process?

Understanding what had maintained their motivation high over the span of a whole life became my research leitmotiv. The question was, what L2 learning trajectories had those three successful senior L2 users taken from the start of their language journey to the present days? More specifically, which choices, strategies and response to challenges related to L2 learning throughout life had led them to experience such a high and stable level of motivation in L2 use now? Inevitably, my biased view and first readings on foreign

language learning (FLL) in third age also triggered my questioning on 'the difficulties claimed to be imposed on them by the effects of an age-related decline in language-learning capacity' (Singleton & Záborská, 2020, p. 112). In other words, how were those highly motivated learners responding to, and potentially compensating on age-related cognitive hurdles? The directions of this PhD thesis also grew out of a concern with how senior L2 learners understood their current LL experience. More precisely, how did they view and express connections between their FLL practice and its influence on developing patterns of well-being in later life?

This case study research explores motivation in language learning as a lifelong individual process that evolves along a narrative continuum, starting with the first encounters with foreign languages, and developing over the course of life, personal experiences, choices and events. Language learning should thus be conceived in dynamic, process-oriented terms, with its variability and situatedness, including its motivational and 'temporary ups and downs' (Dörnyei, 2009a, p. 25). This PhD uses the term third age to cover the period beginning in the pre-retirement phase, and more generally refers to post-retirement life, which, depending on the country and type of professional trajectory, can extend over 20-30 years of an individual's existence. In the context of this study, third agers are 'healthy, motivated individuals' (Oxford, 2018, p. 3) over 60, who are either pre-retired, i.e., no longer working full-time, or fully retired.

The main aim of this research is to explore the narrative journeys of three highly motivated senior L2 users with language learning across their lives. In other words, I wish to examine how they give meaning retrospectively to specific past events in the context of narrative interviews on their lifelong motivational journey with FLL.

Collecting their personal interpretation of lived experiences with language learning and identifying the remit of successful L2 learning across time and sustainable L2 motivation will inevitably have to be rooted on their personal life stories (Consoli, 2021), hence the use of a narrative study. Self-accounts should yield rich insight into the dynamic motivational systems at work in one's lifelong and unique journey to language learning and into the resulting language experience in one's autumn years. Harvey (2017, p. 72) recently noted that the study of such stories remains a 'burgeoning but still underdeveloped area of the LL motivation field'. I thus respond to the call, and believe that collecting oral narratives from the vantage point of mature perspectives can bring new light to FLL motivation research.

1.1 Thesis structure

Chapters 2 and 3 form the literature review altogether. Chapter 2 generally informs on the growing academic attention of FLL in third age, on the one hand, and the flourishing field of narrative studies in SLA on the other hand, thus justifying the relevance to explore seniors' motivation in language learning within a narrative paradigm. Chapter 3 captures the state of research and the existing gaps in the motivation language learning research agenda, and reviews the niche to explore lifelong language learning more specifically in light of three theories, namely the Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST), the L2 Motivational Self-System (L2MSS) and the Directed Motivational Currents (DMC). The basic frame informing this doctoral project is long-term motivation, which indeed needs to be illuminated by a multilevel analysis. Accordingly, the literature review introduces three research questions, namely RQ1 and RQ2, further developed in the concluding section of Chapter 2, and RQ3, presented at the end of Chapter 3.

The temptation to see complexity and dynamism in every aspect of senior L2 learners'

lifelong journey with languages should not spare me from deploying a rigorous and carefully designed methodological approach that is coherent with my theoretical framework. As such, Chapter 4 provides details on my research design, and traces the journey of my methodological choices and self-reflective endeavours while collecting and analysing data within a narrative epistemology, and through a multimodal and triangulated selection of instruments.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 explore the individual stories of Georges, Josette and Patricia, respectively, and their lifelong history with L2 learning. Each of the three chapters has a common twofold structure, and is divided into two sections. The first section provides a brief biographical sketch divided into the time windows each participant personally framed. The second section then follows up with a separate discussion on the individual L2 motivational trajectory ordered under key emerging themes, and in dialogue with the theories of CDST, DMC and L2MSS. The analysis of the second section goes over each LL history in a chronological fashion, so as to parallel the biographical sketch of the first section.

The complexity of human identity goes beyond the constraints of any one isolated model. As such, Chapter 8 goes beyond the compare/contrast initial move, and discusses common salient patterns around the lifelong development of motivational self-constructs. This chapter subsequently informs on the overall interpretation of the stories as a whole, and proposes a discussion in light of the research tripartite theoretical framework and within the wider academic literature covered in both Chapters 2 and 3.

Finally, I conclude my thesis by summarizing my findings in Chapter 9, developing on the contributions this research brings to the field, and the practical applications in educational contexts. I end my thesis by considering potential pathways for future investigation.

This research somewhat forms a *mise-en-abyme* of a complex system, by taking a transdisciplinary approach, enhanced in my wish to associate psychological and SLA issues with the larger phenomena of ageing, well-being in later life, motivation and lifelong learning in an integrative manner. As Morin (2001, p. 3) once famously cautioned the research community, deploying a complex lens forces us to 'learn to navigate on a sea of uncertainties'. In hindsight, a complex and dynamic perspective on L2 lifelong motivation is applied throughout this PhD thesis, and pervades my choices and trade-offs, from the design of my study and literature discussion, through to the data collection and analytical processes.

By adopting a complex and dynamic perspective that offers parallel insights across research areas, I hope to highlight the permeable and shifting natures of boundaries from one field to another, in a more universal and ontological attempt to look at human condition through a wide-angle 'fish-eye' complexity lens (Sampson & Pinner, 2021; Ushioda, 2021). I thus propose cross-disciplinary connections, locating third age L2 learning experience in the wider spectrum of narrative and motivational studies.

Examining the indicators and historical developments of motivation in language learning from the perspective of highly motivated senior L2 users will hopefully provide impetus for ulterior and potentially more sophisticated investigation on lifelong FLL and motivational capital. In practical matters, my wish is that findings on those sustainable motivational FLL ecosystems can provide instructional language designers and practitioners with a better

appreciation of the longstanding motivational impact of language practices on one's overall emotional quality of life and wellbeing upon retirement. Another layer of interpretation of the narratives may also invite to look at the nature of current FLL facilities and instruments for older L2 students, and ponder over ways to improve them for a better learning experience in third age. More generally, understanding FLL and LL education within the life continuum can hopefully optimize language education quality and more adequately anticipate on the autonomous third age L2 learning experience.

CHAPTER TWO: LIFE STORIES OF MOTIVATIONAL LL ECOLOGIES IN THIRD AGE

'Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end'. Roman Philosopher Seneca unwittingly – yet quite convincingly – made a strong case of where I believe a doctoral literature review should humbly depart from: some other beginning's end. This over two-thousand-year-old statement also echoes the cyclic and dialogic nature of research, and reminds PhD students and the academic community at large of their un-ending duty to constantly re-assess literature in light of emerging theories, new empirical findings and practical issues in real-life learning situations. In the context of applied linguistics, pointing at existing gaps in the literature and areas of potential for further research bears a significant amount of pragmatism for direct application, whether inside or outside language classrooms, and for both language learners and teachers.

To ensure optimal clarity, I have divided the revision of literature into two chapters that have been ordered according to a funnel conceptual scheme. My wish is to telescope the broad research landscape on language learning motivation in third age, narrative inquiry and learning ecology (chapter 2) into the more technical and multi-layered theoretical underpinnings of L2 motivation (chapter 3).

In light of my research aim to look at the lifelong motivational trajectories of senior language users from an ecological perspective, this chapter introduces SLA research coverage on language learning and motivation in third age, the emerging trends in narrative studies and the opportunities of an ecological approach to lifelong FLL motivation. Section 2.1 aims at justifying the need to fill in the gap in the research agenda on SLA third age studies, and to consider lifelong learning motivation through the narrative perspective of third age experienced learners. I posit that my central focus on individual stories with lifelong FLL can be adequately explored through the use of narrative techniques, whose literature and use in SLA research are discussed in 2.2. I then wrap up my funnel approach by zooming into what I consider one of the most promising and pivotal concepts of this study, which could explain how and why senior L2 users maintain motivation in the long run, namely the emergence of lifelong language learning motivational ecologies in later life, for which I provide further definitions in 2.3. The chapter eventually ends by proposing two research questions, namely RQ1 and RQ2, respectively.

2.1. Literature review on senior foreign language learners

2.1.1. Definitions

Researchers so far have highlighted the difficulties at grading and demarcating third age (Degnen, 2007; Oxford, 2018; Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019). The problematization of age has changed over the last few decades with demographic changes, longevity, social lore and individuation at-large. Long before the current renewal of interest among the research community for this part of the population, "old age" suffered from its social marginalized image, fuelled by negative social ageist stereotypes (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019; Singleton, 2018). This period of life was often overlooked and considered as a "black hole"

(Gilleard & Higgs, 2010), and as a homogeneous cohort with no real distinctive specificities among its members (Degnen, 2007).

Much of the habitus today is to separate the "third age", initially coined in the 1980s, and which indicates the "post-work" life of a healthy, cognitively active individual, from the "fourth age", the latter being excluded from the present literature review and research. I follow the lines of several scholars and posit that third age more or less starts at the onset of retirement (Andrew, 2012; de Bot & Van der Hoeven, 2013; Findsen & Formosa, 2011; Gabryś-Barker, 2018; Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019), in other words, at the end of professional activity (Moen, 2001). I also align with Grotek's (2018) definition of a senior learner as 'any retired person who is involved in the process of learning either in the various forms of adult education or in the broader sense of lifelong learning' (p. 128).

Although people retire at different ages across the world and even within the same country, for the purpose of my study, I'll take 62 years old (which was the official age of retirement in France until the recent political reforms upheld in March 2023) as the start of third age. Furthermore, Oxford (2018) defines third agers as 'relatively healthy "young old" people who are now retired, while feeling energy, excitement, purpose and well-being' (p. 4). In light of the above definitions of 'third age' or 'senior' age, one must also bear in mind the cultural fabric together with the social underpinnings of ageing, which clearly differ across societies due to the different national discourses and policies (Andrew, 2012; Derenowski, 2021). What remains certain is that definitions will patently fluctuate with the ever-growing number of senescent individuals exercising agency, displaying an ever-growing degree of autonomy, and performing highly in language learning. As Gilleard & Higgs (2010) point out, the third age is 'a cultural field predicated upon the agency of its participants' (p. 123). This study views language learning and ageing as an individual life-long process, starting

at birth and developing over the course of life, personal experience and events.

Another way to define third age is by leaving older learners the choice to define themselves (Gullette, 2003), in order to 'make sense of their ageing selves' (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019, p. 438), and to voice their own learning experience and trajectory. I use the definition of Ramírez Gómez (2016) who refers to the word 'trajectory' as 'the learner's perception of his learning experience' (p. 119). Providing the space for narrating such a perception is precisely what this doctorate intends to offer to its participants through its qualitative narrative case studies: inviting senior narrators to articulate, through personal accounts or creative pieces of their choices their own endeavours and language learning lifelong commitment. Articulating 'old' self-hood in such a way will hopefully not only solve any definitional contradictions, but also do more justice to the socio-affective and contextual nature of the age factor than to its primary negative stereotypes.

2.1.2. Trends and foundations of a critical foreign language geragogy

Throughout the twentieth century, third age studies have long been considered as the *bête noire* across most disciplines. This is not only because of conflicting theories on ageing at a social, biological, psychological, and philosophical level (Derenowski, 2021), but also because it took time for mentalities and perceptions on the matter to evolve with medical advancement, and more generally with the gradual ageing of our societies and related predominance of increasingly more visible needs and expectations. Official numbers from the European Commission (2019) estimate that by 2060, at least one in three Europeans will be over 65. As such, eHealth, ageing and well-being have become global challenges for international institutions

In social sciences, the concept of 'productive aging', introduced by Butler (1985) almost

40 years ago, also coined 'positive gerontology', and 'vital aging, and conscious aging', was triggered by the growth in later life human capital. Productivity in later life used to refer to the acknowledgement of seniors' 'capacity to initiate and continue valuable activities longer into the life course' (Morrow-Howell & Greenfield, 2015, p. 293). A similar concept called 'successful aging', first coined by Havighurst (1961) and referred to as getting a maximum of satisfaction out of life, has also triggered interest in numerous authors (Depp *et al.*, 2010; Rowe & Kahn, 1997). Literature shows that such a productivity mainly referred to monetary aspects however, and heavily focused on the degree of contribution the senior community could *still* bring to society after retirement (Butler, 1997).

In its most recent literature, the field highlights a recent paradigm shift in how we perceive the ageing population. Concerns about health, mental and long-term care together with economic security have given way to a more specific focus on activity engagement and well-being in later life (Hoppmann & Gerstorf, 2016). Likewise, the 'psychological vitality' among elders, most recently tackled by Smith & Ryan (2016, p. 304), highlights the importance to look at seniors' high cognitive and physical functional capacities. In parallel and for many years, SLA research had almost exclusively focused its interest on contrastive analyses between young and older learners in language learning, often reducing ageing to cognitive decline and therefore to learning deficits. According to Pfenninger and Singleton (2019), findings would not always specify how 'increased knowledge' or 'cumulative experience' (p. 424) gained over the course of a life could impair learning processes in senescence due to the overload of knowledge and learning experience. They would not dig into the intragenerational dynamics at stake in the construction of old age identity either (Degnen, 2007).

Traditionally, young adults have been the main focus group under study in SLA (Cox, 2019;

Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019). It is particularly true in L2 motivation research (Thompson & Vásquez, 2015). This is probably due to its better accessibility for researchers (who are also university professors for the most part) aiming to investigate and collect data in schools and universities. Derenowski (2021) argues that only three main groups are usually appraised in the field of SLA, (1) young learners, (2) adolescents and (3) adults. According to him, there is a substantial lack from the research community to provide further specifications related to senior language learners (p. xiv), although surely it is very likely that they share a cohort of specific characteristics. This literature review confirms the academic gap in this area, which is further echoed in teaching practices as well.

Reports from teachers can feed SLA studies, together with observations from researchers made in formal educational settings. In third age studies, data collection is logically limited due to a lack of teachers specialised in senior instruction. Likewise, most studies show an inadequacy, nay a total absence of teaching training and methodology specifically targeted at senior language learners (Derenowski, 2018; Pawlak *et al.*, 2018). Those practical deficits inevitably bring any researcher interested to explore senior foreign language learning and motivational mechanisms to a deadlock. To this research challenge, Derenowski (2021) provides an extensive overview of senior foreign language instruction in classrooms. He heralds a lifelong learning approach to third age language learning in view of understanding the benefits for senior learners to keep learning, even at a later stage of life. In line with Pfenninger & Singleton's (2017) postulates, Derenowski points out at the need to put into practice new knowledge on senior psychological and cognitive responses to language learning. This involves a better pre-service training of senior language teachers, and more generally a better apprehension of ageing at a social level.

Cox (2019) argues that to this day, literature in SLA age research largely gave more

attention to two strands: (1) the Critical Period Hypothesis, which contends that starting an L2 before a specific critical age offers top achievement (Andrew, 2010; Dekeyser, 2013), and (2) the effects of starting age in L2 learning in childhood and adolescence (Muñoz, 2011, 2014; Muñoz & Singleton, 2011; Pfenninger & Singleton, 2017). To those two foci, I shall add scholars' overmedicalized look at ageing, and its impact on the study of cognition and language learning (de Bot & Van der Hoeven, 2013). Recent studies have demonstrated that on the age spectrum, and in the case of specific learning processes, differences were lesser than one would usually surmise (Kliesch *et al.,* 2018; Murphy & Evangelou, 2016; Pfenninger & Singleton, 2017). For instance, while differences between age groups usually refer to the learning of new words, in which elderly groups have more difficulties, authors (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019; Singleton, 2003; Van der Hoeven & de Bot, 2012), contend that there is no difference between age groups (students/middle-aged/elderly) in the process of relearning words.

Furthermore, Hartshorne and Germine (2015) have researched on the 'asynchronous rise and fall of different cognitive abilities' on the life spectrum within the same individual, thus making it impossible to generalize further investigation on a cohort of old and young learners. Indeed, recent findings in cognitive research argue that 'not only is there no age at which humans are performing at peak on all cognitive tasks, there may not be an age at which humans perform at peak on most cognitive tasks' (Hartshorne & Germine, 2015, p. 440). Overall, it seems that a valid and ongoing hypothesis is that when it comes to re-training, old language learners are on a par with younger learners (Antoniou *et al.*, 2013; Murray, 2011a). Re-training should be understood here as the revival of learning strategies after a period of interruption, including the 'reassessment of several elements involved in the learning process, such as preconceptions, attitudes, beliefs regarding FL learning, learning strategies and needs' (Ramírez Gómez, 2016, p. 113). Above all, the age factor

should be considered relatively in language learning development (Muñoz, 2019), and necessarily in complement to other socio-psychological developments and salient context-related factors, together with the impact of FL instructional quality over the long run (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2017).

The increase of life expectancy and retirees' degree of autonomy has induced the mushrooming of senior centres, third age universities and other older learners' communities, which today provide a better social apprehension of ageing. Society's attention to the well-being, security and cognitive development of the elderly throws a new light on older learners' identities, choices and practices in SLA research (Derenowski, 2021). In other words, the field of Third Age studies has switched its focus on choice, agency and self-directedness rather than on cognitive and physical degenerations (Gilleard & Higgs, 2010). As Derenowski (2018, p. 147) puts:

> *Currently, in the education of the elderly, we may observe a transformation from its organised forms (which share is reduced with age) to less formalised ones, departing from education towards self-education, from centralised solutions to more dispersed educational practice.*

Today, there is a renewed interest from researchers in SLA to combat vernacular representations and negative stereotypes of ageing (Cox, 2019; Derenowski, 2021; Gabryś-Barker, 2018; Ramscar *et al*., 2014), and to conduct research with a more conciliatory view that encompasses the beneficial role of experience (Muñoz, 2019) in the process of language learning and lifelong self-instruction at a later stage in life. Geragogy, defined as 'a learning theory that proposes that instructional practices are more effective when designed to address the distinctive physical, psychological, and social realities of

populations of learners characterized as elderly' (Johnson, 2016), takes a more neutral view on learning in third age, and goes beyond the limited ageist focus on cognitive and biological declines in later life.

With these newly raised issues in mind, Formosa (2012) proposes to foment a critical educational geragogy (CEG), which refers to 'the integration of the institutions and processes of education concerned with the knowledge of human ageing and the needs of older people' (p. 38). CEG draws from older learners' own perceptions of their learning experience, invoking 'a reflective stance whereby the voices of learners […] are given an opportunity to reflect on the appropriateness of the content, strategies, and social and political contexts of learning in later life' (Formosa, 2012, p. 41). Very much similar yet more precise than Formosa's broad concept of CEG, Ramírez Gómez (2016) explores the concept of a critical foreign language geragogy (CFLG), based on an informed acknowledgement of older learners' reasons to learn foreign languages, in other words, on the nature of their learning motivations in later life. While both CEG and CFLG currently mainly limit their practical scope to the management of learning and teaching strategies in third age within formal educational structures, they represent promising conceptual frameworks to study older learners' self-reflective journeys with FLL.

Beyond studies in instructional contexts and formal education, most research on FLL in third age considers recent neuroscientific input on seniors' FLL cognitive systems. A majority of researchers, including Kliesch and his colleagues (2018), and Pfenninger and Singleton (2017) today agree that cognitive factors and motivation are the two central aspects in today's research that affect language learning in late adulthood. Both cognitive and motivational systems in third age should therefore receive equal consideration, as I develop in the next section.

2.1.3. Emerging issues on third age cognitive and motivational FLL systems

2.1.3.1. Impact of FLL on the cognitive system in third age

Beyond the usual cognitive deficits from the elderly community mentioned in literature, which represents an ongoing debate (Andrew, 2012; Derenowski, 2021; Singleton & Záborska, 2020), research on the cognitive processing of ageing has showed increased interest in the field of neuroscience. For instance, the concepts of brain's plasticity and compensatory mechanisms (Muñoz, 2019; Piechurska-Kuciel & Szyszka, 2018), Cognitive Reserve (CR) and cognitive-reserve-building activities (Wong *et al.,* 2019) have increasingly gained importance. CR posits that lifelong mental activity and the accumulation of knowledge and skills act as a buffer in cognitive ageing. Pfenninger & Singleton (2019) define it as 'the brain's resilience in combating neuropathological damage, resulting from experience-based neural changes associated with a physically and mentally stimulating lifestyle' (p. 42). Experts in neuropsychology and neuroscience unanimously agree that learners' cognitive response may vary from one individual to another, according essentially to training and practice, especially in the areas of memory (Logie & Morris, 2015; Luo & Craik, 2008) and physical exercising (Green, 2017; Muñoz, 2019).

Clinical researchers have indeed often raised the complexity of memory ageing, since 'some type of memory decline with age, other types show little or no change' (Luo & Craik, 2008, p. 352). Nevertheless, studies still diverge in findings when comparing language processing in senior monolingual and senior bilingual learners. While some find cognitive, psychological, neurological and social advantages for bilingual older adults over monolinguals (Bialystok *et al.*, 2004; Gathercole *et al.*; Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019; 2016; Reuter-Lorenz, 2002; Salvatierra & Rosselli, 2011), others have not found any particular

benefits on executive functions or cognitive processing stemming from bilingualism or FL learning in the elderly (Anton *et al.*, 2016; de Bruin *et al.*, 2015; Paap & Grenneberg, 2013). What is often underestimated and even overlooked, when reading such studies, is the nature of the tests used to study the effects of age on cognition. A better apprehension of the characteristics of the tests has a clear impact on findings and on the general conclusions.

As Singleton (2018) points out, 'besides the question of how good older adults are at additional language learning, there is also the question of how additional language learning is good for *them*' (p. 23). Some academics have looked at FLL as an 'anti-aging activity' (Ryan & Dörnyei, 2013, p. 93), at a cognitive, medical and psychological levels. Some studies have reported how learning a language in late adulthood could have neuroprotective effects by staving off the emergence of neurodegenerative diseases, such as dementia, and mental diseases, such as Alzheimer's (Alladi *et al.,* 2013; Bialystok & Craik, 2010; Craik *et al.*, 2010; Gold, 2018; Roberts & Kreuz, 2019). The literature shows that much remains to be studied regarding the extent to which language training induces causal functional and anatomical (i.e., grey and white matter) changes and/or domain-specific plastic changes in the brain (Antoniou *et al.*, 2013; Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019; Wong *et al.*, 2019).

2.1.3.2. Motivation in later life and well-being

Beyond cognitive matters, the literature covered largely agrees on the socializing, recreational and interactive benefits that L2 learning also endeavours to bring to senior learners (Oxford, 2018). Leaving senior learners express their own perspective on language learning has led recent studies to consider how, why, and what they learn (Amer *et al.* 2016; Hartshorne & Germine, 2015; Ramírez Gómez, 2016) rather than what, how

and why they fail to learn (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2017). Understanding the goals, expectations and incentives of later-life L2 learners indeed brings forth some interesting foundations to feed into the third-age motivation research agenda.

In the field of SLA, not so much has been written on older learners' goals, and on the way with which they maintain the learning momentum. Cox (2019) mentions two main goals, (1) attenuate cognitive declines and (2) enhance social interaction, while Ramírez Gómez (2016) advances that many older L2 students take up languages because of personal traveling plans. Surely, these observations cry out for closer scrutiny in the context of the narratives I plan to collect and analyse. Older learners' motivations to learn can be intrinsic and go beyond anti-ageing goals, and pragmatic necessities. Beyond any personal and specific reasons, gauging third agers' motivation with an eye toward the broader issue of self-regulation seems relevant. How does their motivation help them to self-monitor? How do they evaluate progress and renew goals? How does access to various resources impact on success and continuation with the commitment of learning a new language later in life? These are questions Pfenninger and Singleton (2019) ask, and which certainly deserve further investigation.

Emerging concepts from positive psychology have brought forth the idea of 'savoring' the *here and now* of activities that one willingly selects and completes at a later stage in life (Bryant & Veroff, 2012; Matsumoto, 2019). In relation to Higgins's (2014) motivational conceptual framework, well-being is also defined as the optimal tailoring of motivation to fit a given situation. Higgins argues that well-being comes with experience and maturity, therefore it comes with age, and with the learner having reached a phase of ecological order. In other words, by being 'more selective in choosing which goals to pursue, and concentrate their resources more on selected priorities' (Higgins, 2014, p. 421), older

learners are more successful at reaching well-being. They do it *their* way, and *their* way is an accumulation of winning and tailored combinations at effectively relating motives all together at different degrees according to their life contexts. Old age also involves a rise in accommodative processes and in the readjustment of narrower, and thus more feasible personal goals that subsequently trigger a higher sense of control and self-efficacy. Because of their high specific goal orientations and ability to make sense of both their past and present realities altogether, old age learners can thus create, throughout the years, a natural preference for a particular strategic way of doing things, and therefore increase self-consistency.

Likewise, and as opposed to the theory of disengagement (Cumming & Henry, 1961), which advances that old age limits the construal of future time and long-term goals, Carstensen's (1995) socioemotional selectivity theory looks at individuals' goals as a lifelong process that strengthens and matures with ageing. The author holds that 'the salience of specific goals fluctuates depending on the place in the life cycle' (p. 152). Motivation therefore should be understood as a lifelong process of experiential accumulation that ends with death, and could possibly reach its apex in later life, depending on how balanced (i.e., feasible) and organized goals are in terms of life priorities. Overall, and within a lifespan context, the picture of seniors' motivational landscape represents a gradual and lifelong phenomenon that has had time to grow and narrow down preferences and habits through the constant re-organization of its goals.

To summarize, old age 'success story', as Higgins coins it, lies in seniors' growing power of adaptation (Higgins, 2014). The degree of adaptability older learners can reach enables them to more adequately elaborate on their goals (Brandstädter, Wentura & Rothermund, 1999). With age, intentional activity increases together with 'developmental ecologies' that

consist in enhancing congruence between individual goals and action resources. In terms of language learning, part of the literature covered argues that overall, third age L2 users can successfully organize present knowledge with past knowledge in a meaningful way. They are able to create adequate learning shortcuts and adapt their FLL goals through better self-awareness.

2.1.4. Capitalising on motivation and FLL throughout life: An individual story

2.1.4.1. Lifelong experience of motivation

What the above third age SLA literature agrees on is the myriad of structural and functional, experience-induced changes and evolution all throughout life (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019), due to biological and environmental changes (de Bot & Van der Hoeven, 2013). A dynamic and ecological perspective on language development views language learning as a series of dynamic systems with variables that interact over time. In fact, one could argue that bringing the study of third age L2 motivation under the limelight of a complex conceptual scheme detaches one from taking age as the prime factor, but rather brings one to look at the history of motivation through the prisms of time, life and learning capitals and experience.

This doctorate addresses L2 lifelong motivation as a complex living occurrence that forms and evolves through the interaction of a myriad of conditions, idiosyncrasies and life events, choices, beliefs, memories and influences, to name but a few of the agents that form the very essence of one's 'life capital', as Consoli (2021) names it, when he refers to the 'richness of one's life experiences' (p. 121). This *life capital* involves 'memories, desires, emotions, attitudes, opinions and these can be relatively positive or negative and explicit or concealed depending on how the individual manages, shares and employs their life capital' (p. 122). The present research views L2 lifelong motivation as a nested living

complex *eco*system, and as 'a constellation of dynamic, reciprocal processes that unfold over time' (Schmidt *et al.*, 2013, p. 331). By the same token, I align with Sade (2011), and posit that 'language learning […] emerges from participation in communities of practice in which learners develop their learning out of experience' (p. 44). As Wenger (1998) and Sade (2011) point out, every life experience is by nature a source of learning. In the case of this study, lifelong motivation comes with lifespan learning experience.

As such, exploring third age motivational patterns should be 'based on the idea that intra-learner variability is a necessary condition for development' (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2019, p. 435). In other words, foreign language learning is a developmental and dynamic process influenced by a wide range of internal and external factors, in addition to age. It is also key to understand the individual nature of language learning, especially at a later stage in life. Matsumoto (2019) calls for a 'multi-stage life' (p. 112), de-categorizing and de-socialising traditional age groups, and integrating older learners into the larger spectrum of adult learners with inter-individual differences, such as highly differentiated behavioural patterns, tendencies and contingencies. The idea is to tease out all sorts of taxonomies related to the "age issue", put aside its definitional fuzziness, in order to better focus on which strategy each individual uses, at different stages of his life, to make sense of themselves as learning agents. A socio-cultural perspective indicates a shift from 'a preoccupation with language as an *end-in-itself*' to 'a vehicle for self-discovery and social transformation' (Morgan, 2007, p. 1035).

2.1.4.2. The power of storytelling in third age research

From the best of my knowledge, there have been few attempts to understand storytelling, old age and motivation in FLL all combined, let alone to theorise around them. Understanding (1) multilingual third agers' prior experience of learning and mental models,

and (2) how they voice and express such experience narratively, will bring key information on current practices and on how they cope with their language learning situation at a later stage of life (Knowles *et al.*, 2011). Pfenninger & Singleton (2019) advocate more studies based on encouraging third-age learners to develop and express their own 'voice', and to articulate in their own words what learning an additional language means to them. Yet not much has been examined regarding such experience, on the way stories are "digested" and re-told.

As we have seen previously, the temporal dimension is key to understanding older learners' experience of using and *savouring* the language they learn, especially from a lifelong perspective. Different authors (Coffey, 2007; Karlsson, 2008; Polkinghorne, 1995) point out at the cyclic nature of experience, and the importance to take into account past, present and future altogether to have a better glance at learners' histories and experiential realitie(s) as a whole. As such, stories are indicators of the way learners experience the use of a foreign language and assess the affordances of specific language methods that vary over the years. Above all, stories help switch research trends and methods of analysis, by turning the traditional etic perspective (i.e., focus on external researcher's interpretation of the learning experience) into an emic approach, which rather focuses on learners' own interpretation of their learning experiences (Menezes, 2008).

On the one hand, those narratives represent timekeepers that keep track of the evolutions and changes that occur in a learner's lifetime. On the other hand, a poststructuralist view contends that those textual narratives have a transformative and performative quality of turning language users into storytellers with a high degree of self-awareness (Menezes *et al.*, 2008; Pavlenko, 2008, 2007). Narrative discourse also reflects one very important aspect of learners' identity construct as responsible social agents and life-long 'performers'

(Coffey, 2007, p. 147). Agency permeates experiences throughout lifetime, which narratives display, acknowledging and articulating the long-term quality of learning and its motivational lever.

Overall, and in light of the literature above covered, my work plans to study older learners' accumulated experience with language learning as a life-long process. The study aims to encompass the larger concept of the construction of ageing identities within hybrid and self-made educational and multilingual settings. As such, a lifelong learning approach allows for a more successful integration of the elements that build up throughout each step of life with the ultimate outcome of reaching well-being and self-assertiveness. The use of narrative techniques should be the most appropriate to highlight such a process in the most organic, ecological and ethically valid way, which I discuss next.

2.2. Narrative techniques in SLA research

2.2.1. Research trends on narrative techniques: A field in the making

In SLA research, the use of narrative techniques as a form of qualitative research, has been gaining momentum for the last twenty years (Benson, 2018; Bell, 2002; Chik & Breidbach, 2011; Pavlenko, 2007; Vásquez, 2011), nurturing researchers' attempt to explore the historical and progressive shaping of discursive learning identities. The literature covered below reports how narratives help transcribing language learning as a very individual experience set in a combination of formal and informal contexts, in which incidental and intentional happenings intertwine through a 'kaleidoscope' of learning identities (Kalaja *et al.*, 2008a). Note that research based on third age FLL narratives and retrospective self-accounts has received very poor attention – if none at all – until only recently, and in parallel to the growing interest of lifelong FLL. By the time this doctorate

was coming to an end, Pfenninger and colleagues (2023) were about to publish a note on the power of 'narrative gerontology' in reframing lifelong language learning. As a result of the limited research corpus on the matter, the focus of this section is mainly on the use of narrative techniques in the broader field of SLA.

From the best of my knowledge, and because of its methodological complexity, there is not one all-inclusive definition of narrative research (Barkuizen *et al.*, 2014; Pavlenko, 2007). In their corpus of case studies on narratives of learning and teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL), Kalaja and colleagues (2008a) define the narrative technique as a 'tool that allows an understanding of the impact of our experiences, the emergence of deeply hidden assumptions, and an opportunity to understand change in people and events' (p. 224). In light of the growing appreciation of the use of narrative techniques in data collection when studying language learning ecologies, I present and compare two approaches, respectively introduced by Polkinghorne (1995), and more recently by Benson (2018). Both approaches should give a glimpse at the historical evolution of the methodology over the last two decades.

In its initial practice in social sciences about 25 years ago in SLA, Polkinghorne (1995) puts forward two kinds of narrative studies:

  (1) the *analysis of narratives* (also termed 'paradigmatic analysis'), which refers to analysing typologies and categories from the stories collected, and producing 'knowledge of concepts' (p. 21);

  (2) the *narrative analysis*, which presents the stories themselves, descriptions of actions, events and happenings, producing 'knowledge of particular situations'

(p. 21). In this second approach, storytelling becomes the *means* of analysing data and presenting findings.

A few decades later, and complementing Polkinghorne's view, Benson (2018) provides additional nuances by presenting three approaches to narrative research:

(1) *the content analysis of narratives* – this provides the topics, the themes, and more generally refers to *what* narrators say. Content analysis of narratives aims to analyse content ant emergent themes that cut through individual cases, often through coding and categorizing data extracts. This probably relates closely to Polkinghorne's *analysis of narratives,* and more recently to 'thematic analysis' (Barkhuizen *et al.,* 2014, p. 74);

(2) *the discourse analysis of narratives* – this gives hints at *how* storytellers present their narratives (therefore most likely alluding to Polkinghorne's *narrative analysis* approach). Such analysis tends to respond to the interpretative and subjective problems raised in content analysis of narratives, and rather attempts to assess how narratives are explained in local contexts of interaction with efforts to stick to a more objective analysis of events, psychological states and processes in general;

(3) *the analysis of narrative studies*, which consists in maintaining as much as possible the integrity of the individual case, re-storying in a temporally coherent manner, or 'making sense of an experience through narrating, analyzing narratives, reporting narrative research, and consuming research findings' (Barkhuizen, quoted by Benson, 2018, p. 599). Chik's (2008) several case studies predominantly use such a method, notably as she interviews young English learning students,

returning to Hong Kong, on their experiences with the bilingual education they receive at school. She re-stories their experiences via her own narration, in which she provides a few quotes from the interviews. Like her and many other contemporary scholars, data usually includes reported/quoted speech.

While such approaches above provide researchers with solid grounds to ensure well-structured and coherent methodological choices, adopting a blended methods approach looks inevitable in light of the current tools and materials available for data collection. Furthermore, Pavlenko (2007) invites researchers to conciliate both content, form and context.

2.2.2. Recent narrative practices in SLA and third age research

A narrative inquiry should be understood as a method 'in which data and analysis are presented in a story-like format, [and] based on the idea that stories are means of understanding human lives and experiences' (Riazi, 2021, p. 208). In other words, narrative inquiry focuses 'on people's experiences, people's lives, situated and shaped by larger cultural, social, familial, institutional and linguistic narratives' (Caine *et al.,* 2022, p. 9). A narrative inquiry explores personal stories constructed by both the subjects of the study and the researcher (Nelson, 1989). Below are some of the ongoing practices of narrative inquiry in the research field of SLA with regards to the nature and number of case studies, and to the variety of tools that are being used to collect and analyse narrative data.

In light of the variety of learning experiences, sociocultural and linguistic backgrounds and psychological and cognitive predispositions, SLA research has growingly oriented its focus on the learner as an individual, from the late 1950s onwards, and not just as being 'part of' a larger group (classrooms, communities, and so on). While providing a brief historical

overview of research centred on the learner as a single entity, Benson (2005, 2018, 2019) explores issues surrounding learners' differences, in particular with regards to their learning settings, outcomes and methods. The idea of variability and 'single case studies' has been overwhelmingly acknowledged by the world research community interested in narrative practices. This trend (the focus on one or very few case studies) is particularly notable among Asian scholars (Chik, 2008; Gao, 2007, 2010; Murphey *et al.*, 2004).

Not only does narrative practice require the use of small data samples (i.e., a few participants) to make sense of the uniqueness of each learner, but also a carefully selected choice of data collection. More recent studies in SLA have introduced the concept of 'narratives within narratives' or 'meta-narratives', also known as multimodal narratives (Barkhuizen *et al.,* 2014, pp. 52-71)*.* Such research involves the use of additional and complementary resources that go beyond the traditional form of narratives, and represent 'subsets' of narratives. For instance, the collection of drawings, pictures, and other multimedia tools can form important parts and fragments of stories and anecdotes enriching the main narrative thread.

Along those lines, scholars (Kalaja *et al.*, 2008b; Menezes, 2008; Nikula & Pitkänen-Huhta, 2008), have used different forms of narrative techniques, such as the use of drawings, pictures, sounds. In their aim to discuss the role of English in Finnish teenagers out-of-school lives, Nikula and Pitkänen-Huhta (2008) use photographs taken by those young participants, in an attempt to trigger some specific 'mini narratives' (p. 173). Kalaja and colleagues (2008b) also use visual accounts (drawings) when asking groups of Finnish students to explain, via self-portraits, their EFL learning experience and use of mediational means (books, tv and radio). In a similar approach, Menezes (2008) collected thirty-eight multimedia learning language histories to explore multimedia language learning via the

use of pictures and sounds as supportive tools to complement written texts. All those studies embrace the choice of complementing personal accounts and textual data with alternative tools. Those multimedia *artefacts* are the products of cultural trends and learners' habits. More generally, they capture the complexity and breadth of storytelling.

As mentioned earlier, the use of narrative techniques to investigate lifelong LL from the perspective of older learners' self-accounts is at its prime. Small-scale studies on third age language learning strategies so far involved partial narrative content, in the written form, collected from in-class based senior students, and elicited through open-ended questionnaires (i.e., Pawlak *et al.*, 2018). On a larger scale, yet still in the context of a classroom-based study, Grotek (2018) also employed a qualitative analysis of narratives produced by a group of 87 senior students learning EFL at one of the Universities of the Third Age in Poland. Previous studies from the field of SLA and third age using narrative data predominantly focused on the ongoing experience of senior FL users. Narrative studies on lifelong learning and using narrative techniques in a longitudinal and retrospective fashion clearly represent a niche according to Gabryś-Barker (2018).

2.2.3. Ethical and methodological issues in narrative inquiry

In light of the multiplicity of angles one can take in narrative research practices, ethical, structural and methodological issues seem inevitable. According to Kalaja *et al.* (2008a), methodological issues are threefold: (1) the role and influence of the narrator/researcher in reporting and interpreting the stories. This is mainly problematic for narrative analysis; (2) the role of the participant and narratees in the perception of their own views; and (3) the use of multimodal narratives. To (1) and (2), I shall add the problem of the relationship between the narrator and the narratee. Galasiński and Galasińska (2005) suggest the need of a 'narrative contract between the narrator and the narratee' (p. 102), in which both

acknowledge the role of one another, and the potential risks of interpretative and knowledge gaps. As for (3), questions on the use and role of multimodal tools in complementing the text, and the way they should be presented in the discussion and analysis, highly vary from one study to another.

One should also reflect upon the complexity of narratives' structural and duration variability. Benson (2011) points out at the necessity for the narrator to articulate events well enough in order to be able to understand periodization clearly. Structuring events and phases within the narrative indeed seems essential. Events' duration also naturally varies from one story to another, hence the importance of designing a timeline to distinguish what are critical incidents from less important ones. In the case of my study, a timeline is naturally incorporated and used during the interview phase, with the collaboration of each participant.

Being able to structure participants' stories into a coherent narrative also involves looking at the very psychological state of the narrator at the (present) time of storytelling. Learning amounts to a continual process of becoming, therefore stories are dynamic and not static (Dutra & Mello, 2008; Galasiński & Galasińska, 2005). The way the narrator, whether participant or researcher, will articulate the stories, will highly rely on his physical, cognitive, affective and emotional states at the time he articulates and expresses them. In addition, one may expect interruptions and disconnections from participants in their narratives. Maintaining the connection with each participant, even after the interviews is key, in case further clarifications are needed regarding some obscure thoughts or aspects of the narratives, which inevitably lead to a fragmented collection of short stories that need to be re-ordered. Also note that narrators naturally 'select' fragments of their learning stories, which may end up in being 'non-conclusive' data (Karlsson, 2008, p. 85). The

elicited narratives I purport to collect will thus have to be 'co-constructions' of multiple writing and reporting. As such, I expect to collect overlapping stories with several beginnings and several ends that will eventually constitute the lifetime narrative gestalt of my participants' language learning experience.

Moreover, Karlsson (2008) mentions the risk to block narrators, and therefore learners, within their own stories; the narrative then becomes 'a vehicle for frozen learning practices and assumptions' (p. 91). Some scholars have also questioned the factual nature of narratives (Benson, 2011), what Coffey describes as 'figured worlds' set into 'imagined communities' (Coffey, 2007, p. 135). Narratives collected will inherently represent 'autobiographically forged identities', drawn from the narrators' imagination (Coffey, 2010; Pavlenko, 2007). Polkinghorne (1995) even refers to the idea that a story 'carries a connotation of falsehood or misrepresentation' (p. 7). As Pavlenko (2007) also warns, researchers should always bear in mind that 'narratives constitute, rather than reflect, reality' (p. 180). In the case of my study, the onus is to assess senior users' 'experiential reality' rather than 'textual reality' with language learning. I further tackle the notion of reliability in Chapter 4, Section 4.6.2.

Finally, it is important to point out that the distinction between narrative and non-narrative data sometimes remains unclear. For instance, there could be interviews that take the form of narratives, or researchers who edit some extracts of an interview and turn them into narratives (Barkhuizen *et al.*, 2014). In light of the methodological loopholes and definitional uncertainty mentioned above, I contend that complementing the narrative inquiry with other data collection procedures seems recommended in this case. However, one must keep in mind that limitations will remain through every type of modality of presentation that is offered to the participant.

2.2.4. Concluding remarks and justification for narrative study

Narrative identity work needs to be done in order to make sense of language learners' experiences (Benson, 2018). I should add that it makes even more sense in light of my case studies that purport to foray into older learners' sense of agency and autonomy in language acquisition. Collecting their storyline(s) is necessary to make sense of their lifelong evolution and current choices. As Malcolm (2005) points out, there are few studies that investigate 'how learners' beliefs, and the strategies derived from them, develop in relation to the changing contexts of their life and language learning experiences over time' (p. 69). Documenting how those stories become personal theories of effective practice and training is the very focus of this study. How do senior L2 learners/narrators refine their own identity as lifelong learners? Which impact, if any at all, does their view on past events, and the way they narrate them have in their present learning practices? Which life events, choices, and interactions have turned their language use into sustainable and persistently successful patterns? What has brought them to continuously renew and nurture their desire to keep learning a foreign language? Attempting to answer those questions necessarily implies the use of a multilevel narrative approach. Note that the ethical dilemmas and interpretative nature of narrative studies I have mentioned in this literature review, and which I further explore in Chapter 3, precisely reflect the very contradictions, imperfections, inconsistencies and nonlinear quality of the learning experience.

The ecological paradigm I wish to bring next to my literature review shows how narrative practice can also trigger shortcuts in learning self-awareness. Narrating one's own process of learning can help take a step back, have a clearer view of one's own profile as a lifelong learner, and potentially anticipate on future learning tasks with more rapidity and efficiency. A narrative study can thus better highlight one's ecological approach to FLL.

2.3. The study of lifelong motivational persistence: An ecological perspective

One way in which lifelong L2 motivation could be represented is through the concept of the learning ecology hereinafter defined (2.3.1), and whose implementation in the context of FLL motivation and developmental nature over the long run are further discussed in 2.3.2 and 2.3.3, respectively. These considerations will eventually help clarify the research niche related to lifelong and sustainable L2 motivation, and justify the need to address two research questions (RQ1 and RQ2), further developed in 2.3.4.

2.3.1. The learning ecology (LE): Definitions, breadth and limitations

The concept of learning ecology (LE) takes guidance from Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological Systems Theory (EST), mainly used in human development and social work (Bronfenbrenner, 1993; Greene, 2008), to examine learners in specific contexts and social networks. Ecologically-oriented academics refer to those multilayered aspects of individual analysis as many nested layers of environments that are organized 'like a set of Russian dolls' (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 3). Widely adopted in the last 2O years, the concept characterizes innovative ways of learning, often mediated by digital technologies highlighting the dichotomy of formal versus informal multilevel learning settings.

Most scholarly articles have only barely given hints of what an LE *could be*, while those who tried to provide a better definition failed to cohere around a consensual position. However, most scholars do agree on the unclear theoretical and polysemic definitions of the LE (Sangrá *et al.*, 2019). Table 2.1 below is a collection of nuanced definitions provided between 2002 and 2021, and which I have collected from my own readings.

Table 2.1. A review of definitions of LEs from 2002 to 2021

AUTHORS	DEFINITIONS & REFERENCES TO LEARNING ECOLOGIES	DATE	RESEARCH APPLICATIONS
Kramsch	'the totality of the relationships that a learner, as a living organism, entertains with all aspects of his/her environment' (p. 22). First application of the LE concept to SLA, related as a dynamic system.	2002	(SLA) General overview
Barron	Dynamic interest-driven learning system shaped by contextual interdependencies, and forming 'a unique configuration of activities, material resources [and] relationships' (p. 195).	2006	(SLA) 3 case studies of adolescents – study of the relationships between in and out-of-class learning
Van Lier	'the study of the relationships among elements in an environment or ecosystem, in particular the interactions among such elements' (p. 3). Connection with three other concepts: (1) relationships; (2) quality and (3) agency.	2010	None – general conceptual overview
Casanave	'ecology of effort' – contextual and relational characteristics in which experiences, emotional and physical events influence the learning journey.	2012	(SLA) Adults' first account diaries – longitudinal studies
Watling Neal & Neal	Revision of Bronfenbrenner's EST by advocating a network of patterns of social interaction rather than 'nested' overlapping structures in the development of human beings. The building blocks of ecological systems are social interactions and not settings.	2013	(Developmental Research) Development of a child
Sharples	'seamless' learning experience – a continuous flow of meaning-making with a focus on setting and context, especially in mobile learning.	2015	Children's education with games
Kashiwa & Benson	In line with Barron's definition: 'a set of contexts that provide opportunities for learning and develop over time' (p. 741).	2018	(SLA) 3 case studies (abroad students) on the role of context
Bender & Peppler	Interest-driven system of learning connecting young learners' skills, experience and interests to 'sites of opportunities.'	2019	Youth learning
Barnett & Jackson	Multi-level practices: from the personal to the global Boundless, practical, 'liminal, as lacking firm boundaries, [and] emerging from circumstances and interaction' (p. 224).	2020	None – general conceptual overview
Jackson	'ecology of practice', which involves a value-creating system 'enabling to interact in a meaningful way with [learners'] environment' (p. 191).	2020	Study of a geologist's 'ecology of practice'
O'toole et al.	From a teacher-centered position, revision of Bronfenbrenner's 'ecology of learning across settings, both formal and informal' (p. 22). Acknowledges the importance of contextual knowledge, individual characteristics and focuses on 'proximal processes' (= processes in relationships) as determining factors.	2020	None – general conceptual overview
Wals	Views the LE in light of its environmentally and ethically sustainable nature, and defines sustainability-oriented learning as 'an organic and relational process of continuous framing, reframing, tuning and fine-tuning, disruption and accommodation, and action and reflection, guided by a moral compass of doing what is right and inspired by an ethic of care' (p. 63).	2020	None – general conceptual overview
Benson, Consoli	Consoli looks at CDST through the concept of ecology, and views ecology in line with Kramsch's definition (2002, quoted above). Likewise, Benson connects the concept of LE to the notion of 'space' as an environment composed of learning resources the learner interacts with.	2021	(SLA) Language learning

As the table shows, within 20 years of research, most studies have been either observational or exploratory (Barnett & Jackson, 2020; Kramsch, 2002; O'toole *et al.*, 2020; Van Lier, 2010; Wals, 2020), but with no direct educational applications to form concrete research frameworks with predictive and proactive research outcomes. Moreover, the number of research applications to empirical studies in SLA (Barron, 2006; Casanave, 2012; Consoli, 2021; Kashiwa & Benson, 2018) remains extremely low. In the rare case of actual research applications, the focus was on younger learning communities exclusively.

As a result of the concept's ambiguous and elusive nature, several authors have reviewed

the initial bioecological model of learning by adding intermingling layers of contextual systems (O'Toole *et al.,* 2020; Watling & Neal, 2013) that also influence the shape of learning. Sangrá *et al.* (2019) offer the most relevant and integrative definition of an LE as the 'sum of contexts where the learner self-directs her activity, cultivating relationships and using, producing and sharing resources [and integrating] formal and informal learning' (p. 1621). Following this definition, the two main characteristics of LEs are hybridity and diversity (Barron, 2006; Lai *et al.*, 2015). An LE therefore encompasses several ramifications that include both abstract concepts (time, agency, values) and tangible ones (structure, people, resources). Those innovative learning environments represent drivers of agentic practices, bridging gaps between learning spaces (formal, informal, non-formal), and relational, emotional and contextual factors.

From the background literature revised to date, there is a clear lack of alignment between ontological definitions, methodological approaches and research applications of the LE to specific groups. Partly due to the complexity of contextual influences at stake in the construction of an LE (Casanave, 2012; O'Toole *et al.*, 2020), the concept also suffers from its breadth of implementation in several fields (developmental research, social sciences, psychology) and contexts. This study aims to take scholars' call to refine the picture of lifelong learning continuums through the lens of LEs (Sangrá *et al.,* 2019).

2.3.2. Implementation of the LE in FLL and lifelong motivation

An ecological perspective on language learning intends to provide a holistic view on the L2 learner's personal development and creation of practice opportunities. In FLL research, scarce allusions to the LE have been mainly associated with connectivism, the network approach and lifelong learning in the field of adult learning (Sangrá *et al.,* 2019; Siemens, 2008; Watling Neal *et al.*, 2013), yet the concept remains relatively unexplored to this day

(Bender and Peppler, 2019), especially when targeting specifically lifelong motivation in language learning.

For the context of this research, I wish to go beyond the 'initial metaphor' that the LE conveys (Lai *et al.,* 2015, p. 300), and understand a language LE (LEE) as an agency-rich FL learning environment built over the long run through a multimodal set of resources, tools and actions, and within which 'experience happens and is given meaning' (Casanave, 2012, p. 646). The temporal dimension is key, since the LLE has to 'connect the past with the present and create essential infrastructure for the future' (Barnett & Jackson, 2020, p. 225). An LLE is thus made and conceived at an individual level through time, and only exists and develops because it is meaningful to the L2 learner who creates and experiences it.

The LLE represents one type of learning environment that places the learner (as opposed to the teacher) at the centre of language acquisition (Sangrá *et al.,* 2019), and which comprises the interaction of 'various dynamic and interdependent elements' (Lai *et al.,* 2015, p. 282). As the network perspective contends, some of the main attributes of the LLE are its cognitively adaptive and connective patterns that allow for a self-organized and context-based learning experience (Barron, 2006; Sangrá *et al*., 2019; Sharples, 2015; Watling Neal *et al.*, 2013). As such, the LLE combines a diversity of flexible and sustainable learning patterns that complement one another in order to form shortcuts. The more experienced the language learner is, i.e., the more integrated those learning experiences are across one's life contexts and situations (Jackson, 2014), the more refined learning shortcuts are, and the more elaborate the LLE is. Because of the key role of accumulated learning experience in the LLE construction of a third age and lifelong L2 user, the concept should be looked longitudinally. Figure 2.1 below shows the general and common

attributes I have gathered from the ecologically-oriented scholars reviewed, and which apply for LLEs.

Figure 2.1. Attributes of an LLE through a network approach
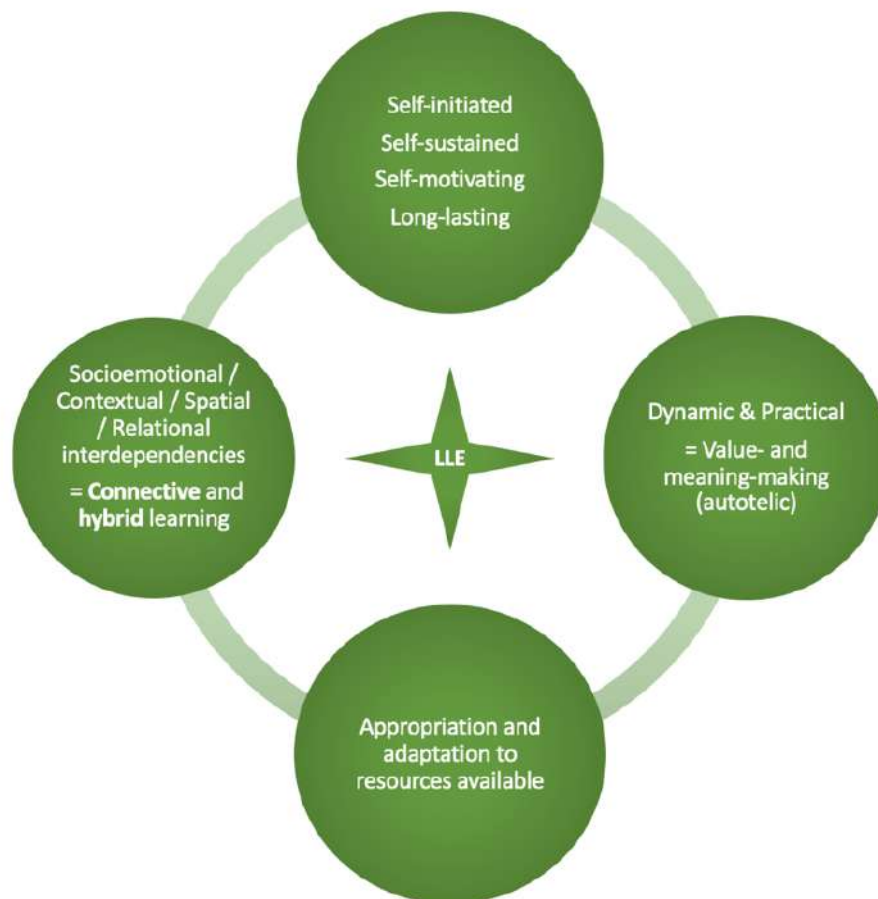
I contend that in the case of the present research on enduring FLL, autonomy and motivational agency are two conceptual aspects that must be integrated into the concept of lifelong LLE. Derenowski (2021) assumes that self-motivated learning involves 'that in lifelong learning there is an emphasis on the need for individual people to assume more responsibility for their own learning' (p. 30). Other predicates for a viable LLE in third age entail that (1) its agents are *well informed and experienced learners* with a high degree of self-awareness, language exposure and learning responsibility, and that (2) they display a lifelong lived 'history' of learning habits and choices. Again, much remains to be explored

regarding lifelong LLEs (Sangrá *et al.*, 2019), and what forms the grounds of a qualitative LLE for mature learners.

A multi-layered approach to language acquisition would view older learners choosing a paraphernalia of tools and resources, often to complement 'a measure of experience', i.e., those lived events remembered by the neurological system. As such, the experience of an LLE would be incomplete without understanding the connection between flexible and adaptative neurological structures, and fast and efficient learning. The use of narratives should help explore mature learners' language use and practices in light of their timesaving solutions and self-made / self-regulated cognitive learning patterns (Dörnyei, 2009).

In the case of older learning brains, a lifelong LLE can also be associated to the growth of cognitive shortcuts and intellectual alternative routes, hence the necessary mention to neurolinguistics. I aim to connect the above-given definitions with the characteristics provided by Muñoz (2019, p. 440), who explains that:

> *besides recruiting additional neural resources when something is lost, it has been suggested that adults recruit additional cognitive and environmental resources (quantity and quality of input, instruction, etc.) to cope with the learning task.*

As a result, those ecological patterns develop over a lifespan, not only through experience and external factors, but also through biological, neurological and physiological changes, which are even more important to consider in later life.

According to Savin-Baden (2020), agents of LLEs typically reach a plateau or a liminal state of learning at a certain stage of their life. Liminal states of learning enable 'the learner

[to] co-construct meaning, deconstruct knowledge, and locate his or her self within learning spaces that are both formal and informal' (p. 47)**.** The threshold concept has drawn some researchers to correlate it to transformational education (Meyer *et al.,* 2010; Siemens, 2008). In a similar vein, Menezes (2008) compares this phase to the 'edge of chaos', which is the very locus where 'the greatest information processing takes place, where risks are taken and new behavior is tried out' (p. 203). As such, some research show that the formation of more sophisticated LLEs stems from a crisis at a certain point in life, a sensation of disjunction/being stuck, and leads to the subsequent development of flexibility in learners to adapt to their new 'educational' environment. A cognitive state as such, that is always on the edge, is more readily opened for imaginative and creative connections, supported by social interactions. The use of narratives should help detect and trace the developments of such critical times, and further examine their impact on older learners' overall LLE.

2.3.4. Research niche and justification for an ecological approach to FLL motivation

The study of lifelong L2 motivational endurance represents a key aim in this thesis. More particularly, two main research questions emerge from the literature covered in this chapter, namely RQ1 and RQ2, respectively:

RQ1: What are the origins and developments of lifelong L2 motivation among three highly motivated senior L2 users?

RQ2: Why and how did the three senior participants reach such a level of L2 learning commitment in third age?

My study aims at clarifying some of the characteristics of the LLE above-mentioned in a specific and well-defined context of three highly motivated lifelong learners. The analysis will hopefully help determine the extent of ecological growth and motivation maintenance throughout a lifespan via the exploration of the most meaningful events and potential crises highlighted in the narratives.

The immediate availability of online and offline learning resources and tools in today's hybrid educational climate of free appropriation, and highly individualized self-determined learning, positions this study beyond the traditional debate of formal/informal learning environments or in-class/out-of-class paradigm. Instead, I aim at presenting what scholars have described as a 'flow' or 'seamless' learning experience (Sangrá *et al.,* 2019; Sharples, 2015), or as context-aware 'ubiquitous' learning (Lopes *et al.*, 2017; Virtanen *et al.*, 2018), i.e., the LLE in which learners successfully display an 'ecological effort' at maintaining and nurturing their motivation and practice through the creative use of the resources available to them.

Another problem that is raised in most scholars' work, and which deserves further consideration is that an LLE represents a structure with tangible objects on the one hand (learning tools, learning physical environment, such as classrooms or computers) and more 'virtual', personal and self-created spaces on the other hand (emotions, imagined learning communities), with no real physical attributes. Learners are engaged and influenced through both interactional and spatial factors that sometimes cannot be quantified at all or easily analysed (Watling Neal *et al*., 2013). Better said, the LE is a dynamic and ever-growing entity of both facts and values (Barnett & Jackson, 2020; Jackson, 2020; Menezes, 2008). According to the authors, an LE offers an infinity of

possibilities and challenges, hence its constant, unpredictable change and impossibility to catalyze or control fully. Likewise, one cannot foretell what and how an LLE will turn into, even within a short period of time, since it evolves with and through life unforeseen events and constraints.

In light of the unpredictable nature of LLEs, one of the methodological questions raised is, how can we best capture ways to assess the dynamics of a system that is bound to continuously change and evolve over the course of life and events? (Barron, 2006). Answering this question would require, at least, (1) more longitudinal or retrospective studies to trace the LLE system's trajectory, and (2) separating aspects of the LLE into different units of analysis, and focusing only on one feature and 'micro-interactional processes' at a time, for instance, and 'across short time frames' (Barron, 2006, p. 196). These features may include critical moments of learning and their related emotional response, interactions with the learning environment and tools at a given time, and so on. The present study aims to achieve such a task by selecting from the narratives key aspects of the participants' LLE that are meaningful to them, and which helped shape their overall ecological system of FLL.

Taking an ecological perspective on a complex and dynamic phenomenon (i.e., FLL) tends to add a more refined and precise view on the matter. In this sense, I very much align with the idea that bringing up a fine-grained ecological lens to this broad perspective filters and puts coherent order, by looking precisely at the relational and contextual interactions of one learner's unique LLE (Barkhuizen & Consoli, 2021). The ecological approach of this study directly yields to the use of a complex theoretical framework, which literature I review in the following chapter, providing an overview of motivation in FLL through multiple research angles.

CHAPTER THREE: FLL MOTIVATION IN LIGHT OF THREE FRAMEWORKS

This chapter aims to consider some of the key arguments for adopting a complexity approach in the instance of my research. More specifically, the following review looks at the relevance of associating three theories to shed light on the historical developments and multiple interacting aspects of lifelong motivational ecologies. In particular, I examine the literature relevant to long-term motivation in language learning in light of three theoretical frameworks, namely the L2 Motivational Self-System (L2MSS), the Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (CDST), and the theory of Directed Motivational Currents (DMC). More generally, the literature review aims to capture the conceptual and methodological growing trends in research on lifelong motivation, while also addressing the common pitfalls that are typical of cross-disciplinary research. These considerations involve a high degree of multi-level analysis, and thus call for a third research question, namely RQ3, further elaborated in the final section of this chapter.

Chapter 3 first takes a grand tour approach of motivation in language learning, and reviews the main theoretical approaches in the area, including L2MSS (3.1). My discussion on the historical shift towards complexity-oriented research leads to further explore the

roots and components of CDST (3.2). Concerns about the level of analytical granularity in complex and dynamic approaches to FLL are raised, and bring me to narrow down research through the prism of DMC whose patterns are further examined (3.3). Reflections inspired from previous studies will likely help negotiate my position with respect to the existing body of knowledge and empirical studies, while instructing on alternative routes for analysis. Finally, I end this chapter introducing a third research question, namely RQ3, which complements RQ1 and RQ2 (3.4). Concluding remarks will pave the way for further justification of my methodological choices, research design guidelines and analytical directions.

3.1. General overview of motivation in language learning

Over 60 years after Gardner and Lambert's (1959, 1972) first discussions that shaped the contours of research inquiry on motivation in foreign language learning (FLL), the field and its related literature keeps mutating and growing steadily. The multiplicity of research angles around motivation in FLL invites every researcher to keep abreast of the changes, while conceiving the topic in the larger complex system of human motivation, and in light of the interconnected cognitive processes at stake in SLA. A holistic view on motivation in FLL undeniably subsumes other fundamental aspects immanent to SLA research, such as context, self, identity construct, human agency and autonomy, which would deserve yet another literature review on their own. Moreover, as Dörnyei & Ushioda (2021) rightly point out, 'the challenge of capturing and integrating all the multiple complexities of human motivation within a single comprehensive theory will undoubtedly remain elusive' (p. 9). Rather, this general overview on the historical variations of theoretical and methodological approaches to FLL motivation aims to assess a few core issues linked to my research, and the ongoing developments and potential niches in the field to which this PhD's focus hopes to bring a small contribution.

More specifically, I aim to justify my choice to consider FLL motivation in its theoretical complexity and pluralist definition. This introduction will first briefly look at the historical evolution of academic discussions on FLL motivation that better informs today's research landscape, notably in light of L2MSS. The analysis will then zoom into the multifaceted definitional nature of FLL motivation. Finally, I highlight the historical – and still ongoing – debate around methodological choices in FLL motivation, within which I justify the position of my own qualitative and process-oriented study.

3.1.1. Historical research (r)evolution toward the 'complex turn'

The amount of extra theoretical layers amassed through generations of experts in L2 motivation compels us to take a bird's eye view on the field's historical shifts and turns. Scholars all pinpoint the complexity and multifaceted nature of approaches to FLL motivation (Al-Hoorie & MacIntyre, 2020; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Dörnyei *et al.*, 2015; Lamb *et al.*, 2019). Dörnyei and Ushioda's appropriate use of the knitted net metaphor best describes the differences between the mutual existence of various theories of L2 motivation: 'If we lift it up by holding different knots, very different shapes will emerge, even though the actual net is exactly the same' (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 9). In a similar vein, while Murray notes that it is impossible to 'rely on any one theory to explain motivation in language learning' (2011a, p. 261), Schumann also concludes that 'the number of possible formulations of the phenomena is potentially infinite' (2015, p. xvii).

For the purpose of this research, I will not be able to go over the rich history of L2 motivation, but I want to highlight its ongoing intellectual vitality across time and research world locations. In today's research climate of methodological innovation and unceasing conceptual overhaul (Dörnyei, 2020), it seems noteworthy to mention past debates, which

have inevitably paved the way to scholars' new orientations ever since. I also believe that understanding the historical developments on conceptual discussions better informs the present predominance of CDST in relation to FLL motivation, and, more specifically, shores up my present position within today's prevailing frameworks. Dörnyei (2019) offers a view of the historical twists and turns of theoretical constructs and approaches to L2 motivation, and academics' attempts at expanding research paradigms over three decades, which I have aimed to summarize below in Table 3.1.

Motivation in language learning has long been regarded outside mainstream SLA (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), yet researchers' growing interest in exploring more components that form L2 individual learners' complex learning system has had the field flourish over the last three decades. As Table 3.1 indicates, the 'cognitive revolution' fundamentally triggered a boom in motivation research in the 1970s, and led for a deeper conceptual clarity by sorting out the vast range of motivational factors into categories of theoretical constructs.

Table 3.1. Historical evolution of approaches to L2 motivation over 40 years

APPROACHES TO MOTIVATION	PERIOD	AUTHORS INVOLVED	UNDERPINNINGS
Broad social psychological focus - Gardner's (1985) *socio-educational model*	*Mid to Late 1980s*	Gardner and his associates: Gardner & Lambert (1959), Gardner (1985), Gardner & Tremblay (1994), Gardner & Clément (1990).	Psychologists interested in SLA - Pioneers in designing an integrative and instrumental motivational theoretical framework with psychological foundations, around 3 main components: Motivation, Integrativeness and Attitudes towards L2 learning.
- Deci & Ryan's (1985) *Self-Determination Theory*	*Mid to Late 1980s*	Deci & Ryan (1985).	Introduction to *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* motivations.
Revision of Gardner's approach toward more educationally relevant research	*Early 1990s*	Crookes & Schmidt (1991), Oxford & Shearin (1994), Dörnyei (1994).	'Storming phase' (Dörnyei, 1994, p. 522). New wave of L2 motivation researchers aiming to revise and elaborate on Gardner's integrative approach, and provide specificity and a smaller lens approach to motivation in SLA.
Social motivation through context variation	*Mid-1990s*	Weiner (1994), Rueda & Dembo (1995), Ushioda (2009), Yim *et al.* (2019), Wosnitza & Beltman (2012).	Learner viewed as a 'self-reflective intentional agent, 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' (Ushioda, 2009, p. 220). Nascent ideas of Ushioda's Person-in-Context Theory.
Affective foundation of L2 acquisition from a neurobiological perspective	*Late 1990s*	Schumann (1997).	Posits that motivation consists of 'various permutations and patterns of stimulus appraisal processes' (Dörnyei, 2019, p. 46). Due to a lack of laboratory access, research in this field is rather sparse.
L2 demotivation	*Early 2000s through to present*	Dörnyei (2001), Kim & Kim (2013), Thorner & Kikuchi (2019).	Exploratory research started in 1998 and 'mapped, ranked and clustered various demotivational antecedents' (Dörnyei, 2019, p. 42). Due to language learning failure, research on this topic is ongoing.
L2 Motivational Self-System (L2MSS)	*Early 2000s to present*	Markus & Nurius (1986), Higgins (1987), Dörnyei (2005, 2009a), Dörnyei & Ushioda (2009a), Clarke and Hennig (2013), Thompson & Vásquez (2015), Henry (2017), Harvey (2017) Csizér (2019), Thompson (2017, 2022), Papi (2022).	Inspired from Markus and Nurius's Possible-Selves Theory and Higgins's Self-Discrepancy Theory, which link motivation with self-concept and emotions. Takes the learner's identity and idiosyncrasy, future self-guides, i.e., *ideal self* and *ought-to self*, and highlights differences among learners. The locus is on the learner's mental imagery, 'ideological becoming', ethical self-formation and vision of himself. Thompson (2017) more recently introduced the concept *of anti-ought-to self* (against external expectations) as an additional motivational profile that complements the *ought-to self* category.
Motivation and group dynamics	*Early 2000s to present*	Dörnyei & Murphey (2003), Chang (2010), Murphey *et al.* (2012), Sazaki *et al.* (2017), Dörnyei & Muir (2019).	Study of L2 motivation through *Group cohesiveness* and *group norms*.
Complex Dynamic approach to L2 motivation (CDST)	*Early 2000s to present*	Larsen-Freeman (1997), Holland (1998), De Bot *et al.* (2007), Ellis (2007), Larsen-Freeman & Cameron (2008a, 2008b), Sade (2011), Menezes (2011), Ortega & Han (2017), Dörnyei *et al.* (2015), Hiver & Al-Hoorie (2016), Hiver & Papi (2019), Papi & Hiver (2022).	Larsen-Freeman (1997) first observes a connection between the new science of chaos/complexity and SLA. Increasing recognition and application of CDST concepts in SLA research ever since. Highlights the salience of temporal and situational variations.
L2 re-motivation	*Mid-2010s*	Falout *et al.* (2013), Song & Kim (2017).	More recent additions to L2 demotivation.
L2 and motivational mindsets + emotions - Directed Motivational Currents (DMC)	*Mid-2010s and Early 2020s*	Dörnyei & Kubanyiova (2014), MacIntyre & Mercer (2014), Lou & Noels (2019), Piniel & Albert (2019), Gregersen (2019), Feng & Papi (2020), Muir & Dörnyei (2013), Dörnyei *et al.* (2014), Gregersen *et al.* (2020), Muir (2020, 2021), Henry (2019), Dewaele (2020, 2022) Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016), Fukada *et al.* (2022).	Investigations on the flow experience both at individual and collective levels, well-being (Fukada *et al.*, 2022), momentum and vision (Muir, 2020), and positive psychology in SLA (MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014), together with emotions (Dewaele, 2020, 2022) but also more recently on the relationship between grit, and two L2 motivational dimensions: intensity and persistence (Feng & Papi, 2020).
Motivation and the Unconscious	*Present*	Al-Hoorie (2015, 2019).	Provides an additional perspective that can be included into other approaches (Possible-Selves Theory, DMCs, Self-Determination Theory etc). Focus on unconscious motives, drawing from the field of psychology with an analysis of automatic and implicit attitudes, and non-conscious motivational processes. Should not be separated from conscious motives.
Motivation and Age	*Present*	Ramírez Gómez (2016), Pfenninger & Singleton (2017), Gabryś-Barker (2018), Kliesch *et al.* (2018), Djigunović & Nikolov (2019).	Focus on both young and old spectrums. Emerging research field.

In like manner, Boo *et al.* (2015) have provided a review of the historical publication pattern of research on FLL motivation, hinting on the constant conceptual overhaul of approaches. One of their review articles aimed at categorizing academic papers from 2005 into the seven following theoretical trends: (1) Gardner's (1985) pioneering socio-educational theory of second language acquisition, which has left a significant legacy (Al-Hoorie & MacIntyre, 2020); (2) Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS); (3) Bandura's (1977, 1997) Self-Efficacy theory; (4) Deci & Ryan's (1985) Self-Determination theory (SDT); (5) Weiner's (1976, 2010) Attribution theory; (6) MacIntyre and colleagues' (1998) Willingness to Communicate (WTC) in an L2, and (7) Motivational dynamics utilizing Complex Dynamic Systems Theory (Boo *et al.*, 2015). Of course, by the look of the widening scope of the research landscape and theoretical venues in FLL motivation, it would seem vain to even try categorize today's studies into one theoretical movement. Inspired from Dörnyei's (2005) timeframe division, and later from Dörnyei and Ushioda's (2011) historical overviews of theories in FLL motivation, Boo and his colleagues (2015) also propose a three-phase timeframe that clearly highlights the evolution of the research 'shifting landscape' (p. 146), as I have outlined in Figure 3.1.

Figure 3.1. Paradigm shift from the 1990s to present[1]
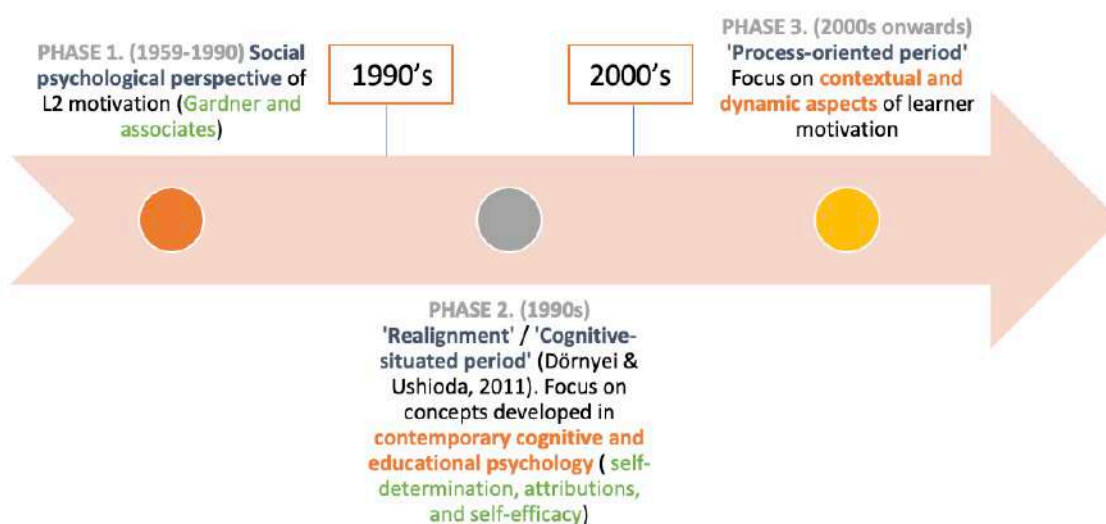
In the early 2010s, a global shift away from the Gardnerian aptitude/achievement-related framework occurs towards a 'more contextually grounded and identity-oriented perspective' (Ushioda, 2011, p. 18). The connection of FLL motivation to self, identity goals and identity formation (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009) brings into sharp relief the necessity to look at motivation as a combination of long-term development processes and timely situated experiences that lifelong personal trajectories can best describe. Of course, one must nuance scholars' attempts at defining historical conceptual clusters. My aim is not to provide an exhaustive list of approaches to L2 motivation but to acknowledge, as Dörnyei and his associates did before (Dörnyei, 2003; Menezes, 2011; Murray, 2011a), that these are all legitimate angles that complement, overlap and subtly interact with one another, and eventually form part of the same conceptual kaleidoscope.

Both Gardner and Dörnyei have held remarkable sway in providing a construct-oriented approach to motivation, borrowing from mainstream social and educational psychology. Gardner's highly productive and influential work that integrated the gold standard Attitudes and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), has undoubtedly stood the test of time and inspired generations of L2 motivation researchers (Al-Hoorie & MacIntyre, 2020), while setting the stage for the exploration of a relatively uncharted territory.

To the social-psychological perspective Gardner and his associates spearheaded as early as in the beginning of 1950s, academic critics added revised models arguing that Gardner's paradigm, victim of what seems common to all new theories, lacked a systematic application to actual and situated educational landscapes (Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 1994, 2019). This default has been largely compensated in the momentous 'motivational renaissance' of the 1990s (Boo *et al.,* 2015), which introduced a new era of

FLL motivational pragmatism. As Table 3.1 indicates, practical aspects of demotivation[2] were tackled in the late 90s, and related more recently to the analysis of FLL re-motivation[3] (Falout *et al.,* 2013; Song & Kim, 2017) and the importance of mindsets[4] (Lou & Noels, 2019), which borrows from the field of positive psychology and well-being (Gregerson, 2019; Gregersen *et al.,* 2020; Selingman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

3.1.2. L2MSS: A complex-oriented theoretical approach to FLL motivation

The new millennium envisioned L2 motivation in light of social psychology with the substantive works of Dörnyei's (2005) innovative L2MSS, broadening the scope of Gardner's theory and drawing inspiration from Higgins's (1987, 2014) Self-Discrepancy Theory, which itself draws on Markus & Nurius's Possible Selves theory (1986). Based on theories of self and identity, the L2MSS is a model that offers 'an integrated account of language learning motivation' (Csizér, 2019, p. 71), aimed to inform how self-concept, and its related learning context, contributes in directing motivational behaviour. This framework first received a wide range of interpretations and extensions (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009), and was more recently tackled under new lights by Thompson (2015), Henry (2017), Thompson and Vásquez (2015) and Csizér (2019). Dörnyei's L2MSS emerges with the interest in the self in L2 motivation research around the 2010s (Csizér & Kálmán, 2019; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), and generally still serves today as a 'springboard' for new approaches centred on the individual, and his dynamic and interacting learning self-guides (Dörnyei, 2019; Boo *et al.*, 2015; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2009).

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[2] According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), *demotivation '*concerns various negative influences that cancel out existing motivation' (p. 138).

[3] According to Falout (2012), *re-motivation* is the 'process of recovering motivation after losing it' (p. 3).

[4] According to Lou and Noels (2019), *mindsets* refer to 'lay theories [that] are information-processing paradigms that help people to form, revise, transform, and even change their everyday experience to a meaningful system of beliefs' (p. 538). *Language mindsets* are lay theories 'regarding general language intelligence, L2 aptitude, and age sensitivity beliefs' (p. 540).

Three core facets constitute the L2MSS, namely the ideal L2 self, the ought-to L2 self, and the L2 learning experience, as illustrated and explained in detail in Figure 3.2 below.

Figure 3.2. Dörnyei's (2009) model of L2MSS

IDEAL SELF
- Who a learner would like to become in terms of language ability;
- Based on Internal desires or wishes;
- Draws from personal mental imagery, inner vision and imagination;

OUGHT-TO-SELF
- Who the learner feels that he or she is obliged to become;
- Based on personal expectations (own);
- Based on external pressures (others) (Ex., pressure from friends, authority figures, or in terms of general societal expectations).

LEARNING EXPERIENCE
- Compilation of the past and current experiences of a language learner;
- Involves naturalistic and out-of-class experiences, interactions with and influence of "others";
- Includes artifacts and objects of self-study.

ANTI-OUGHT-TO SELF
- In reaction to 'ought-to-self';
- Active resistance/reactance against societal expectations as the main source of L2 motivation;
- Motivated by the opposite of external pressures' expectations, i.e., choosing to study a language to go against the norms of society.

While the two first components (i.e., the ideal L2 self and the ought-to L2 self) have received major attention among researchers, the language experience, which refers to 'the

situated motives that relate to the immediate learning environment, which includes attitudes towards classroom processes' (Csizér, 2019, p.73), has been largely neglected (Csizér & Kálmán, 2019) or has triggered, at the very least, conceptual confusion (You *et al.,* 2016). In light of the expansive and adaptable quality of the L2MSS model (Csizér, 2019), Thompson's study (2017) brings an additional component to the traditional three aspects of the L2MSS, that of the *anti-ought-to-self*, also referred to as the *rebellious* self (Lanvers, 2016), and which is the opposite of the ought-to self. I have integrated this recent feature in Figure 3.2 for better clarity on its characteristics. The anti-ought-to self is defined as the 'active resistance against societal expectations as a key source of motivation' (Thompson, 2017, p. 39). It draws inspiration from the dimension of psychological reactance (Brehm, 1966; Brehm & Brehm, 1981), and must be understood as 'the urge to perform an action specifically because someone gave advice to the contrary' (Thompson & Vásquez, 2015, p. 161).

According to Thomspon and Vásquez (2015), while much has already been discussed in terms of ideal and ought-to selves, there remains a substantial need to re-assess this framework with a focus and a reconceptualization of the learning experience, which has been much less tackled and theorized in studies designed longitudinally and outside classroom contexts. More specifically, understanding the historical evolution of L2 selves throughout one's L2 learning, i.e., within a long-term timescale, and in light of a complex and dynamic framing remains a promising venue for research.

Dörnyei's L2MSS inspired an impressive – and still growing – body of research. Meanwhile, Ushioda's (2009) 'person-in-context' relational view, first introduced in 2009, extended the analytical spectrum of language learning to both formal or informal environments, and micro and macro contexts. Such a situated approach to L2 motivation

allowed for taking into account learners' 'context-bound histories, social relationships and lived experience as well as individuality' (Ushioda, 2020, p. 203). In this perspective, learners are considered as entities integrated in a very specific cultural and historical context, which deserves researchers' full acknowledgment.

The L2MSS perspective welcomes more holistic analyses of motivation, in other words, a broader view on FLL motivation as general motivation 'to learn and develop' (Harvey, 2017, p. 70). To this day, the model has provided seeds to a burgeoning literature on ways mental imagery and the role of positive vision help sustain energy in long-term L2 motivation (Csizér, 2019). According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), traditionally, motivation in language learning was mainly about analysing degrees of compatibility between the initial learning conditions and learners' derivative achievements and outcomes. Years of research on FLL motivation, and new far-reaching theories, such as the L2MSS, have progressively detached scholars from limiting their reasoning on FLL motivation to a hardwired cause/effect rationale, and brought them instead to 'view motivation as an integral part of this evolving organic and adaptive system of cognitive, affective and contextual processes shaping SLA' (p. 259). FLL motivation therefore represents one feature that forms part of, and helps shape a broader, more complex and dynamic paradigm in constant flux.

Today's global research tends to converge toward a process-oriented paradigm merging with a 'socio-dynamic phase' (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011, p. 40) with now two central thematic focuses: (1) 'the holistic and dynamic nature of motivation' and (2) the 'long-term motivation and sustained motivated behaviour' (Dörnyei, 2019, p. 50). This includes a clear focus on the temporal dimension of FLL motivation, taken as a process that develops and evolves over time. Time raises the question of motivational sustainability and potential to

keep language learners emotionally engaged with and invested in what appears as a lifelong lasting endeavour.

As L2MSS clearly indicates through its interactional and continuously evolving patterns, FLL motivation is a complex dynamic system per se (MacIntyre *et al.,* 2015, p. 419). As such, I align with Ushioda, who describes FLL motivation as 'an organic process that emerges through the complex system of interrelations' (Ushioda, 2009, p. 13), and considers the learner as an individual 'within the various contexts that constitute their daily lives' (Murray, 2011a, p. 260). In my endeavour to confront the complex situational nature of human motivation, I hope to achieve a good understanding of elements at stake in lifelong motivation, in which CDST takes centre stage.

3.1.3. Definitions

As the review on FLL motivation research history shows, the difficulty of defining FLL motivation resides in its conceptual breadth and its wide array of pedagogical shortcomings, theoretical frameworks and contexts of analysis (Ushioda, 2019). One must again acknowledge the idiosyncrasy and complexity of an individual's learning context in response to particular life events and experiences. Larsen-Freeman (1997) invited researchers from the field of SLA to shift away from 'the lengthening of taxonomies of language-learner characteristics' (pp. 156-157), and to look at SLA as a 'complex nonlinear process' instead. I believe one should do likewise in the context of defining FLL motivation.

Motivation in language learning is a phenomenon that not only varies across individuals, but also within individuals across time. It should therefore be considered from a holistic perspective (Harvey, 2017; Ushioda, 2012). There are as many different motivational behaviours as there are individuals in this world, and in light of the 'socially distributed and

contextually- situated nature of motivation' (Ushioda, 2019, p. 668), the number of learning environments, external and internal influences and conditions in which motives evolve is infinite. In other words, trying to define language learning motivation in general terms would amount to dismissing its core flexible and dynamic nature, to 'throw the baby out with the bath water', as scholars aptly warn (MacIntyre *et al.,* 2009). The dilemma is to find a definition that is both holistic and yet specific enough.

Crookes and Schmidt (1991) foresee the origins and first psychological discussions of the definition of motivation back to James's (1890) concept of instinct and 'survival-oriented needs', or 'drives' (Hull, 1943; Woodworth, 1918). Let us take the analogy of a tree, with its roots, trunk, branches, twigs and foliage. Human motivation is the 'common trunk' to all other types of motivation, taking its roots from human – almost primary needs to generate a drive, satisfy basic and more complex needs, and get an orientation in life. This common trunk is declined into branches (i.e., types of motivation, such as FLL motivation, the one that is at the core of this research), while twigs and foliage add an extra layer of specificity and represent smaller and micro-levels of motives. This image of the tree can be complemented with Menezes's view, which defines FLL motivation as a 'dynamic force involving social, affective and cognitive factors manifested in desire, attitudes, expectations, interests, needs, values, pleasure and efforts' (2011, p. 63). Finally, and as L2MSS instigates, FLL motivation also refers to 'how individuals pursue learning as a way of creating a particular desired version of the self' (Clarke & Henning, 2013, p. 77). This definition integrates FLL motivation into the broader system of identity and self constructs.

By the same token, research on motivation in FLL has often been integrated into other broader paradigms essentially centred on learner' individual difference (ID) (Dörnyei, 2009b; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). Several scholars (Benson, 2007; Holec, 1981; Little,

1991; Menezes, 2011; Muir, 2020; Murray *et al.,* 2011; Sade, 2011) have convincingly found interrelated dynamics between motivation, identity, and autonomy. Due to their non-linear, variable and adaptable nature, all share three traits in common: 'they change over time, they depend on context and they are socially mediated' (Murray, 2011a, p. 248). While the research community has experienced decades of attempts to apply theories of motivation to the particular field of SLA, I posit that FLL motivation is a complex system nested within the greater field of learning motivation, which itself falls under the even broader umbrella of human motivation. In light of these implications, below I justify my choice to use qualitative instruments, as the literature covered supports.

3.1.4. Discussions on research methodologies in FLL motivation

Because FLL motivation is not an observable phenomenon, it relies almost exclusively on self-reports. In reporting Lambert's advice delivered in the late 60s, Spolsky anticipated that 'the best way to learn about someone's integrative motivation was probably to sit quietly and chat with him over a bottle of wine for an evening' (2000, p. 160). Today's focus on individual motivational learning variance and the multiple qualities that this motivation might take calls for a 'wine and conversation' approach, as Ushioda coins it (2020, pp. 198-199), in other words for the use of qualitative instruments. Since then, qualitative methods have gained ground and further elaboration. I, myself, initially designed the contours of this doctoral research with only a few senior students in mind as my subjects of study. Before the start of this thesis, I intuitively knew that the matter about to be discussed within years of work and research was to be analysed qualitatively and not quantitatively.

Gardner and colleagues designed their quantitative methodology from a somewhat vague concept that they had borrowed from social psychology in order to attempt codifying it to

a more pragmatic and situated approach nurtured by empirically-oriented studies. The quantitative paradigm, that drew inspiration from Gardner and Lambert's cutting-edge use of statistical analysis (Al-Hoorie *et al.*, 2020), would generally comprise 'psychometric measurement and the development of abstract computational models of mental processes and learning outcomes and behaviours' (Ushioda, 2013, p. 11). Quantitative studies would originate from the conceptual principles of linear modelling, statistical probability and the cause/effect relations of FLL motivation among groups of students. Motivation in language learning would also typically be treated as a stable independent background variable, premised on a normative/prescriptive view of language learning, determined in advance by intrinsic and extrinsic forces (Ushioda, 2019).

As empirical input grew in the field of SLA motivation, researchers' view of learners evolved from 'theoretical abstractions' whose voice would be unheard, to more situated individuals 'who bring uniquely individual identities, histories, goals and intentions and who inhabit complex dynamic social realties' (Ushioda, 2011, p. 18). As such, I argue that qualitative instruments provide a more nuanced analysis of context-dynamic interactions with local, social, relational and contextual processes. For my own need to consider individual language learning motivation at a granular level, and more specifically as a temporal and long-term and nonlinear process, I clearly align with Ushioda's emphasis on the use of qualitative methodology and its transformative and reflexive power (Ridley & Ushioda, 1997; Ushioda, 1993, 1994, 1996, 2019).

3.1.5. Concluding remarks

As we saw, profound terminological, measurement and conceptual issues have prevailed throughout the history of L2 motivation research. The methodological and theoretical 'hunts' clearly highlight the multifaceted nature of the concepts under study. I have

attempted to underline the historical threads that have led scholars to the gradual and almost unanimous adoption of a complexity perspective, which better helps to situate my own research. Yet, and as Noels (2009) had already observed more than a decade ago, we, FLL motivation researchers, must understand that it is part of our work to continuously 'test the limits of our theories, and stretch beyond their boundaries' (p. 310), and through pertinent empirical research.

The last three decades have been characterized by growingly innovative research content and new motivation paradigms, as exemplified with L2MSS but also other models (i.e., CDST and DMC), essentially paving the way for the focus on its dynamic epistemological basis and long-term value. Understanding lifelong trajectories of motivation could bring sharp relief to this long-term vision of sustained FLL motivational behaviour. Definitions given in section 3.1.3 allude to the complex nature of L2 motivation, as if the latter could be well considered as a 'fractal', in the words of mathematician Mandelbrot (1982), i.e., as a subcategory of human motivation, displaying its 'self-similarity property' (Menezes, 2011, p. 59), and broadly moored in a socio-psychological paradigm.

Delineating motivational periods and patterns throughout life in a timely manner seems to be one of the first step to consider. In addition, my wish to come up with a detailed approach to FLL motivation finds some answers and interesting insights in the concept of L2MSS. However, the ecological perspective that this study embraces requires additional frameworks that can better inform broader organic processes of personal and social growth and development. As such, the next step of this literature review is to dig into the wider implications of CDST in relation to motivation, and more precisely, its significance for my research focus.

3.2. Exploring the implications of CDST on long-term FLL motivation

3.2.1. Definitions of CDST: Conceptual roots

It is almost a pleonasm to claim that fluctuation and change are at the heart of FLL motivation, since life itself, with its unpredictable and chaotic properties, *is* at the core of FLL motivation. Probably one of FLL motivation researchers' most challenging, yet key tasks is to try capture at best the complexity of the individual learner's context and lifelong experience, in other words, his *life story* (Consoli, 2021a)*.* As such, approaching motivation as a complex-dynamic construct in relation to other phenomena seems intuitively essential. I align with Papi & Hiver (2020), and consider complex dynamic systems as the object of interest and fundamental unit of analysis in second language learning research. Understanding the functions and place of CDST in this PhD is essential, and should be first highlighted thanks to a clear definition of the following key terms: *complexity*, *dynamism* and *system*.

By *complexity*, I understand its Latin roots, *cum* (i.e., with), and *plexus* (i.e., networks/interwoven/intricate), in other words, 'that which is woven together' (Sampson & Pinner, 2021, p. 285). What else could best represent the idea of entanglement but a story? According to Morin, 'complexity is in fact the fabric of events, actions, interactions, retroactions, determinations, and change that constitute our phenomenal world' (2008, p. 5). This research aims to examine the organic processes of change and development of FLL complex motivational systems at various timescales and levels of granularity through self-accounts. Hiver & Larsen-Freeman (2020) mention some of the questions the research agenda should hold today, such as 'what is the trajectory of the complex system at different timescales?' (p. 288). The idea of *trajectory* necessarily entails a clear definition of *dynamism.*

By *dynamism*, this study refers to the various forms and degrees of change and stability that interact within the motivational system of the senior learners under study. These could also be fluctuations within a relatively stable state or homeostasis. Just like for complexity, the degree of *dynamism* is of course relative to the timescale in which one puts the study under scrutiny. What may appear as dynamic on the timescale of a lifetime (i.e., taking action to learn several languages, travelling abroad and interacting with L2 native or non-native speakers) may not look so evident within the smaller timescale of say, a month or even a year, in which participants may not have initiated any relevant language-related activities.

By *system*, I understand an open, self-organizing and self-structuring assemblage of interacting patterns that emerge, interact and evolve over time. I support the definition of a motivation system as an 'emergent, self-organizing state that is soft assembled from a learner's cognition, emotions, behaviours, social context, interactions with peers, teachers, culture, other interlocutors and more' (MacIntyre *et al.*, 2021, p. 21). In this research, I take the highly motivated senior FL user as the main system evolving across different periods of time, and in relation to interacting events around and in response to which the system develops and organises itself. More specifically, I explore their motivational experience with FLL longitudinally, i.e., through a complex and dynamic time frame. Although it is an open 'system', therefore exposed to external and internal fluctuations, the construct must be delineated by time (i.e., lifetime), key periods (i.e., critical episodes, but also more "conventional" time windows, such as childhood or adulthood), and by other interacting agents, both at the individual and collective levels (i.e., other third age language learners and different foreign language speaking groups they take part in).

By the look of CDST's jargonistic and technical weight, Table 3.2 below provides more information on terms used by CDST-oriented researchers. As such, and for future reference in this study, I explain further the following key words: initial conditions, attractors, repellers, phase shifts, fractals, co-adaptation and self-organization.

Table 3.2. Glossary of CDST terms

INITIAL CONDITIONS	- Starting/triggering point of a phenomenon under study; - 'any stretch of time that interests an investigator, so that one person's initial conditions may be another's midstream or final conditions' (Lorenz, 2001, p. 9); → CDST research looks at the impact of initial conditions on the final state of the system (i.e., lifelong motivation);
	Ex in this research: I look at the *initial conditions* of senior L2 learners' motivation on two levels: (1) initial conditions of lifelong L2 practice and (2) initial conditions of the most intense L2 projects (i.e., DMCs).
ATTRACTORS	- 'States, or particular modes of behaviors, that the system "prefers"' (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008a, p. 49); - 'a critical value, pattern, solution or outcome towards which a system settles down or approaches over time' (Newman, 2009); - 'An area or *basin* of either temporary or longer-term stability to which a dynamic system settles as a result of the components' interactions (Menezes, 2011, p. 59);
	Ex: I explore the nature, speed and depth of senior L2 learners' *attractor states* over life.
REPELLERS	- As opposed to **attractors**, these are the states or particular modes of behaviours the networks of the system tend to move away from.
	Ex: I look at potential *repellers* (i.e., elements in participants' life) that may have caused demotivation or at least a decline in their practice/wish to learn.
PHASE SHIFTS	- Tipping points indicating a change in the system under study.
	Ex: I assess the *phase shifts* (i.e., life turning points) that may have led to new attractor states or caused a change in participants' L2 motivational system across life.
FRACTALS	Properties that those complex systems exhibit in different scales or stages, with similar shapes, in whichever scale we view them (not necessarily similar sizes).
	Ex: A DMC and a high peak of motivation are *fractals* of FLL lifelong motivation.
CO-ADAPTATION	- 'A process of mutual causality through which two or more interconnected systems influence each other over time. Change in one system fosters change in other, connected systems, which also feeds back to co-influence the focal system' (Sampson & Pinner, 2021, p. 284).
	Ex: I examine how self-constructs (from the L2MSS) *co-adapt*, i.e., influence one another throughout life.
SELF-ORGANIZATION	- 'The process of interactions through which the components of a system gradually develop towards an attractor state' (Aoyama & Yamamoto, 2021, p. 155).
	Ex: This PhD focuses on the self-organization of several motivational components, i.e., DMCs, high peaks of motivation, and their interaction with L2 motivational selves encapsulated in a complex and dynamic self-organizing motivational system. The study of senior L2 learners' motivational system of *self-organization* is key to understanding the way their language learning ecology emerges and strengthens up over the long run.

Overall, I follow the definition of CDST as 'a poststructural ecological theory' (Hiver & Larsen-Freeman, 2020, p. 286) that studies ever-evolving and non-linear systems, while looking at 'dynamicity, rather than stability; emergence, rather than linearity; and interaction rather than isolation' (Sade, 2011, p. 43). In addition to the components described in Table 3.2, the main qualities of a complex system are its 'self-organization, nonlinearity, openness, stability and change' (Hiver & Larsen-Freeman, 2020, p. 296).

3.2.2. Conceptual underpinnings: Breadth and limitations

Theorizing motivation in language learning from the conceptual perspective of CDST existed long before it became today's zeitgeist in SLA motivation research. While this chapter does not pretend to introduce a documented history of the evolution of the theory of complexity, one must acknowledge that its concepts have been introduced and nurtured in a transdisciplinary fashion (Hiver & Papi, 2019; Larsen-Freeman, 2012), initially emerging from a number of scientific fields, including mathematics, physics and meteorology (Cilliers, 1998; Holland, 1995, 1998; Lewin, 1992; Lorenz, 2001; Williams, 1997), then applied in social sciences (Byrne & Callaghan, 2013). The field of applied linguistics then borrowed the concept of complexity from a wide range of scientific fields at the beginning of the 20th Century (Larsen-Freeman, 1997, 2012, 2013), including mathematics, geometry, meteorology and biology (Menezes, 2011).

 In the early 1990s, Gardner and Tremblay (1994) suggested the relevance of a complex approach in their work, as they held 'the view that motivation is best explained as a complex and dynamic process with room for several intervening variables' (p. 366). Gardner's allusion to relational dynamic systems with SLA, without naming it a theory yet already, has been underlined in a recently published festschrift in tribute to Gardner's

authoritative work (Hiver & Larsen-Freeman, 2020). Since its inception in the field of applied linguistics thanks to Larsen Freeman's (1997) seminal work, there has been an increasingly growing literature on complexity-inspired approaches in the field of SLA research (De Bot *et al.,* 2007; Dörnyei *et al.*, 2015; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008a, 2008b; Ortega & Han, 2017), and even more recently in the L2 motivation research agenda (Al-Hoorie & Hiver, 2022; Hiver & Papi, 2019), as Table 3.3 shows. A wide range of research topics embracing a complexity stance includes multilingualism, long-term motivation, small group dynamics, the impact of context on learners, demotivation and teacher-learner relationship, among others, as displayed in Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3. Examples of complexity-inspired research on motivation in L2

MULTILINGUALISM	LONG-TERM MOTIVATION	SMALL GROUP DYNAMICS	IMPACT OF CONTEXT ON LEARNERS	DEMOTIVATION	TEACHER-LEARNER RELATIONSHIP
Henry, 2017; Ushioda, 2017	Henry *et al.*, 2015.	Dörnyei & Malderez, 1997; Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003; Ehrman & Dörnyei, 1998; Fukada *et al.*, 2019; Poupore, 2018; Sampson, 2015.	Murphey *et al.*, 2014 ; Sasaki *et al.*, 2017; Yim *et al.*, 2019.	Kikuchi, 2017; Thorner & Kikuchi, 2019.	Hiver, 2017; Kubanyiova, 2019; Lamb, 2017; Sampson & Pinner, 2021.

Because of its appealing holistic coverage, CDST has been used as a conceptual umbrella under which an increasing number of academic papers from SLA and connected fields fall today (Hiver & Al-Hoorie, 2016). CDST is thus regarded as a *meta-theory* (Hiver & Al-Hoorie, 2020; Hiver & Papi, 2019; Larsen-Freeman, 2013, 2015) that informs, complements and feeds into other theories (Hiver & Al-Hoorie, 2016; Morin, 1992). For instance, the Chaos Theory, the Dynamic Systems Theory, and the Complexity Theory and Emergentism all fall under CDST (Dörnyei, 2014). The recent mainstream currency of CDST in SLA literature could have us run the risk to gratuitously, yet inappropriately mention this framework, without really looking at its implications in this thesis. As Larsen-Freeman (1997) warns her peers, 'there is a danger when a new theory comes into being

that it can be made into a theory of almost anything' (p. 152). Although more than two decades have passed since Larsen-Freeman threw her word of caution, it still fully resonates in today's research community.

As opposed to the previously prevailing situated perspectives that tried to address the generalizability and universality of language learner psychology, the locus in CDST is on the 'individual and [the] continuously changing nature' of learners' behaviours (Aoyama & Yamamoto, 2021, p. 153). The notions of *growth* and *unpredictability* thus prevail (Boo *et al.*, 2015), and undermine the linear cause-effect relationships initially put forward by Gardner's followers. Some nuances must be made however in terms of determining the extent to which a system is *unusual* and unique; in this sense, I align with MacIntyre and colleagues (2021), who advance that CDST should examine *both* the unexpected and uniqueness of a system *and* its commonalities with other similar systems.

The idea of *connected* and *similar* systems draws interesting parallels with other fields where complexity prevails. An accessible way to start the discussion is by looking at metaphorical analogies. In the field of meteorology, for instance, in light of the theory of chaos, Lorenz (2001) advanced the butterfly effect metaphor to represent the concept of complex systems' sensitive dependence. According to Menezes (2011), this dependence refers to the idea that 'small inputs can trigger enormous consequences' (p. 57). In a similar vein, Muir (2020) takes the metaphor of a 'grain of sand being dropped onto a pile below [which] leads to a dramatic collapse and significant change in the pile's overall topography' (p. 196). By the same token, Holland (1998) describes chaotic systems in which 'small changes in local conditions can cause major changes in global, long-term behavior' (p. 43). This partly justifies why the present research specifically focuses on a local pool of three third age learners, to highlight that even minor changes in one's life (i.e., 'phase

shifts', see the glossary above in Table 3.2) can trigger a great impact on enduring motivation.

In my attempt to provide critical transparency, I should also hint on the conceptual limitations of a complex theoretical framework. The component-dynamic approach brings us to consider long-term motivation as only one component of the relational systems that form part of the complex and wider system of FLL or the other complex systems of learning in late adulthood. Furthermore, looking at lifelong motivation involves breaking down the history into timescales, that represent various 'levels of reality' (Cilliers & Nicolescu, 2012, p. 716). CDST thus does pose unique challenges, especially in light of its over extensive nature (Hiver and Larsen-Freeman, 2020). One must note though that a developmental intake would contend that some components are 'playing a larger role at certain times but not at others' (Hiver & Larsen-Freeman, 2020, p. 293). Collecting a lifetime history with foreign languages necessarily makes us, researchers, responsible for *selecting* which historical milestones and aspects of life will illuminate our investigation. As such, one must make choices that may inevitably offer but only a peripheral and heuristic view of the system under study.

In light of the wide scope of CDST above suggested, it seems essential to zoom into the adequate level of granularity for my study in particular, especially because, as Hiver and Al-Hoorie (2016) remind, 'the goal in CDST research will rarely be to represent the entire complex system in question' (p. 745). The devil is in the details, and surely detail has always been valued by CDST advocates (Larsen-Freeman, 1997). That is the reason why this research should limit its analysis to four related measures of complexity: (1) at the individual level, with the selection of three case studies, (2) at the small-scale group level, with the assessment of interactions and mutual motivational contagion between

participants and close L2 speaking friends; and in terms of timescales, (3) at the level of a lifetime L2 use and practice, and (4) at the level of specific moments of high peak of motivation (HPM).

This selection, which provides somewhat arbitrary boundaries, clearly has limited potential and cannot explore the entire hierarchy of nested levels and timescales at stake in the lifelong history of participants' motivational system. Moreover, since *nonfinality*[5] is a landmark for all complex systems (Larsen-Freeman, 2015), including FLL motivation, 'what might seem to be an end point in L2 motivation or development is likely just one of many stable points in an ongoing and dialogic work in process' (Hiver & Papi, 2019, p. 121). Below I provide more details on the situated approach to FLL motivation I take in order to narrow down the multiple angles of study suggested by CDST.

3.2.3. A situated approach to motivation in language learning

3.2.3.1. Context

Context, 'the here-and-now in which a system is active' (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008a, p. 34), plays a major role in CDST, and in my narrative investigation on participants' historical, psychological, material and physical lifelong developments. Context is at the core of third age learners' motivational system, and should not be seen 'merely as a background on which the action is enacted' (Sade, 2011, p. 43). The analysis of the data I collect from the narratives should therefore equally focus on the context at a given time that impacted informants' individual actions and decisions. The situation and environment of each individual is as pivotal as his/her actions and directions, since there is no

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[5] *Nonfinality* is one attribute of a complex system which has no end point 'as long as [it] remains open, interacting with its environment, [and which] will continue to evolve [and] has no final state' (Larsen-Freeman, 2015, p. 16).

hierarchical, onion-skin relationship in CDST, but rather a mutually constitutive and non-linear one (Csizér *et al.*, 2010; Hiver & Papi, 2019; Rauthmann *et al.*, 2015).

Ushioda's (2009) person-in-context relational view offers a sharpened look at contextual factors, and instigates learners as 'people who are necessarily located in particular cultural and historical contexts' (p. 216). In line with other works (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001), who encourage learner-centredness in SLA research, and almost ten years later, Dörnyei (2017) also invites L2 motivation scholars to set a more integrative research framework that should 'explain the dynamic development of real people in actual contexts' (p. 87). Benson (2019) further proposes to go beyond the learner-centredness approach, and to also 'focus on individuals in social context [and view] learners as people, and not as computers or processing devices' (p. 67). More recently, Ushioda (2021, p. 270) provides a definition of contexts as:

> *dynamically evolving **ecologies** that people are an integral part of, act upon and contribute to shaping and changing with varying degrees of agency, and this agency is itself socially constituted – i.e., supported, enabled or constrained through one's relationality with other people.* [emphasis added]

As Ushioda suggests, the study of context would be incomplete without taking into consideration the interaction of systemic networks and interconnected systems within the context (Hiver & Al-Hoorie, 2016; Hiver & Papi, 2019). This is true at both individual and group levels. Within the relational characteristic of contexts, a situated approach to FLL ecologies and motivational systems thus further entails two levels of variation: (1) variation at local and individual levels, and (2) variation at the group level, referred by Holliday (1999) as 'small cultures'.

3.2.3.2. Individual and collective levels

In their book on research methods, Hiver & Al-Hoorie (2020) enhance the compatibility of individual-based research with CDST, hence my choice to focus on individual stories as a primary interest. Research calls for *tangible* dynamic systems, in other words, systems shaped by 'real individuals doing particular things in particular contexts at particular times' (Hiver & Larsen-Freeman, 2020, p. 290). One reason why I find the use of narratives enticing is their potential to highlight the historical dynamics of events, and thus several 'layers' of granularity within the same individual, especially in terms of motivational self-constructs in the context of this research. This echoes Ushioda's call to study individuals (Ushioda, 2020), and to 'maintain a concrete holistic focus on language learners and teachers as *people* situated in specific social realities, as opposed to an abstract theoretical focus on self-organizing systems, processes, states or variables' (Ushioda, 2021, p. 271).

At the individual level, the third age learner's motivational patterns also evolve throughout time, via the encounters with other systems. These could be other individuals, inspiring figures, teachers, family or friends but also environments, such as educational institutions (language schools, high school, university) or experiences abroad. The multitude of systems' influences on the primary system's agent under study (i.e., the individual third age FLL learner) indicates that networks should be considered at every step of the research in order to view individual development in its global aspect, including in its interactions with others individuals.

As a result, the second level of context variation focuses on the group level. A majority of studies in FLL motivation research deals with group dynamics (see Table 3.3). 'Small cultures', understood as 'small social groupings or activities wherever there is cohesive

behaviour' (Holliday, 1999, p. 237), appear as a complementary interest to my study to understand the trajectory of senior language learners towards autonomy. The group level is thus understood here as the influence of context and other people on my participants. As Sealey and Carter (2004) point out, one must bear in mind the 'specificity of time, place and social location' (p. 195) of participants and their overall social structure. Other studies have dug into the notion of language learners' 'multimembership' to several practice communities and discursive attractors (Sade, 2011), forming a sum of identity fractals through collaborative learning. What most papers underline is that 'learning takes place much more outside the classroom walls than inside them' (Sade, 2011, p. 54), and this is even more relevant for learning in late adulthood.

The concept of small cultures forms a striking parallel with group DMCs, since they both emerge and are maintained (i.e., are kept within a stable attractor state) through specific factors (Muir, 2021). Of course, as Muir points out when considering a similar group motivational dynamism in a classroom, 'group-level motivation is influenced on a moment-by-moment basis not only by all other systems with which it interacts […], but also by the continually evolving motivational subsystems of each individual learner' (Muir, 2021, p. 199). In other words, studying the interaction of individual and collective systems of FLL altogether is key in understanding long-term L2 motivation (Cox, 2019). Involving different scales has its counterpart, however, and raises some important methodological issues to consider.

3.2.4. Methodological considerations

Several methodological challenges emerge both with studies that focus on FLL motivation, and even more so with those that take a CDST perspective. As Dörnyei & Ushioda (2011) explain, 'the unobservable, multifaceted and dynamically changing nature of motivation

makes its study admittedly complicated' (p. 198). One must bear in mind that taking the CDST approach does raise serious methodological questions and difficulties (MacIntyre *et al.,* 2015, 2017), since 'most of the data we rely on stems from data collections points that fall outside the actual temporal, physical and social contexts interacting with participants' motivation' (Ushioda, 2019, p. 671). This, so shall we admit, is the case of narrative and retrospective studies.

Much remains to be done in terms of putting CDST framework into practice (Aoyama & Yamamoto, 2021; MacIntyre *et al.*, 2021), especially when looking at the multidimensional and highly unpredictable nature of lifelong language learning motivation, and at senior learner's evolving motivational subsystems. Clearly, the methodological repertoire related to complexity-informed L2 motivation research inquiry is still at its infancy (Hiver & Al-Hoorie, 2016, 2020; Hiver & Papi, 2019; MacIntyre *et al.,* 2015, 2017). Scholarly enthusiasm for CDST originally stemmed from the theory's new 'ontological and epistemological considerations' (Hiver & Al-Hoorie, 2016, p. 743) regarding the *new* way researchers would engage with the phenomena around them. Such primary interest slightly ironed out concerns for methodological implications (MacIntyre *et al.*, 2017), especially when considering more specific areas within applied linguistics, such as L2 motivation research (Hiver & Papi, 2019).

However, the last decade witnesses an increasing number of books targeted at illuminating methodological applications of CDST to SLA research and its related fields. Since Larsen-Freeman and Cameron's (2008a) foundational work on CDST in SLA, several authors have highlighted the 'pressing need' (MacIntyre *et al.*, 2017, p. 118) to stake out and develop a more sophisticated and accessible set of dynamic methods, and indeed have brought a solid springboard for future contributions (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2015; Ortega & Han,

2017. Verspoor *et al.*, 2011). Hiver & Al-Hoorie's (2020) most recent state-of-the-art review on available methods compatible with complexity theory in applied linguistics relates to the field at large, including examples of studies from outside applied linguistics. However, as far as my reading has covered, there is no broader review on research methods and precise guidelines for CDST in L2 Motivation research, quite understandably though, since the field has been relatively unexplored to date in terms of its methodological scope.

Some could argue that newcomers to the field face scholars' somewhat rather disconcerting and overwhelming recommendation to diversify methods and to innovate, since 'there are no such things as "methods of complexity"' (Hiver & Al-Hoorie, 2016, p. 760), as long as the methodology under use ensures congruency with a complexity framework. For instance, triangulation, through the use of mixed-methods (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008b; MacIntyre *et al.*, 2017) is highly encouraged. Some others, on the contrary, could argue that complexivists present the myriad of possibilities for methodological choices and niches. Indeed, previous publications have already provided a wide panel of methods already tested in previous studies (MacIntyre *et al.*, 2017), and complemented by potential research questions each method could adequately help answer (Hiver & Al-Hoorie, 2019). The most recent literature on CDST in SLA thus opens the door to a vast territory of opportunities yet to explore, and which I further develop in section 3.3. Nevertheless, I also think CDST-grounded research, such as mine, requires a critical eye on the methodological approach in light of previous work. For this reason, below I justify my focus on a qualitative, small lens approach, and provide a brief review of relevant and recent studies, from which my methodological scheme draws its inspiration.

Concerns have been voiced regarding methodology that embraces positivist positions, as quantitative-oriented investigations do. For instance, Atkinson (2002) critically describes

quantitative methodologies as tools that 'neutralize by design what is variable and individual in human behaviour or otherwise [and] produce epiphenomenally uniform accounts' (p. 536). Quantitative studies, because they are 'almost entirely based on group averages', fail to address 'idiosyncratic details that are at the heart of understanding development in dynamic systems' (Dörnyei, 2014, p. 83). On the other hand of the spectrum, qualitative studies offer 'a holistic perspective on phenomena and processes [that] can potentially reveal more of the complexity of the system than an approach which reduces or fragments variables and processes' (MacIntyre *et al.*, 2021, p. 23). My focus on context, and on the openness and dynamism of the learner's motivational systems along an extended timeline thus calls for the use of qualitative data. Likewise, my decision to collect both in an ongoing fashion and retrospectively illuminates the importance to keep the complex and dynamic perspective in sight.

Furthermore, authors encourage researchers from the field to opt for an integrative design that should combine at least two aspects of one same level of analysis (Hiver & Al-Hoorie, 2020). Following their recommendations, I hope that drawing a case study from three different case studies/participants, and looking at different motivational patterns within one participant across different time periods and peaks, will highlight my efforts to delve into the phenomenon of FLL motivation among the elderly in an integrative manner. Through the use of diverse analytical tools, further explained in Chapter 4, I purport to follow scholars' recommendation (Larsen Freeman, 2012, 2013) to incorporate insights from both process- (i.e., variation) and outcome- (i.e., states) oriented research. Most importantly, I believe that the narrative lens has the potential to shed light on both recurring patterns and outcomes on the one hand, and on the mechanisms that have led to these outcomes in my informants' motivational history with FLL, on the other hand.

3.2.5. Concluding remarks

The emerging complexity and dynamic perspective best captures the full complexity of motivational contexts in FLL. In line with a vast majority of scholars from the field (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Ellis, 2007; Hiver & Al Hoorie, 2016; MacIntyre *et al.*, 2015; Papi & Khajavi, 2021), Muir argues that 'not only has a recognition of complex dynamic systems theory (CDST) become indispensable for furthering our understanding of L2 motivation, it is inescapable' (Muir, 2002, p. 5). CDST studies not only represent a theoretical fulcrum of all theories above mentioned but also 'the latest theoretical innovation in the field of SLA' (Boo *et al.,* 2015, p. 153). Muir even christens today's research phase the 'complexity turn' (Muir, 2020, p. 4), which justifies why this project's theoretical apparatus must incorporate and use its guidelines.

Furthermore, I follow Ushioda's (2016) recommendation to deploy a small lens approach, and select the appropriate 'level of detail', as Holland puts it (1998, p. 45), while bearing in mind the probability that data may run the risk to be 'messy, dense and […] difficult to summarize without losing the nature of the dynamics' (MacIntyre, 2021, p. 30). This is particularly true for idiodynamic or longitudinal methods, but also for data collected from narratives in the context of my research (see Chapter 4). As such, I next look at the literature that covers the DMC theory, and explain how the latter helps deploy a small lens approach by adequately highlighting specific motivational patterns related to the lifelong evolution of senior L2 learners' practices.

3.3. Discussing the application of DMCs in the exploration of senior language learners' motivation

This review would be incomplete without taking into account contemporary concepts of

inner-fulfilment and enduring motivation settled in serendipitous moments, which have flourished recently notably with the concept of DMC as a 'complex motivational superstructure' (Henry, 2019, p. 146), drawing from Dörnyei's theory of vision in L2 learning (Dörnyei, 2018; Dörnyei & Chan, 2013; Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014) and Csíkszentmihályi's (2008) theory of *flow*. A DMC is commonly defined as 'a prolonged process of engagement in a series of tasks which are rewarding primarily because they transport the individual towards a highly valued end' (Dörney *et al.*, 2015, p. 98). More specifically, a DMC represents a 'heightened level of motivational state' (Dörnyei, 2019, p. 59), characterized by its long-term nature and revolving around three main concepts: (1) concordant goals and vision, (2) complex dynamic systems and (3) long-term motivation.

Authors (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016; Henry, 2019; Muir, 2020, 2021) have advanced the necessity to look at DMCs not only as a tool for optimal learning conditions, but also as a self-sustaining 'effortless outflow of energy [that] can generate deep-seated feelings of personal fulfilment' (Henry, 2019, p. 140). However, and as will be discussed in this section, the concept of DMC is at its prime, and needs further empirical exploration and methodological elaboration. Authors have mainly only considered DMCs in the context of classrooms, at a group level and using quantitative instruments (Muir, 2020, 2021). Much remains to be explored in terms of the methodological applications beyond formal learning contexts, and through longitudinal studies.

3.3.1. Specificity of lifelong experience with language learning

Looking at L2 learning as a lifelong project leads us to consider the theory of DMC as one specificity to long-lasting L2 motivation. The theory has been largely empirically unexplored to this day outside classroom contexts and through a lifespan perspective. Scholars (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2014, 2016; Henry, 2019; Muir, 2020) have pushed the field down

new channels and into relatively uncharted territory with the concept of DMCs, which draws on the experience of effortless, automatized and self-motivating language learning through long-term and self-sustaining learning projects. The idea stems from scholars' attempt to understand enduring motivation (Dörnyei, 2019), and originated from Dörnyei's theory of L2 vision and L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2018; Dörnyei & Chan, 2013, Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021). I consider the theory of DMCs as a complementary framework to CDST and L2MSS, and as a relevant angle that adequately structures the narratives of lifelong practice into motivational phases.

Given that this research considers L2 learning as a lifelong project, I align with Dörnyei's (2019) view that 'DMCs can be viewed as representing the *optimal form of engagement* with an extended project, and […] almost any form of long-term, sustained motivation is in fact a partial realization of a DMC' (p. 60). Furthermore, in the first international survey study investigating the broader relevance and recognisability of DMCs Muir (2020) initiated, findings indicated that 'individuals over the age of 30 [were] more likely to experience DMCs than those who [were] younger' (p. 92). While it is important to acknowledge that 'these surges are admittedly not that frequent' in one's life (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2021, p. 83), they are nonetheless crucial to analyse in order to highlight the role of individual persistence in long-term L2 motivation. I thus aim to consider the validity of this theory's application to my research in light of my focus on lifelong and sustained L2 motivation, and in the context of learners over the age of 65.

Above all, the analysis of third age learners' narratives aims to explore the evolving nature of those DMCs throughout life. The DMC represents a salient dimension of an individual's identity. It is a useful pointer to exploring third age individuals' historical motivation, i.e., the lifelong trajectory of intense and self-absorbing goal-focused behaviours that are

anchored in time and context, and reciprocated over the long run in an increasingly effortless manner. Studying DMCs as an ecological, lifelong and self-generating system brings sharp relief to the importance of looking at L2 motivation as a complex and dynamic system, where patterns (DMCs and motives) interplay along a historical thread, drawing the contours of a unique narrative on lifelong inner feelings of well-being.

The theory has its caveats however, more particularly in light of its application outside any 'formal' and institutional context, and even more so in the context of third age FL learning. In later life, the vision of future selves and the achievement of goals probably have a different 'flavour' than in earlier adulthood, whether or not this period is focused on time limitations or stuck to only or exclusively 'past' visions. Dörnyei and colleagues' (2014) pioneering paper on the subject states that a DMC involves 'a powerful regulatory process whose course and end-state are, to a large extent, predictable and thus researchable' (Dörnyei, 2019, p. 59). How researchable are L2 DMCs in one's lifelong FL use and learning? Below I advance a few reflections on the theoretical and practical validity and limitations for my research based on the burgeoning literature on DMC.

3.3.2. Discussing the framework and organization of a DMC

My discussion takes roots in scholars' (Muir, 2020; Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016) recent indication of the 'five most prominent facets of DMCs', namely (1) their goal/vision orientedness, highlighting the directional power of DMCs, with concrete end goals; (2) their launch, which refers to *the initial conditions* / starting point that triggers goal-oriented actions; (3) their clear prominent facilitative structure, involving the 'self-propelling' nature of the current; (4) their positive emotional quality, and (5) their end, which refers to their finite nature and to the 'varying rates' of motivational longevity (Muir, 2020, pp. 23-24). All five facets, displayed in Figure 3.3, involve a high degree of temporal awareness, which fits my

research focus on *lifelong* motivational currents.

Figure 3.3. Model of a language learning DMC
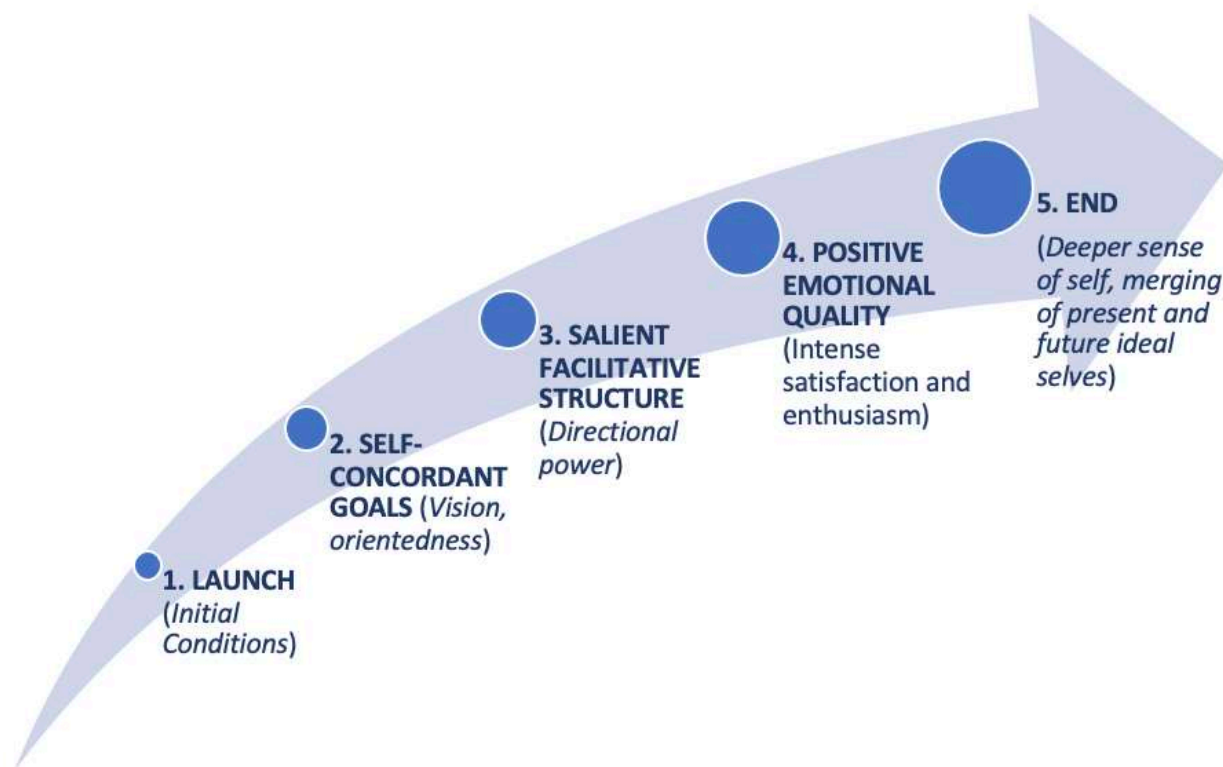
While all these facets have been explored in light of specific contexts, i.e., in language learning classrooms and among younger students, much remains to be explored in the context of senior retired learners. According to Muir (2020), L2 DMCs can indeed 'be experienced either *concurrently to* or *independent of* enrolment in formal language tuition' (p. 43). To what extent are the L2 DMCs experienced outside classrooms and formal teaching as intensely and as tangibly defined as the ones experienced in formal language institutions? As I explore third age learners' ongoing motivation, I will look at how applicable and valid Muir's five key attributes are.

With regards to facets 1 and 4, Muir (2020) understands the DMC as 'a clear goal, performance over and above what an individual would usually expect of themselves, and

accompanying positive emotionality' (p. 22). I contend that this assertion should be nuanced and that the degree of positive loading empirically studied so far in a DMC (Ibrahim, 2016a, 2016b) does vary across ages in the context of lifelong DMCs, and in light of changing circumstances. The present research needs to assess whether senior participants in this study have always turned and consistently still turn their language activities into 'all-consuming preoccupations' (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016, p. 2). In the meantime, I opt to change the 'positive emotionality' characteristic into more neutral 'intense emotionality'. Furthermore, intensity probably does not solely justify their consistent and high engagement with the language.

Intensity is indeed questioned over time, together with FL users' 'focus' on the L2 activity itself. In the educational context, focus that originates in a DMC is often triggered by students, teachers and more generally through the self-renewing energy flow of a group. It is however insufficient to consider this as the sole motivational resource, especially when looking at one's long-haul life history with language learning. The degree of motivational intensity in seniors' L2 learning complex system has never been assessed more globally so far, i.e., in the wider context of lifelong learning.

Moreover, what could be viewed for senior L2 users as a positive experience of a language learning project in their present narratives may not have been perceived so positively at the moment they completed the project, however intense and effective previous projects were on the development of their language skills. As a typical example, children are often requested by adults, whether parents or teachers, to spend a large amount of time learning for a specific language exam. This phenomenon of parental pressure is also known as *parentocracy* (Pfenninger & Singleton, 2017). At the moment the students delve into this type of highly intense project that is imposed upon them, they may not be excited about it

nor even fully grasping the importance of it outside their academic bubble. Yet years later and with hindsight, they realize how important and useful that period was to reach tangible results (for example, enhance career prospects or get into graduate school). Note that with this in mind, the higher number of years separates a DMC project from its retrospective account, the more distorted and therefore unreliable an analysis on its resulting emotions and feelings can be (Muir, 2020).

Furthermore, goal pathways are not always crystal clear at the moment they are drawn. Note that a DMC can only take shape when the goal and its accompanying vision co-exist 'chronically' (Henry, 2019, p. 146). A retrospective look at DMCs through the use of present narratives therefore has its limitations. Defining past DMCs' contours requires adequate recalling and an unblurred vision on 'past-selves'' future visions. Muir also raises the methodological issue of retrospective self-reports that may not recall past DMC goals' delineations as clearly as present ones, thus hampering an appropriate analysis. One must anticipate on those inevitable challenges in studying past DMCs. As we can see so far, my intervention on the application of DMCs' theoretical constructs should be more nuanced when addressing the case of senior individuals' L2 DMCs.

While most DMC advocates pinpoint the delimited nature of the experience in terms of timescale, uncertainties remain in terms of its actual length and longevity. Dörnyei and his colleagues introduce the temporal delineations of a DMC by describing the experience as a 'relatively short-term, highly intense burst of motivational energy focused towards a clearly defined goal' (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016, pp. 2-3). However, this statement should be considered relatively and with caution again when looking at an entire life potentially replete with one to several DMCs. Rather, a more nuanced definition of a 'historical' DMC in senior L2 users should capture learners' evolving representations of their achievement

in light of what they believe they felt then and now feel about the same project, years after its completion.

The difference between present DMCs and historical/past DMCs is the same as retrospection on recent events and retrospection on events from a faraway past. Present accounts of my participants may unconsciously lessen or magnify the degree of past projects' intensity and clarity. As such, I align with the more specific idea of *self-concordant* goals, developed by Sheldon and colleagues (Sheldon & Elliott, 1998, 1999; Sheldon & Kasser, 1998), closely linked to personal vision and behavioural consistency, and which 'belong to the self in a deeper sense' (Sheldon & Elliott, 1999, p. 494). Because the driving force of a DMC lies in its long-term impact, its completion does not signal its end but is 'a step towards a goal that is much larger, and has significant personal importance' (Henry, 2019, p. 145). To the idea of quintessential 'deeper sense' of the self, or 'visionary single-mindedness' (Dörnyei, 2019, p. 151), Dörnyei *et al.* (2016, p. 113) add an extra analytical marker specific to a DMC, which is the meeting point of DMC-related future and present ideal selves:

> *On the basis of these considerations, it may be reasonable to assume that in a DMC, the ideal self becomes a more or less permanent part of the learner's conception of the self. Thus, the vision of the future self is so pervasive that it becomes part of who the learner is; part of 'the real me'.*

The merging of future and present ideal selves (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016) is particularly interesting to consider in the exploration of senior learners' FLL DMCs, because of the key role of time in later life. 'Mind time', i.e., time that the brain forms through mental imagery, reduces as one grows older, which partially explains why days seem shorter as one gets

older (Bejan, 2019). Yet, what happens to be a physical phenomenon in ageing could well explain the impact on the degree of intensity in third age L2 users' focus and learning experience. As far as my literature review covers, the assessment of DMCs' transformations and changing nature throughout life has been untapped. Similarly, the variations of lifelong mental imagery related to motivation (i.e., present and future ideal selves) have never been assessed from the standpoint of senior L2 users.

Self-concordant goals also refer to learners 'acting in a manner consistent with the actualization of personal potential' (Muir, 2020, p. 35), which, upon achievement, creates feelings of deep inner joy. The meshing that occurs between one's learning activity, one's core personal values and self-conceptions results in creating 'one's self [that] is affirmed and […] experiences authenticity' (Vannini & Burgess, 2009, p. 104). As Henry *et al.* (2015) point out, goals may look nebulous and more rightly refer to a stronger, deep-seated 'sense of being or becoming' (p. 342), with no necessary direct relation to L2 competence. In other words, *self-concordant goals* directly relate to learners' core values, beliefs and convictions, with lesser influence from external or internal obligation (Muir, 2020, p. 25), therefore with less influence from the ought-to self. Self-concordant goals in a DMC are both identity-congruent and action consistent, and fall under the broader umbrella of life goals and identity construct and are generators of well-being (Henry, 2022). For this reason, it seems particularly interesting to look at third age L2 learners' history of DMCs from the wider perspective of the history of their life goals and personal development. This involves wider lifelong constructs, such as learning self-regulation, self-concepts and persistence, but also other values and self-beliefs that evolve through life and experience.

I discuss facets 2 (starting point of a DMC, see Figure 3.3) and 5 (ending point of a DMC, see Figure 3.3) together since they form part of the larger debate over motivational 'length'

and incorporate the time dimension. A DMC has a starting point, initiated by optimal contextual triggering stimuli, and naturally interrupted by life's events and distractions (end point). The end of a DMC, whether sudden or progressive, indicates the end of the guiding vision. It also underlines the weakening of the self-concordance of goals. As a result, distractions appear and pave the way to alternative conceptions of future selves, making conflict-resolution more difficult, and the tasks originally at the heart of the DMC more effortful and demanding (Dörnyei, 2019). Yet, while being 'interrupted', a DMC constantly remains 'alive' in the background. One criterion that sustains one's DMC over time is one's sense of ownership, in other words, the constant belief that one is capable of achieving one's goals. Dörnyei and his colleagues (2014, p. 12) touch upon one key aspect of a DMC, which is its transformative power:

> *After the accomplishment of the goal, life resumes its normal balance – although perhaps at a modified level – and long-term goals and visions once again assume control of directing thought and action, until the day the conditions may once again fall into place to allow another DMC to emerge.*

In the context of my study, I argue that while such a conviction may have its ups and downs in the long run and does not always apply "at its peak" in one's lifetime projects, it surely forms a key cog in a DMC structure, and pinpoints some pivotal personality aspects of the DMC's agent, notably his/her self-focused and autotelic-oriented personalities (Csikszentmihalyi, 2008; Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016, p. 64), in other words, his/her likeliness to experience flow-like experiences. Facet 3 (Figure 3.3) more generally relates to learners' behavioural routines, motivational autopiloted behaviours and nonconscious self-regulation, which form the structure of their DMCs, empowering them to automatically resume their goal(s) pursuit after disruptions (Muir, 2020).

3.3.3. Discussing the temporal remit of a DMC

DMC advocates pinpoint the finite nature of a motivational current (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016; Muir, 2020), which signals 'a change in the structure of goal constellations' (Muir 2020, p. 39). This statement should be taken with more subtlety however, and I prefer to look at DMCs as parts of a self-sustaining and never-ending motivational story in one's lifetime. As such, I align with Papi & Hiver (2020), who consider that 'what appears to be an end point in L2 motivation or development is just one of many relatively stable points in an ongoing and dynamic trajectory within the state landscape' (p. 212). This ongoing and self-sustained motivational pattern is also supported by Rose *et al.* (2013). Henry alludes to the intermittent nature of a DMC, which differentiates DMC experiences from 'flow' experiences. It is a 're-triggering mechanism', with ebbs and flows and interruptions (Henry, 2019, p. 150), and most importantly with activable and chronically accessible visions (Bargh *et al.*, 1988; Higgins *et al.*, 1982) that are part of the 'user-generated imagery' (Henry, 2019, p. 143), and ready to be potentially re-activated *if* and *when* need be (Henry, 2019). Such a chronic capacity to re-trigger motivation completely matches third age learners' chronic motivational 'hyperdrive' (Dörnyei *et al.,* 2016), and deserves further investigation in this study.

This perspective not only hints at DMCs' nonfinality and constant self-re-organization, but also at another methodological issue. Because of a DMC's continuity in time, its 'temporary' end may be hard to detect. Yet, instead of looking at clear ends and in light of my investigation's locus on lifelong positive L2 engagement, I believe potential 'disruptions' or 'suspensions' of L2 DMCs in senior learners' life do not impact negatively on their overall motivational landscape. Whether one considers lifelong learning as a system that encapsulates a series of DMC experiences or as a single global lifelong DMC, depends

on the timescale one stands on. In light of the holistic view from which I decide to depart, I foresee the identification of a series of DMC experiences related to language learning, which shape the contours of a lifelong DMC in a continuous process of interruptions and mechanisms of re-triggering.

In a similar vein, when discussing issues raised in CFLG, i.e., which concern the learning and teaching issues of senior language learners (Derenowski, 2021), Ramírez Gómez (2016) alludes to the need of looking at third age learners' 'retooling' or 'retraining' (Ramírez Gómez, 2016, pp. 110-158), which consists in drawing inspiration from previous learning experiences (in this context, L2 DMCs) in order to uncover the learner's profile. Such a *retooling* forms a striking parallel with DMCs' concept of 're-triggering', and enables self-assessment, self-acknowledgment, while also developing self-directedness. Ramírez Gómez's concept of re-training as a tool of self-assessment based on previous learning practice, poses the epistemological problem of unconscious behaviour, which I discuss below.

Let us look at one last key element that is still largely missing in the literature on DMCs, and yet deserves careful consideration, since it raises additional methodological issues: how can one assess unconsciously-formed self-generating DMCs? In fact, how can language learners even recall those particular DMCs if they are unconsciously constructed *per se*? With regards to the latter concern, this study acknowledges that not all language-learning related DMCs in a lifetime may be recorded nor even included in the narratives. Collecting "all" DMCs would not even count as an appropriate task for a PhD candidate searching on the lifelong trajectories of FLL motivation, in which the central focus of analysis is the learner's view and story of his own motivation at different stages of his life. The locus here is on the learner's awareness of himself as a lifelong learning entity. Rather,

I believe collecting 'unconscious' DMCs could more adequately serve the research agenda of a psychologist, a memory expert or a neurocognitive specialist focused on unravelling 'invisible' or unconscious habits.

DMCs, when repeated over and over again throughout an extended period of time, are often *unconsciously* self-regulated (Aarts & Custers, 2012; Al-Hoorie, 2019; Henry, 2019). DMCs are 'an unreflected-upon part' (Henry, 2019, p. 148) of an autopilot process. As such, the so-called intensity that is specific to a DMC experience may well be transferred into some unconscious yet intense behaviour that is not regarded as such from an internal perspective. While there is no direct resolution to this challenging aspect of analysis, this research decides not to disregard unconscious DMCs fully.

3.3.4. Research niche

Academics have fallen short of recognizing the potential of the DMC framework when viewed outside the educational context. As Dörnyei and his colleagues point out, 'a DMC is often a highly individual experience, not uncommonly a solitary undertaking' (Dörnyei *et al.,* 2016, p. 135), hence the reason why a careful consideration of my participants' individual motivational pathway must come first in my analysis.

While the popular application of the theory of Group-DMCs in classrooms (Dörnyei *et al.,* 2014, 2016; Muir, 2020) in light of Intensive Group Projects (IGP) could be reciprocated to the Café groups and spontaneous conversation L2 groups formed by each participant on their own, capturing group DMC experiences among participants goes beyond the limitations of this study. Nevertheless, this study takes into consideration claims from Henry and his colleagues (2015), who explain that 'through the generation of a shared vision and the creation of group energy through processes of cognitive, emotional, and

goal contagion, DMCs, like group flow, can operate at a collective level' (p. 343). Therefore, my research necessarily looks at participants' collective projects as well, which should logically emerge organically from their own narratives, and founded on three core principles, as summarized by Muir (2020): (1) collaborative learning; (2) process-oriented structure and (3) resulting in tangible products. Stoller (2006, pp. 23-24) complements Muir's summary with additional requirements of those projects 'with DMC potential', some of which I shall keep in mind for my research. These include: (4) having a clear definition; (5) extending over a period of time; (6) involving participants' individual responsibility for their own learning (i.e., self-regulation).

Of course, the aim is not to consider the successes of such projects. By success, I mean the tangible L2 skills development and language 'speaking' and 'writing' achievements. The nature of success is all relative and dependent on the unique characteristics of every DMC group's dynamic. Yet, by definition, what all DMC groups commonly succeed in is to maintain their motivation at a high level for a certain amount of time. In addition to my investigation of individual narratives on L2 lifelong motivation, it is interesting to include observations from those spontaneous groups/intense projects of conversations, and assess the extent to which those core principles presented by the literature are applicable to non-formal learning environments and to a third age learning *group*.

3.3.5. Epistemological value and pragmatic implications

In conclusion, DMCs are a launching pad for the exploration of sustained and chronic L2 motivation in an ecologically valid manner. DMCs represent a partial, yet pragmatic answer to understanding the extent and underpinnings of third age L2 motivation through the development and achievement of smaller scale L2 intense projects throughout life. Because DMCs do not have any demographic, generational and geographical

requirements, I believe they have a large application breadth that deserves to be validated in the case of this study. L2 senior learners' extended versions of DMCs are undoubtedly harder to create and to sustain; they thus require substantially more powerful and enduring visions to invigorate them.

In complement to Muir's quantitative perspective, I aim to approach DMCs under a new light and through a qualitative lens, in order to provide an in-depth analysis of my senior participants' view on their past and present experiences of L2 DMCs. Understanding key language-related projects senior learners have gone through sheds light on the potential historical breadth and iterative nature of self-generating DMCs throughout life. I anticipate findings will also yield implications for mainstream FLL motivation research.

Above all, the study of DMCs tangibly bridges the gap between research in third age L2 learning and CFLG (discussed in Chapter 2, section 2.1.2), bringing forth pragmatic pedagogical implications for peer-teaching, and taking advantage of the learners' extensive experience with DMC as a resource (Findsen & Formosa, 2011). DMCs draw under-researched yet fascinating parallels to process models, as highlighted by Ramírez Gómez (2016), and which I explore in this study jointly with L2MSS and CDST.

In as much as 'a smooth sea never made a skilled sailor', as once publicly remarked US President Franklin D. Roosevelt, I believe that a 'smooth life' without its self-propelling motivational currents and streams of energy cannot sustain motivation and language acquisition in the long run. Dörnyei and colleagues' (2016) paralleling metaphor of the 'motivational currents' as oceanic *superhighways* – such as the Gulf Stream or the East Australian Current, quite do the trick when looking at seniors' lifelong trajectories of L2 motivation. To some extent however, there must come a point where waves break and

lead to another type of stream, which deserves further exploration in the case of later life L2 learning.

3.4 Concluding remarks on the literature review: Recap of research questions, aims and design

Chapters 2 and 3 took a multi-level analytical approach of the literature. In particular, Chapter 3 reviewed the increasing amount of research involved in FLL motivation using a dynamic systems perspective and situated approach to lifelong motivation, which heralds a call for qualitative methodological tools. Furthermore, FLL motivation requires the in-depth combination of several theories, hence my triadic theoretical focus on L2MSS, CDST and DMC. Picking up one theory only would contradict my very attempt at keeping a *dynamic* approach to senior language learners' motivational histories. Based on this consideration, a third research question (RQ3) emerges:

RQ3: To what extent can the tripartite framework CDST/L2MSS/DMC bring light to the development of lifelong L2 motivation?

RQ3 addresses the implementation of a complex-oriented theoretical framework in my exploration of the origins and developments of long-term motivation among three highly committed senior L2 learners (RQ1). RQ3 also complements my assessment of the participants' reasons and strategies to reach a high level of motivation in later life (RQ2).

The explanatory power of CDST is incontestable. The model looks at enduring motivation as a developmental process and from an ecological perspective that is formed through years of learning experience and self-agentic actions. I have highlighted how its core elements and methodological underpinnings adequately sit with the purposes of the

present research. CDST indeed cogently justifies for most of the key choices this study makes, in terms of the finely-grained integrative design, exploratory methodology, multidimensional theoretical framework, and historically and individually-oriented research question. The number of approaches to the motivational dynamics over a period of time, whether short or extended, offers an infinite number of possible interpretations and study angles. Limitations are inevitable, both at a conceptual methodological level, and so are choices when selecting the degree of granularity and timescales. Both L2MSS and DMC show compatibility with CDST, and help refine and delineate the complex lens, while positioning the study within a small-scale, situated and individually-based framework.

The use of narrative inquiry looks particularly relevant to understand learners' life histories and historical 'self-perceptions' nested in a complex web of social, institutional and societal interrelations (Murray, 2011b; Cole & Knowles, 2001). The use of language learners' narratives to further investigate on the dynamic complexity of personal meaning-making in socially and historically-situated contexts has already been widely explored (Dörnyei, 2017, Hiver *et al.*, 2019; Oxford & Cuéllar, 2014; Thompson and Vásquez, 2015), yet much remains to be investigated with regards to the stories of highly motivated lifelong language learners. Indeed, little heed has been paid to the study of lifelong motivation to this day (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011), even less so from the vantage point of mature L2 learners. By the look of section titles in contemporary handbooks on motivation for language learning, there has been little mention, if none at all, on this particular lifelong aspect of motivation where the temporal and historical self-dimensions are key.

The narratives I am planning to collect will be the results of highly individual tracks. Such differentiation is exemplified through the diversity in personality factors, motivations and the degree of engagement and willingness. As Larsen-Freeman points out, 'every time

[learners] use language, they are making choices, and by so doing, negotiating their identities' (Larsen-Freeman, 2017, p. 28). This study ultimately tends to correlate both language learning with motivational identity construct and selfhood, which present opportunities for metacognitive development among the third age learners (Murray, 2011). Hopefully the narratives will illuminate such a perspective.

Overall, the aims of this literature review were threefold. First, I intended to tease out the current trends of research in FLL motivation, and the potential literature gaps my study and its forthcoming data analysis would need to focus on, as summarised in Table 3.4 below. In this regard, the review not only introduced the three main research questions of this thesis, but also hopefully provided a clear rationale justifying the need to fill in the existing niches and shortcomings in Third Age SLA research and lifelong motivation.

Table 3.4. Recap of literature gaps and resulting research niche and aims

CENTRAL CONCEPTS AND THEORIES USED IN THIS PHD	FOREIGN LANGUAGE MOTIVATION	CDST	DMC	L2MSS	THIRD AGE STUDIES IN SLA RESEARCH	NARRATIVE INQUIRY IN SLA RESEARCH	LLEs
RESEARCH LITERATURE STATUS QUO AND ONGOING DEVELOPMENTS	- Growing interest since the early 1980s; - Ongoing intellectual vitality among research community; - Recent switch to a process-oriented paradigm with 2 central interests: (1) dynamic nature of motivation and (2) its long-term quality; - Recent paradigm shift to qualitative mixed methods research and to smaller-scale qualitative inquiries, in particular due to the popular focus on the experiences of self and identity.	- Tackled on broad and metaphorical terms; - Widely used in interdisciplinary perspectives; - The theoretical framework that is mostly used in recent SLA studies; - No review on research methods and precise guidelines for CDST in L2 motivation research.	- Very recent theoretical framework that has not been tackled outside classrooms, in the context of older learners, and over a lifespan; - Closely linked to a CDST framework, which comes as a more specific complement; - Mainly approached through a quantitative lens and targeting short periods of motivational peaks.	- Major focus on the ideal and ought-to L2 selves; - The third element, i.e., the language experience often discarded in related studies; - Growing interest in the anti-ought-to L2 self.	- Growing focus on choice and agency; - Combatting vernacular representations + negative stereotypes of ageing; - Third Age starts at the onset of retirement (62 years old in France); - Clear link with the concepts of well-being and savouring (Bryant & Veroff, 2007) - Studies often relate to seniors' cognitive processes and highlight pedagogical underpinnings to train teachers from Third Age Universities.	- Gaining momentum (ex in Asian studies); - Largely focused on young learners' reports; students/immigrants; - Lack of clear definition in SLA research; - Lack of clear methodological guidelines.	- Over-generalised and abstract term used in cross-disciplinary research; - Definitional fuzziness; - Rare research applications to empirical studies in SLA; - In the case of actual research applications to case studies, focus was exclusively on younger learning communities.
NICHE AND AIMS OF THIS PHD	Little heed has been paid to the study of lifelong motivation to this day, even less so from the vantage point of mature L2 learners. This PhD aims to focus on an under-researched area of FL motivation, which is the lifelong aspect of motivation where the temporal and historical self-dimensions are key.	This PhD adds specificity to the use of CDST in combination with DMC and in light of my research context on 3 highly motivated elder language learners.	I will approach DMCs through a qualitative lens, focusing on individual third age participants outside the exclusive context of classrooms or any formal educational environments, and over a lifespan.	I will approach the L2MSS in light of the more recent concept of the anti-ought-to self and delve into the language experience of third age L2 learners.	I will approach third age SLA in light of foreign language motivation, which is under-researched, especially from the retrospective self-accounts of senior L2 learners.	My use of narrative analysis and triangulated narrative data will hopefully illuminate the lifelong construct of learning identities among my senior participants, while providing a clear historical overview of their motivational responses (and peaks) to language learning.	I will connect the concept of LEE with my theoretical frameworks, use of narrative techniques and my focus on third age L2 lifelong motivation. I aim to bring additional specificity of successful lifelong LLE by looking at historical developments (focus on DMCs, attractor states, motivational peaks, and the lifelong accumulation of L2 experience).

Second, I wished to enhance how the choice of my theoretical frameworks dovetailed with my research aims, while actually informing the overall research design of this study. Third and last, Chapters 2 and 3 served as a preamble to my methodological choices. More precisely, I have tried to look at some potential pitfalls, especially when dealing with complex multilevel analysis. Acknowledging some methodological inadequacies from previous research provides with some practical guidelines for this study, which is what I discuss in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

This chapter introduces my methodological choices and the development of my longitudinal qualitative interview design, together with the related work ethics I conducted in light of my research aims, literature review and theoretical frameworks. Above all, I confront those choices with CDST, which 'constrains methodological choices, while at the same time encouraging innovation and diversification' (Al-Hoorie & Hiver, 2022, p.176). In fact, this CDST-oriented research demands that one considers every step of the process carefully, since 'the study of chaos requires a very systematic and well-explained methodology that follows a set of relevant quality criteria' (Lowie, 2017, p. 139).

As Miles *et al.* (2020) posit, explaining clearly one's methodology is 'an evidentiary warrant, of sorts – not of data, but of the researcher's systematic ways of working – that authenticate the qualifications of the investigator and the quality of the study's design and execution' (p. 321). To some extent, I aim to bring credibility and full transparency about this multi-method design, and underscore the efficiency of using a multiplicity of instruments during data collection, so as to open as many analytical windows as possible, and justify my own trajectories over three years of investigation.

This retrospective research uses Riazi's (2021) definition of the narrative study as the

assessment of 'storytellers' past experiences and their reflections on them' (p. 208). Indeed, I intend to present this work as an analysis of three highly motivated senior L2 users' stories on their respective lifelong language learning trajectories. My wish is to perform an analysis of their personal accounts, i.e., by re-storying participants' oral reports.

To some extent, crafting the methods for my data collection and analysis turned into a journey of reflexivity, which I share below in the six following sections. I first justify my choices of sample and study context (4.1), providing background to both the selection of my senior FLL participants alongside the specificities of the interview settings. I then present my instruments together with my data collection procedures (4.2), divided into two cycles, which I describe in sections 4.3 and 4.4 respectively. The ensuing transcribing and coding methods are further discussed together with the resulting analytical approach I take (4.5). I eventually conclude (4.6) with a focus on the reliability of my methods, and assess the validity of those procedures in terms of accuracy and its interpretative scope. The final section aims to explore broader ethical and philosophical considerations about my research journey.

4.1. Choice of sample and study context

4.1.1. Context of research

There always is background history to the story itself. In fact, my research originates from multiple contextual, experiential and interactional elements, which I believe give a hint to understand the genesis of this thesis. Because 'local contexts tend to get eclipsed' (Riessman, 2008, p. 62), I have wished to compensate on this gap in this chapter and tried to shed some light on the underlying 'blind spots' that pervaded my narrative analysis. Part of my task as a reflexive researcher is to draw careful attention to the context and its impact

on the overall interactive quality of my data collection (Davies, 2008; Mann, 2016).

I already introduced my doctoral project at the macro-level, in light of the ongoing phenomenon of the University of the Third Age (Formosa, 2019. Šuica, 2020), and the increasing importance European institutions have been giving lately to lifelong learning, positive ageing and well-being in later life. The micro-level focus I embrace locates this research in the neighbouring cities of Saint- Laurent-du-Var and Nice, both situated in the southeast French Riviera (see Maps 4.1 and 4.2), where I met three English senior students aged over 65 years old, two of whom had been retired for a while, and one about to when we first met. I refer to them with the following pseudonyms, and in the chronological order in which we first met: Georges, aged 71, based in Saint-Laurent-du-Var, met in the fall of 2017; Josette, aged 80, based in Nice, first introduced on the phone in late 2020, and met in the fall of 2021, and Patricia, aged 65, based in Nice, introduced by email thanks to Josette, and met in the fall of 2021. I met both Josette and Patricia for the first time for the purposes of this present research.

Maps 4.1 and 4.2. Geographical positions of Georges (G), Josette (J) and Patricia (P)

In this study, the location matters in several ways, and more particularly as it provides

additional socio-economic background to the participants. The area offers a high number of opportunities both for L2 speaking on the one hand, and for elderly social interactions, on the other hand. With about 17,932 English native expats recorded in 2018, the department of Provence Côte D'Azur is the fifth French department which hosts the most important number of English native speakers according to statistics from the INSEE (The Local, 2018). The South East of France is also the third French region with the most important number of retirees, hosting about 8.2% of the French retired population (CNAV, 2023). Finally, the region is also one of the wealthiest of all French regions, which indeed is exemplified in the case of each participant, who benefits from good living standards, and some relatively high material comfort, enabling them to do a wide range of extra activities, including sports, travels and participate in regular social events that involve extra costs.

4.1.2. Participants

The selection of my three participants resulted from a rather natural collaborative 'hunt'. As soon as my student Georges heard of my wish to study *him* further, he suggested to introduce me to what became the second participant, Josette, who herself immediately thought to *involve* a third participant and one of her closest English learning partners and friends, Patricia. Part of my reflexivity process was to let participants engage in the fieldwork from the start, by using a snowball sampling method, as Figure 4.1 shows below. In other words, I had them naturally offer suggestions for the selection of like-minded profiles. As Consoli & Ganassin (2023) put, 'trust and relationship building are not just important to gain access to a research context and engage participants in fieldwork processes, but they are also crucial to enhance the rigour and depth of their studies' (p. 2). This selection process is an additional indicator of the co-constructed nature of this research, and the *power* and *weight* I gave to each of my participants to shape this inquiry.

Figure 4.1. Snowball sampling method: participants' involvement in the selection process
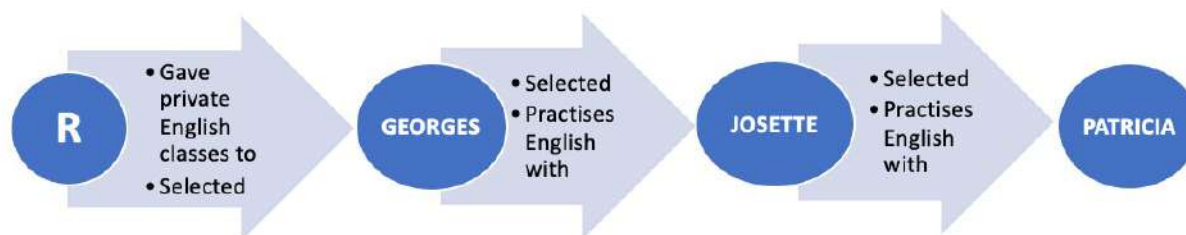
While I remained attentive to Georges's suggestions, for the connection we had created over the years had resulted in a solid bond of trust, I also set up my own list of criteria, and used 'positive selection' (Smith & Ryan, 2016, p. 315), by which the other two participants were selected not only because of their high linguistic potential and level of motivation, but also through their other common strengths, i.e., cognitive, affective and physical vitalities. More importantly, the key attribute I looked in my exchanges with potential candidates was their level of motivation. Motivational consistency (i.e., constant enthusiasm and eagerness to work on any topic) was another trait I had observed in Georges over the long run and was looking for in my other candidates as well. Since I did not spend the same amount of time with the two other candidates to assess such consistency, I more generally looked for candidates who could express on a phone call 'clear goals, desires, and aspirations […]' in L2 (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003, p. 128).

I departed from the premise that the senior foreign language learners I chose to interview had all gone through the long-haul experience of at least one DMC, and potentially a wider range of DMCs, or 'partial realizations' of DMCs (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016, p. 33) throughout their lives characterised by different attributes, frequency, intensity, length and timescales (Muir, 2020). This study draws inspiration from Dörnyei's (2019) three indicators that detect individual experiences, notably: (1) an overarching vision and superordinate self-concordant goal; (2) a salient facilitative structure; (3) positive emotionality, which

transforms into 'social well-being' in the case of group-DMCs (Dörnyei *et al.,* 2016, p. 157).

Table 4.1 informs on participants' general information. Note that while all three candidates are proficient English speakers, they also have knowledge of other languages (including Italian or German). As Table 4.1 indicates, Georges met Josette at the Café English group in Nice a couple of years ago, in which they regularly participate at present, while Josette met Patricia twenty years ago at AnimaNice, a local cultural centre established in the region, and which proposes a wide range of activities for all ages, including language courses for senior learners, which both Josette and Patricia actively attend on a regular basis.

Table 4.1. Information on participants

	GEORGES	JOSETTE	PATRICIA
AGE	71	80	65
ACTIVE MEMBERS OF CAFÉ GROUP	YES	YES	NO (pre-retired) but intends to
JOB BEFORE RETIREMENT	Sports coach / teacher at University, Nice, France – **Retired at 64**	Export/import manager at IBM, La Gaude, France – **Retired at 58**	Radiographer, Nice, France **Pre-retired – will retire at 66**
FOREIGN LANGUAGES	English (fluent); German (notions)	English; Italian (fluent in both)	English (fluent); German (notions)
DEGREE OF AFFILIATION WITH OTHER PARTICIPANTS	Josette's friend	Patricia's friend and Georges' friend	Josette's friend

4.2. Data collection scheme

4.2.1. Pilot phase

Prior to initiating data collection, I ran a pilot phase (my log entry for this phase is available in Appendix B) that provided an additional layer of my research development and self-reflection, and which mainly helped me re-wording the initial prompt so as to be more simple, open and straightforward, and to naturally elicit detailed accounts. The pilot study consisted

in running a series of interviews with 5 highly motivated and proactive FLL profiles, aged between 33 and 70 in the fall of 2020 and in the very particular context of the COVID-19 world pandemic.

The aim was to test my instruments, i.e., check whether the prompt, motigraphs and interview guidelines I had designed would be well understood and receive a positive response from participants. More specifically, I piloted my interview questions for which I made sure they were carefully worded and free of words, idioms or syntax likely to interfere with the respondents' understanding of them (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992), especially in the specific context of conducting interviews in a foreign language. I was flexible when selecting the pilot pool, which also included adults under 60 years old, in order to receive as much feedback as possible on the format of the prompt mainly, and more generally on the design of my instruments. I had my first experience of transcription and re-wrote the narrative of one of my pilot participants, which helped me measure the time required for the tasks, and seek solutions to some difficulties, especially with regards to the management of recordings and sound quality.

4.2.2. Chronological structure and Instruments

Once I had finalised the design of my instruments, and selected my participants, I divided data collection into 2 main cycles, later referred as DC 1 (Data Collection Cycle 1) and DC 2 (Data Collection Cycle 2). As Figure 4.2 explains below, both DC 1 and DC 2 were themselves divided into 3 phases: (1) pre-session (PS1 and PS2), (2) during session (DS1 and DS2) and (3) post-session (POS1 and POS2). The two cycles I present in Figure 4.2 were demarcated by the two sets of individual interviews I conducted with each participant. DC 1 mainly refers to the preparation and running of Interview (1), while Interview (2) represents the core aspect of DC 2. The figure below also indicates the corresponding

instruments used during each phase of both data collection cycles.

Figure 4.2 summarizes the details of each interview, including objects brought by both the interviewees and the interviewer, and instruments used during each phase, which I describe next and in a chronological order of use as I go through each phase. Overall, interviews ranged from 50 to 130 minutes in length each, with an average length of around 80 minutes for Interview 1 (DS1 in Figure 4.2), and 70 minutes for Interview 2 (DS2 in Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2. Data collection agenda and related instruments
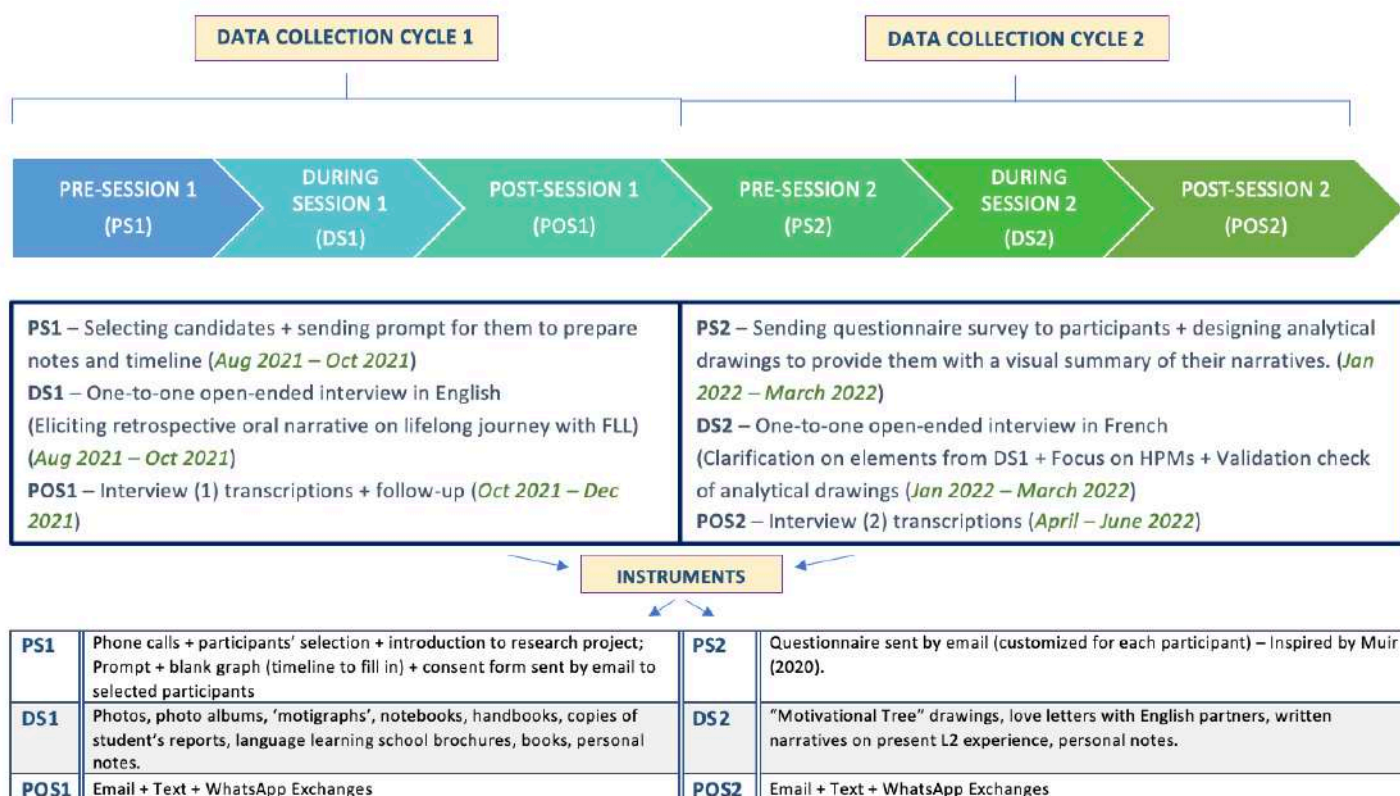
Narratives were tape-recorded, for greater accuracy and transcribed (see section below). This research proposes to follow Benson's (2021) suggestion to enhance spatial awareness in the narrative study. As such, the additional use of visuals and objects not

only triggered graphic elicitation (Bagnoli, 2009), but also placed the stories along a historical timeline, and in a specific environmental and situational paradigm, so as to enhance the relational perspective of time and space.

4.2.3. Data collection settings

Implications of this research include the understanding of the relationship of the context with motivational development and change. The choice of venue for both DC 1 and DC 2 (Figure 4.2) was therefore important to consider to ensure coherence. By coherence, I meant to reproduce as closely as possible the typical learning, practice and interactional environments the senior L2 users under study would feel the most active and motivated in. The language exchange café, for instance, was one of those stimulating learning spaces I knew they were familiar with, and could easily engage in. Coffee places represent friendly alternative spaces of socialisation to which participants seemed to relate well-being and some psychological security. Those places carry a certain degree of neutrality, while providing a minimum of cosiness in a relaxing atmosphere. I ensured that each interaction was as natural and as fluid as if participants were experiencing a café language exchange session with their peers. Likewise, while part of my data was collected during the interview at several coffee shops different from the ones they would usually meet with their learning peers, additional data was shared by email or through text messages.

The interviews thus took place in informal environments, four of which being on the upper floor café of a mall in the city centre of Nice, and two of them in a brasserie facing the sea in Saint-Laurent-du-Var. The latter used to be the venue where I organized English sessions with Georges until 2019. Not only did I try to reproduce the environment participants felt the most proactive in L2 but also most comfortable with, with enough intimacy and calm around, so as to ensure they would bring me into their own *world* and

story more easily. The noise level was another important criterion to consider, not only for the recordings' quality, but also to trigger a sense of intimacy.

All three participants quite naturally accepted the venues with no discussion, as if the ideal interview place for them was indeed half way between home and studious environments. I reflected upon this as two participants out of three chose the same coffee address with much activity, movement and dynamism around. The third participant preferred the quieter and comfier address on a coffee terrace facing the sea. From their own spatial positions, I could already detect participants' intuitive sense of finding the most comfortable seat for them and their inclination for "comfortable" and pleasurable learning.

4.3. Description of DC 1

4.3.1. PS1 – Consent and prompt

I initiated my data collection journey with a preparation phase (see PS1, Figure 4.2) for the three candidates before the interview, which was scheduled a month later. I sent each participant a message by email in preparation for the interview, which also contained the prompt (Appendix C) indicating what their task was, and how they could prepare for the upcoming interview, together with a consent form to read and sign (Appendix D). The preparatory phase aimed at developing a clear understanding of the purposes of the research, and was careful to respect a number of ethical considerations, as suggested by Mann (2016), and which I applied to the consent form.

The consent form indicated my wish to preserve interviewees' privacy and respect anonymity through the use of pseudonyms. The document also provided details on the procedures and the nature of the research interview. Because of my wish to avoid any

pressure nor persuasion on my interviewees, the document also mentioned the possibility to 'withdraw at any time', and most importantly:

> *the right to review the notes, transcripts, or any other data collected during the research interview if [they] wish[ed] to, […] the right to access the analysis resulting from [their] story and understand this is one interpretation that will inevitably leave blind spots […] [and] the right to amend all the information [they would] provide the researcher with until the study is sent for approval to the Board of Examiners from the University of Barcelona.*

Seeking participants' permission and validation in every aspect of my work was a constant concern to me. More specifically, I sought their permission to publish very personal tokens, including some intimate letters and personal photos. Following standard research procedures, opportunity was given for them to ask questions or address any particular concerns at every stage of the study. One participant asked that the consent form be translated into French for better understanding, which I did. Overall, the three participants fully agreed with each term of the consent form, and there was no discussion over any item.

The initial prompt (Appendix C) provided interview instructions that encouraged participants to tell their story with languages from birth to the present, with no particular emphasis on the motivation theme. However, indications suggested to divide their life story into "periods (childhood, teenagerhood, adulthood)", and thinking about key aspects and milestones (trips, events) related to language learning. The prompt also invited to think of types of L2 activities and practice, and the associated feelings participants had while doing those FLL activities. There was also a focus on the implications of the "other" dimension

(i.e., external influences, such as specific individuals, influential figures). In light of the prompt, candidates were able to plot their experiences clearly and pinpoint very specific details including events, people, practices, artifacts, educational systems and their own sense of lifelong self-regulation.

Together with the prompt, participants were also given a blank graph or motigraph titled "Lifelong language learning motivation" (see Figure 4.3 below), on which they had to map out the level of their motivation over the years, by drawing a line. The vertical axis would indicate their motivation intensity and strength of engagement, on a scale ranging from 0 to 10, while the horizontal axis would represent their age, from 0 to 80 years old. I reproduced Choi and Slaughter's (2021) grid.

Figure 4.3. Participants' motigraph: "Lifelong language learning motivation"
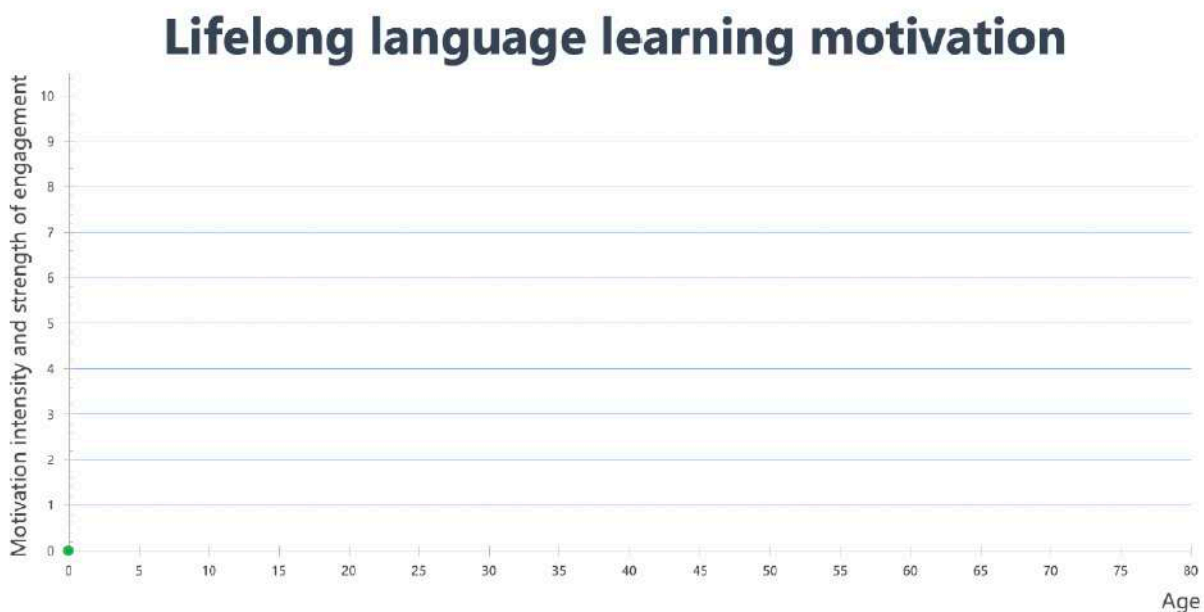
Overall, participants conscientiously prepared notes, which clearly helped them start the conversation during the interview. One participant, Georges, even 'read' his notes from beginning to end during the interview, in order to avoid any interruption due to foreign

language uncertainties. The graph and prompt, which I aimed to be as manageable and user-friendly as possible, were smartly used as an effective warm-up toolkit. Drawing the line on the motigraph was the most challenging task for all three participants during the preparation phase, so much so that two of them waited to see me during the interview to draw the line with my validation and help. Surely the line still clearly coincided with their stories overall, and participants jotted down a few key words that would enlighten the analysis.

4.3.2. DS1

Because of participants' adamant wish to practice their FL skills, their first individual interview (see DS1 in Figure 4.2) was conducted in English, and crafted as a semi-structured one-to-one interview, as Mann defines it (2016). The interview relied on guiding lines (Appendix E), but left room for deviation from the guidelines. Upon participants' agreement, I tape-recorded each interview. Overall, Interview 1 took a conversational tone but remained structured enough as I ensured that participants respected a chronological order in their narration. This interview format also enabled room for discussion, including digressions, and produced an atmosphere of informal conversation to some extent, so as to safeguard the spontaneous quality of my participants' narratives.

During the interview, participants came up with a wide set of objects (see Figure 4.2) that helped contextualize their story (Greenier & Moodie, 2021), while helping the interview flow slow at some point, and have participants take natural pauses in their narrative, so as to better reflect on key milestones. These evocative objects brought the respondents to key sites about their personal experiences, and triggered more anecdotes.

4.3.3. POS1

Transcribed texts and their subsequent first coding resulted in a 'dialogic' effect (Menard-Warwick, 2008), and my wish to go further on certain aspects of the stories. Following Interview 1 (see POS1 in Figure 4.2), two participants volunteered additional personal information and layers to their stories by email, between and after the two sessions. This could include anecdotal 'small stories' (Barkhuizen, 2010) through email or WhatsApp interactions collected from the same participants at different times and in different settings, which helped again greater depth and specificity upon certain aspects of the *main* interview narratives.

4.4. Description of DC 2

4.4.1. PS2

After transcribing and reviewing the data, I noted that all participants had provided a very detailed account of their pathway to proficiency, providing clear insights on the evolution of their motivation. From DS1, I identified a few high peaks of motivation (i.e., HPMs) and elements of their personality I felt necessary to dig into, and have them validate in a second round of interviews. In PS2 (see Figure 4.2), I came up with the idea to have them validate, amend, and then 'rank' and characterise the HPMs I had detected, and confirm key aspects of their self-portrait, re-using the same words they had employed to define themselves or their feelings during the first interview.

As such, a final structured questionnaire (Appendix F) composed of eleven questions was sent by email to participants to capture additional comments on their personality and specific use and context of learning. Generally, the questionnaire was the same for the three participants. However, questions 2 to 6 had to be slightly more individualised, since

they mentioned participants' personal HPMS (i.e., what HPMs were and how many they were in total would vary from one participant to another). This follow-up questionnaire aimed to narrow down narrative content, and targeted specific aspects mentioned in the first interview. The questionnaire inquired about the following issues:

- Confirm the number and nature of HPMs mentioned during the first interview, or amend, in case of disagreement with the propositions presented in the questionnaire;

- Assess the most influential life periods during which participants had felt the most motivated in L2.

- Assess the degree of intensity for each peak, and compare each peak through their main characteristics (whether challenging, rewarding, intense in terms of workload, or beneficial in the long run);

- Assess the impact of several external factors (family, finances, friends) and internal factors (pleasure, brain stimulation, travelling plans, frustration, boosting confidence) on their FLL activities;

- Validate or re-assess participants' personality traits, and their present feelings and beliefs about L2 learning.

In this questionnaire, this time focused on their motivational profile, informants were also asked to measure the degree of influence of language learning on their life and across different periods, and assess whether they agreed or not with previous comments they had made, especially regarding their personality traits. In the second part of the questionnaire (for Questions 7 and 11), I used a five-point Likert scale that included between 7 and 11 statements for which respondents had to mark their level of agreement (with 1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree and 0 = don't know). Due to the high number of HPMs I had recorded from the first interviews' transcripts, statements could only be

general ones, with no specific focus on any peaks. However, participants were given space on the questionnaire to write additional comments. One of my aims was to stick to previously used data collection methods, more particularly Muir's (2020, 2021) use of questionnaire to detect group DMCs. This form of indirect follow-up interviewing has been recently encouraged so as to provide an alternative form of interaction (Mann, 2016).

Overall, this questionnaire between the two sets of interviews, and completed by participants before the second meeting, fulfilled three main functions, (1) follow up on content told from the first interview, (2) narrow down the analysis to the HPMs and development of self-constructs and (3) prepare participants for the second interview, and give them an idea of the general topic of the latter, so that they would be informed about the interviews' general content every step of the way.

4.4.2. DS2

The second interivew (DS2 in Figure 4.2) was largely more open and informal than the first one. Personal comments written in the questionnaire, and which they brought with them from home, were relevant to the discussion. This time, I invited participants to clarify and describe further specific points in time by using their native language, French, so as to avoid any blockage. I realized from the first interview that the use of English, however highly performed, could unnecessarily hamper their story's flow or reduce the spontaneity I sought to reach in this second phase. What I required from them was a more conversational and yet linguistically elaborated, deeper and more focused analysis of particular times and events, which necessitated complete fluency.

This time, the 'small stories' that emerged from DS2 seemed to more intimately stick to participants as intrinsically motivated persons, while Interview 1 emphasized their story as

lifelong L2 users. Moreover, the intimacy and degree of exactitude one can display in the word use when speaking in one's mother tongue is stronger than when one speaks a foreign language. I believe both interviews 1 in English and 2 in French brought complementary data to enrich the overall discussion around the creation of narrative layers and the development of self-constructs.

I used taxonomic elicitation, asking the respondents to develop a taxonomy around their personal life with the drawing of a tree illustrating the growth of their motivation. The roots I drew symbolized the origins of their motivation (family, personality traits), and the multiplying branches and ramifications represented the key historical events and encounters that influenced their motivation and history with languages, as narrated during DS1 (see Figure 4.2), and indicated in their answers to the questionnaire. I had started to draw the tree (individualised for each participant) by hand prior to DS2, and participants then filled in the blanks and added comments to the drawing, making a four-handed analytical visual during DS2.

The motivational tree drawing is another introspective method also known as 'stimulated recall' (Gass & Mackey, 2000). Indeed, the tree 'roots' made participants reflect on their literal 'roots', and recall particular aspects of their family background, which they had not thought of during DS1. This instrument was key in digging into the initial conditions of DMCs and HPMs within the complex and dynamic structure of their motivational state landscape.

4.5. Transcription and analysis

4.5.1. Transcriptions

I transcribed both interviews *verbatim* right after I conducted them (a total of 25,305 transcribed words for Georges; 25,442 for Josette and 19,779 for Patricia), using oTranscribe for Interview 1, and Sonix for Interview 2. The set of conventions I devised for polished quotes and excerpts inserted in the analysis are visible in Appendix G. I then coded the objects I had received from the participants, and for each of which I created a reference number explained in Appendix H.

Pondering on the way we, as researchers, 'constitute' the final text deserves as much attention as the proper analysis that results from the text, especially since 'transcriptions are by definition incomplete, partial, and selective – constructed by an investigator' (Riessman, 2008, p. 50). Repetitions of words or 'sounds', and non-lexical expressions were transcribed exactly as they were heard, including when there were dysfluencies. These provided indications on the transcriptions of speech elements, i.e., small pauses or breaks, or word-finding problems, which did not impede the overall understanding of the sentence. I opted for reading again the transcriptions first, in order to get a general view of the interview directions, and highlight the key topics and themes. As I had noted down timing recurrently on the transcriptions, I would then listen again to key moments from the original recordings, so as to make sure that no words were omitted in the selected quotes I would later use for analysis.

Translating the second interview from French to English provided the additional challenge of adding more layers of perspectives (Riessman, 2008). For this reason, in Chapters 5 and 6, while I make sure every excerpt and quote are in English so as to optimise understanding, I indicate the French version either in a footnote, if the quote is short, or in

a glossary enclosed at the end of this thesis, if the excerpt is longer than 30 words.

4.5.2. Coding

Once transcriptions were revised, I selected and highlighted key quotes from the transcribed texts, which I copied under categories that helped identify salient themes (*frustration*, *pride*, *self-awareness*, *rebellious attitudes,* and so on). Determining emotional aspects was particularly crucial, which exclamation points or ellipses would often reinforce in the transcriptions, together with the voice tone in the recordings. Overall, transcriptions and recordings helped have a better access to the **telling** in addition to the **told**.

4.5.3. Unsolicited data and digressions

In both interviews, giving up control sometimes meant going astray, especially in DS2 (Figure 4.2), following participants down their trails, which did not necessarily directly connect with the research purposes. As the research unfolded, participants' interest in the outcome of my study grew and with it, questions on what would happen after the research. I included theirquestions in the final transcripts, together with aside comments they made that were off topic. I believe those side comments, however distanced from my research topic and aims, nonetheless formed part of their personal stories that were naturally elicited from the methodological strategies and instruments I used. Furthermore, those digressions are a genuine testimony of participants' spontaneity and authenticity with me, which I aimed to preserve as much as possible, and which eventually created a high degree of reciprocity and power exchange during the conversation.

4.5.4. Triangulation

In my attempt to define (1) the notion of story, and (2), how the latter must be analysed, I

considered my data as raw material to which I tried to integrate different channels of expression, from visuals to personal objects, timelines, letters, books and photos, in an attempt to reflect upon the narrative layers and participants' dynamic and multileveled motivational profiles. My wish was also to go beyond the traditional conceptualisations of what a story is, so that the materials and triangulated data used would faithfully reflect the development of learners' actions, experience and identity constructs over time.

As Figure 4.4 shows below, my research design is triangulated on three major levels; (1) the data formats, (2) the data collection methods and (3) the data analyses. I add a fourth layer to this triangulation, which is the longitudinal breadth of my data collection process mentioned earlier in DC 1 and DC 2.

As the figure shows, I indeed used material in visual, written and tape-recorded formats, and collected a myriad of personal belongings, including photos, academic reports, books, handbooks, personal notes and love letters. I extended my research design palette by somehow mixing tools used in qualitative studies (interviews) and those more likely used in quantitative studies (questionnaires). I also aimed to confront, and hopefully tone down, the likely problem of memory impairment by proposing a triangulation of research instruments. Visuals, preparatory material and notes, alongside email exchanges before, in between and after the interviews were all complementary layers of memory that enriched the overall composition of each narrative.

Figure 4.4. Multi-layered triangulation
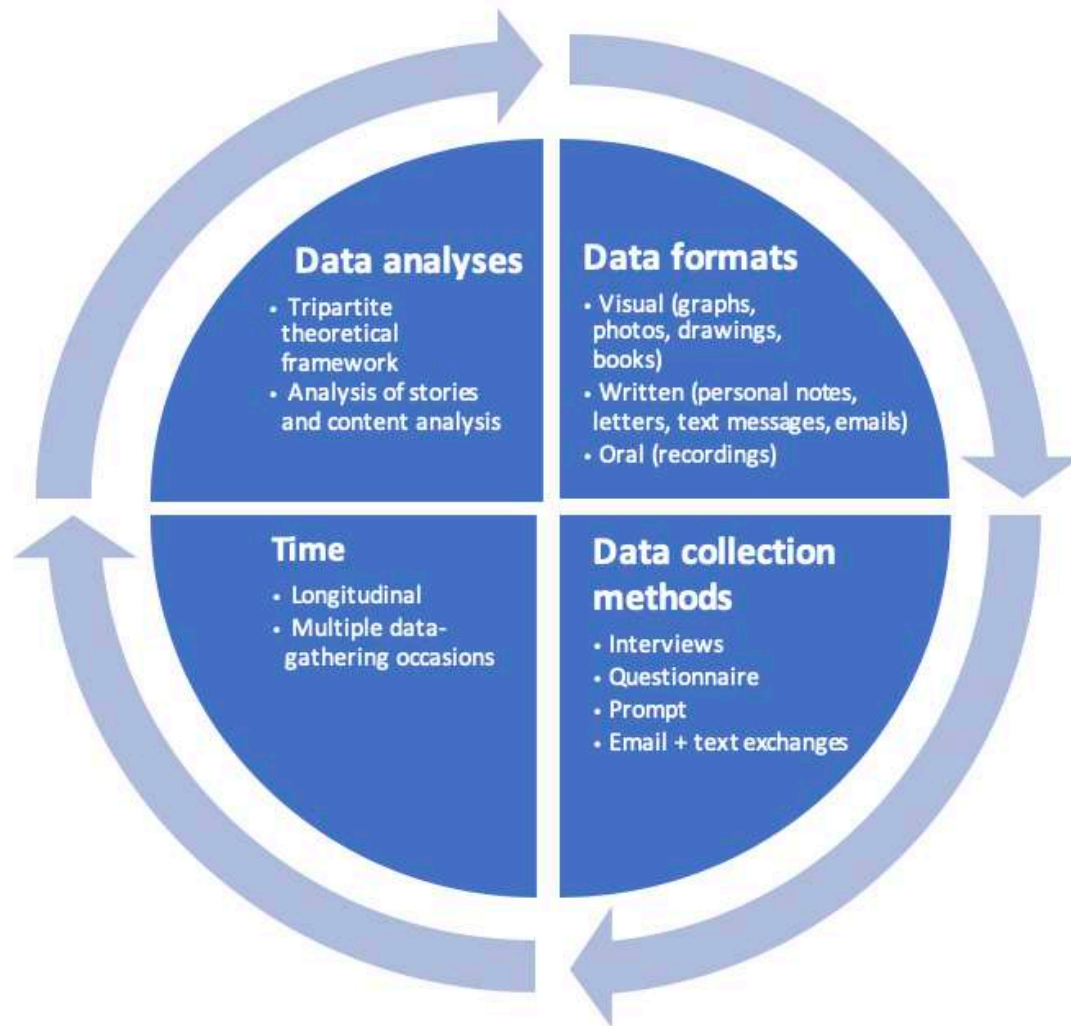
A fourth component of the triangulation above described revolved around the longitudinal quality of this research, which not only explored lifelong trajectories with languages, but covered itself three years of email and WhatsApp exchanges with the participants, in addition to the two sets of interviews with them. Time and life contexts were at the centre of this triangulation. Repeating those interviews on two separated occasions and at two different times of participants' histories with FLL enriched my data and final analysis. Of course, additional investment of time would have been required in order to fully explore the dynamic nature of the mental processes underlying motivation, but was nonetheless limited by the scope, formatting and timely constraints of the PhD thesis.

4.5.5. Data analysis procedures

Confusion and contradictions on distinctions between narrative analytical approaches, whether content or narrative analyses, pervades in books on narrative methodologies, so much so that I decided to follow Mann's (2016) call for a 'combination of several data analyses and approaches' (p. 211), and to mix paradigms. I also decided to use the opportunity of creating a hybrid way of analysing data through the collaboration, feedback, supervision and follow-up of my participants on the one hand, and the use of my tripartite theoretical framework and its related literature on the other hand. Table 4.2 below summarizes every step of my analytical procedures.

Table 4.2. Summary of analytical procedures

Analytical phase #	Description of analytical phase	In this thesis
1	- Re-writing each individual story into an intermediate narrative keeping life chronology.	Chapters 5; 6 and 7 Sections 5.1; 6.1 and 7.1
2	- Individual content analysis from transcripts divided into time units (childhood/adulthood/third age) looking at salient themes and individual L2 motivational dynamics throughout life; - Application of DMCs, L2MSS and CDST.	Chapters 5; 6 and 7 Sections 5.2; 6.2 and 7.2
3	- Collective meta-analysis of the three participants' stories - General discussion comparing the three stories in light of the tripartite theoretical framework and its corresponding literature.	Chapter 8

One of my key analytical foci was to look at potential salient DMCs and HPMs in participants' stories. I further justify my methodological approach through Dörnyei's (2014) proposal to follow at least one of these three strategies to detect and research complex dynamic systems in SLA: (1) Focus on identifying strong attractive states (i.e., high peaks of motivation); (2) Focus on identifying typical attractor conglomerates/attractor basins in L2 motivation research (i.e., DMCs); and (3) Focus on identifying and analysing typical

dynamic outcome patterns through complex systems' self-organizational properties. Accordingly, I assessed and classified DMCs and HPMs in light of the criteria displayed in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3. Criteria used to classify DMCs and HPMs

DMCs	HPMs
✓ A clear validation of the DMC facets described by Muir (2020, 2021);	✓ Participants' personal ranking and detailed discussion in DS2
✓ The amount of time the narrator spent during the interview describing each peak, and the terms used (usually superlatives or positive adjectives that were clear indicators of emotional intensity);	✓ The notes they wrote and the objects they brought gave a hint of the degree of importance of each HPM to them;
✓ The impact of those events on participants' life (prioritization over everything else);	✓ The way they described those peaks and the terms they used;
✓ The impact of those events on other (minor) peaks of motivation or HPMs;	✓ The presence of some negative comments – experiences of HPMs are usually imperfect and involve more negative aspects than DMCs.
✓ The degree of personal satisfaction and reward/self-recognition as one of the main outcomes;	✓ Their flexible length over time: HPMs are not necessarily *over* by the time participants describe them.
✓ The absence of "negativity".	

Note that distinctions between DMCs and HPMs emerged quickly thanks to the above criteria. DMCs were detected through my own analytical perspective, since my participants had not heard about this concept before nor their specific features according to literature. The accessible concept of HPMs on the other hand was easier for them to grasp, hence easier for them to rank as well during DS2 (Figure 4.2) in order of intensity and impact on their overall motivation.

4.6. Concluding remarks on methodological choices

4.6.1. Assets and limitations

This chapter highlighted my attempt to explore the wide range of tools available for narrative researchers to form a tangible partnership with participants, and help them 'plot' ina chronological manner the emotions related to their practices, their life circumstances and the historical events that surrounded their L2 practices and overall motivational lifelong trajectory. The use of data triangulation and multi-modal instrumental approaches aimed to look at the dynamics of my participants' motivational and language learning identities, and expand the narrative endeavour beyond words. This final section aims to bring to the fore a more ethical outlook by exposing potential avenues of concerns and limitations. As such, Table 4.4 below summarizes the strengths and limits of my methodological approach.

Table 4.4. Assets and limitations of methodology

ASSETS	LIMITATIONS
O Data triangulation: Use of a wide set of complementary instruments; O Participants = co-researchers => power-sharing; O Longitudinal quality: enabling time for retrospection; O Ethical considerations: full transparency from researchers' work, and constant feedback and validation from participants on data collected and analytical output; O Minimal interference from external researcher during interviews; O Choice of Narratives: anecdotal storytelling is appropriate for senior participants; O Context and focus clearly defined = small-scale; O Interview guidelines and questionnaires inspired from previous use in theoretically-related recent studies (Papi and Hiver, 2020, Muir, 2020).	O Historical inaccuracies due to memory deterioration; O Retrospection bias => especially because of affective constructs; O Spacio-temporal *gaps*: => stories about the past narrated through the prism of present sates of mind (Brockmeier, 2000); O Huge amount of data due to multiplicity of materials used; O Unlimited layers of interpretation possible; O Relying on self-reported content and a personal, idiosyncratic and biased selection of objects mainly; O Observation on daily activity with L2 is limited in retrospective case-studies; O Ergodicity problem.

4.6.2. A word on narrative reliability

As MacIntyre (2022) has recently pointed out, the list of cognitive biases is almost infinite

when it comes to referring to the numerous ways our sense of selves can distort reality. Part of my concern while collecting narrative data relied on the broad notion of memory reliability and the potential discomfort potential memory 'gaps' could trigger for the narrator. Discarding the problem of memory impairment, especially among the elderly, would be commensurate with dismissing the elephant in the room. In fact, one is largely entitled to wonder how much and at which level of detail participants, all over 65 years old, could remember their past and the way they handled situations that were key to this research. After all, the passage of time does noticeably and measurably affect memories, both in terms of the historical quality of the recollection (*when* it happened) and the quality of the memory itself (*what, why* and *how* it happened).

In an attempt to counter this concern, I argue that participants' stories are not and should not be looked through the ideal lens of 'narrative truths', but rather as fragments and layers of identity constructs. They are one form of expression of individual perspectives independent of any objective assessment. As such, verifying the accuracy of the facts bears less importance – if none at all, than understanding their significance and the meaningful connections in the eyes of the present narrator under study. If one were to assess any particular degree of 'truth' in this study, then it should not be the 'factual' truth, but rather the more 'personal' and meaning-making truths of each narrator at the moment the story is told. Thus, and because my central analytical unit is the learner's own view of events and not their factual circumstances, addressing the 'accuracy' or the trustworthiness of his story thus looks incidental.

4.6.3. Ethical commitments

Ethical and philosophical considerations emerged during the preparation and the process of data collection, and were key in my practice of reflexivity. *Thinking narratively* plays an

important role in shaping this methodology, and enhances what forms part of a more general philosophy of narrative study (Caine *et al.*, 2022). My literature review has already covered a few ethical issues that have been raised in previous narrative studies. I now wish to go further into the discussion in light of my own experience with narrative data management. Both Consoli & Barkhuizen (2021) raise awareness on ethical issues related to the researcher's engagement, and the degree to which the researcher 'influences the quality of the data collected and consequently the trustworthiness of the data analysis' (p. 6). Attention must thus be drawn on the 'discursive relations' between researchers and participants. From the start, I was aware I owed ethical commitment to all participants, and thus decided to share a high level of academic and intellectual interaction with them. All three participants have very similar personalities, they are "knowledge seekers", and somehow, I formed an unofficial mutual *contract*: we mutually hired one another as "knowledge-sharers".

The tools I engaged my participants with represented some interesting starting points to nurture what Choi and Slaughter (2021) have termed 'collaborative relations of power' (p. 81). As Figure 4.5 shows below, my attempt was to diminish the disparity of tasks and 'functions' between researcher/interviewee, and to empower participants with a voice that was meaningful to them.

Figure 4.5. Power-sharing between researcher (R) and participant (P)
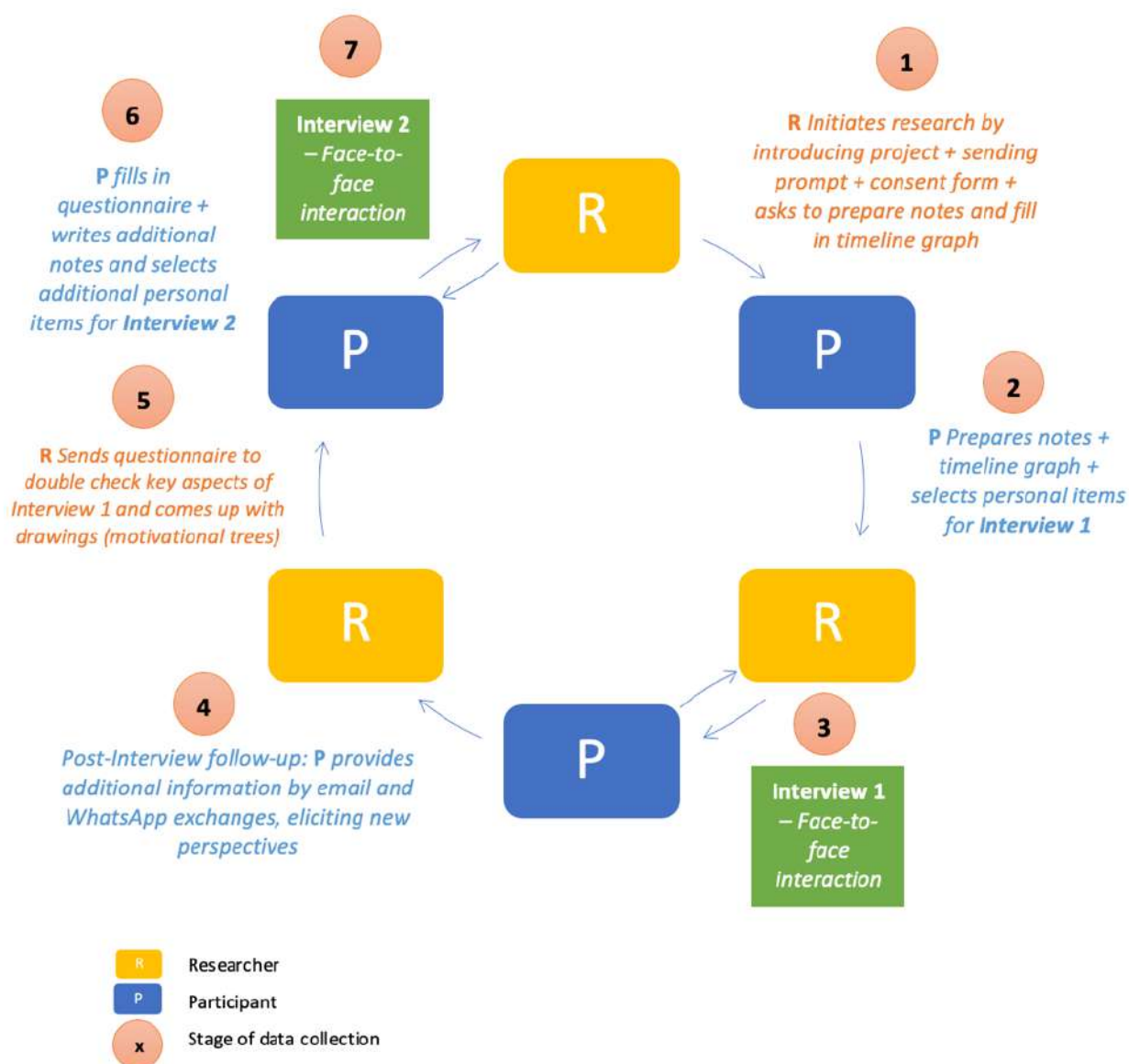
As Figure 4.5 shows, a substantial amount of time was given to participants to check and monitor over the research work, and in order to guarantee credibility from the beginning to the end of the research process. The figure also highlights the 'co-construction process' at stake (Riessman, 2008, p. 58), i.e., the 'talk-in-interaction that takes place during the storytelling process', (Consoli & Barkhuizen, 2021, p. 5) in the phases of collecting, interpretating and analysing narrative data between my participants and I. Interestingly, the investigation ethics that I promoted in this research correlated with my participants' own life and learning ethics, clearly described by Georges as a lifelong effort to 'share'

knowledge beyond age identification and social codification, in a constant non-hierarchized mutual transmission of knowledge ('the value [of intergenerational connections] lies within this very double-headed transmission [of knowledge]'[6] (Georges, Int_2/06:20)). Beyond the explicit aim to remain as intellectually stimulated as possible, the use of drawings and personal items created an atmosphere of playfulness.

Overall, the underlying crunch question is whether the process of this research is coherent and reasonably congruent methods and ethics wise. As such, and in order to ensure the overall integrity of my work, I have followed the criteria and checklist for thorough self-auditing proposed by Miles *et al.* (2020). One main concern I kept in mind was to leave the participants, and to a larger extent, the reader, informed in full transparency about how the data was aggregated, condensed, interpreted, and eventually discussed. Another concern that is explicitly referred to in this chapter in regards with my role and positioning during data collection was my own self-awareness about personal assumptions, values, idiosyncrasies, and biases which have inevitably come into play during this study.

There remain loopholes in my methodology, more particularly because of its very focus on the ever-fluctuating motivational history of individuals, and especially because of individuals' biased views on those behavioural dynamics over time. With retrospect though, I also realized that intuition came handy during the interviews to help the narrative flow and counteract digressions, speech impediments and memory loss. Intuition also helped imagine new pathways to keep participants' curiosity and interest in the study high all throughout and despite a disturbing world pandemic. I support that those hidden codes of intuitive interaction go past any methodological rules, and I have tried to address them in this chapter.

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[6] *c'est cette transmission dans les deux sens qui est riche.*

CHAPTER FIVE: ANALYSIS OF GEORGES'S LIFELONG HISTORY WITH LANGUAGE LEARNING

This chapter begins with a brief biographical sketch from Georges's interviews, and which I narrate following the participant's personally-framed time windows and life watersheds (5.1). I then follow up with a separate discussion on Georges's language learning motivational trajectory (5.2), also ordered in a chronological fashion, and divided into key emerging themes in light of the tripartite theoretical framework (i.e., CDST, L2MSS and DMC) discussed in the literature review. Note I have inserted some of Georges's items throughout this chapter, which can also be found in Appendix I with a prior note on the codification explained in Appendix H. The same structure applies in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7, dedicated to the stories and analyses of Josette and Patricia, respectively.

5.1. Brief biographical sketch

Georges was born in 1950 and raised on a farm in the French central region of Limousin, and began his journey with languages in high school at the age of 12. His brief exposure to German and English then resulted in poor instruction because of the use of a 'very old method' (Int_1/07:26). He still picked up German more easily than English, and found

himself lacking confidence in English, and being 'more gifted in German' (Int_1/06:48), because his 'way of speaking suited German better' (Int_1/05:25). Georges graduated from the prestigious French *Ecole Normale Supérieure* (National School of Administration) and at the age of 26, he was given the opportunity to move to New York to be a physical education (PE) teacher, yet declined the offer, and moved to the South of France, married his wife and was hired as a university sports teacher at the University of Nice, where he worked until he retired.

Throughout his adult life, Georges remained wishful for improving his English skills and finding opportunities to be *confronted* to the language ('it was somewhere at the back of my head!'(Int_1/09:10) / 'it was sometimes there' (Int_1/10:39; Int_2/26:04). In the early 90s, on his return to his first trip to London, Georges' frustration led him to actively seek local English self-teaching material in France. The tools he found at a local library in Nice (French Riviera), which were audio cassettes then, were so disappointing that he jettisoned the idea of learning English again within educational structures. Instead, from 1997 onwards, he planned a series of family trips to the UK and to the US to visit his nephew, who was then a university student in California, which led him to a growing feeling of frustration on the one hand, for not being understood and for not understanding native speakers, as American proved 'very, very difficult' (Int_1/13:08) for him, and deep desire to keep improving on the other hand.

The year before he retired, 2013, came as a turning point in Georges' journey with English learning. He heard from one of the tennis students he was coaching about the opportunity to learn English at the Wall Street Institute (WSI) in his hometown, Saint-Laurent-du-Var (France), and decided to sign up there for a year. He attended supervisions and classes every two weeks and studied from home the rest of the time. He was assessed as an

intermediate beginner ("Survival level 2"), and enjoyed the method so much that this very period was the landmark of him getting 'the virus of English' (Int_1/14:29). Thus began a decade-long intense use and practice of English, especially upon retirement (Int_1/01:05:32), during which he was drawn into his passion for English ("when I was caught up in my passion for English" (l. 38-42)[7].

At the age of 64, on his first year of retirement (2014), Georges felt empty and needed to look for new challenges. He declined an offer to work as a tennis coach in Florida due to family reasons, which was experienced as 'a regret' (Int_1/59:59). In order to fill in the void he was experiencing, he decided to book a full boarding 'in a small semi-detached house of an old English lady in the suburb of London' (Int_1/18:14) for a week. Every morning, he would have face-to-face English lessons with her for three hours, and visit the city center in the afternoon. While this experience somehow brought him back the sensation to be 'like a teenager' (Int_1/18:14) who was told what to do, it also boosted his motivation and enabled him to improve his language skills.

From 2014 up to the world pandemic in 2020, Georges would compare himself to 'a hen' ('I peck at whatever I find to feed my passion for English. I use a lot of free material on the Internet' (Int_1/26:49). Since 2014, Georges has indeed been using a wide range of online tools, alternating with one-to-one English meetings with private teachers, native speakers at the Café group which he joined in Nice in 2015, and always making daily English-learning and practice plans according to his mood of the day, with no specific goals ahead ('No I don't have any plans' (Int_1/30:47). In 2015, Georges joined the local Third Age University in Nice, UNIA (*Université Nice Inter-Âges*), where he studied English for two years. He also kept travelling to English-speaking countries with his wife, always looking

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[7] *quand j'ai été happé par ma passion pour l'anglais.* Part of the « Bref supplément à l'interview en français », (BS) for later references.

for immersion experiences, and any opportunity as an excuse to practice English, including watching movies in original versions, coaching American tennis players near his hometown between 2016 and 2018, always prioritizing the training of his body inasmuch as the training of his brain ('I also have the impression to train my brain... It's important. Like you train your body, you train your brain' (Int_1/54:49)). Flexibility and diversity of activities are key in Georges' present learning trajectory, so as to avoid boredom and the demotivating feeling of hardship: 'I didn't find it was too hard huh... because I switch on activities...' (Int_1/52:26)).

At present, although most of Georges' learning and practice activities happen online, especially due to the pandemic, Georges regularly attends the local café group, especially between the months of November and May every year since 2014, when there are more English native participants coming on vacation for a few months by the sea. Today, he claims, 'English has become an important part of my life' (Int_1/55:04); Georges has turned his L2 practice and use into a daily *obsession* (Int_1/56:53), also turned toward helping others around him with English language practice. He heralds mutual transmission of knowledge among all social and age groups ('it is this two-way transmission that is rich'[8] (Int_2/06:20)). One of his most recent activities was to start coaching his grandchildren ('I used to have them practise some English on the tablet'[9], (Int_2/39:06)) and friends with English learning. As a good illustration, Item EE_G is a screenshot of one of Georges's emails to his friend providing links for English practice (see Appendix: Item EE_G).

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[8] *c'est cette transmission dans les deux sens qui est riche.*
[9] *Et je faisais faire quand même un peu d'anglais avant sur la tablette.*

5.2. Analysing Georges's motivational trajectory as a dynamic system

5.2.1 General view and multi-layered analysis

The following analysis consists in looking back at Georges's story in light of the three main theories of this PhD, in an attempt to dig into his motivational trajectory, so as to provide a more analytical view on the timeline he provided, as displayed below in Figure 5.1.

Figure 5.1. Georges's vision of his motivational trajectory throughout life
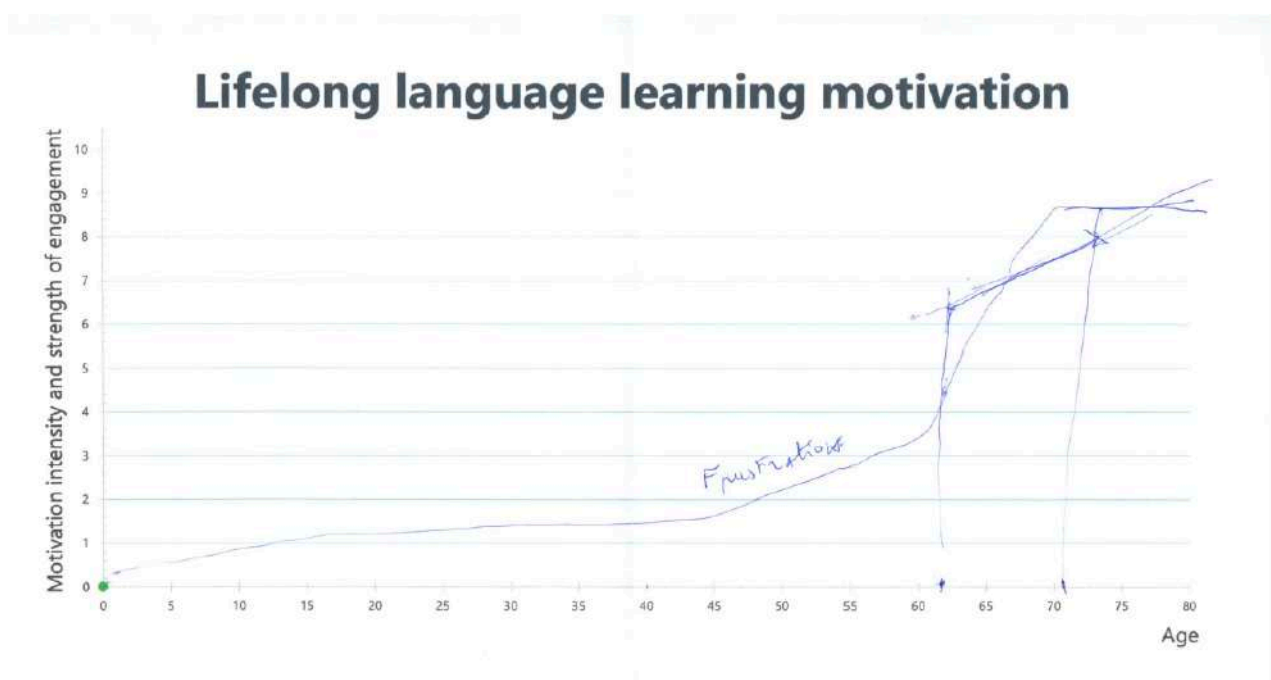
This section aims to represent the 'complex and adaptive subsystems' (De Bot *et al*., 2007; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008a) of his motivational profile, drawing inspiration from Larsen-Freeman & Cameron (2008a), and Thompson's (2017) pictorial representations. As such, Figure 5.2 develops further the application of CDST-related concepts looking at the initial conditions (i.e., initial state, IC) of Georges's motivational profile, the phase shifts (i.e., the turning points), and the attractor states (i.e., the preferred states) of his

motivational system with English learning and use.

The analysis traces retrospectively the causal mechanisms (i.e., the 'signature dynamics') that led him to a high degree of L2 motivation. In this complexity-led modeling, I represent Georges's motivational drive (here, with the letter G) by a ball rolling over the state landscape, which we visualize as a curved line fluctuating through attractor states with different levels of steepness. The departing point is the most recent and final attractor state Georges fell in, i.e., deep and persistent motivation in L2.

CDST literature compares attractor states to valleys or wells with different degrees of depth into which the ball (i.e., the system under scrutiny) would roll over and fall (Larsen-Freeman and Cameron, 2008). Attractor states can either be deep (DAS), moderately deep (MDAS), or shallow (SAS), according to the degree of intensity motivation is experienced after each phase shift. As can be seen in Figure 5.2, Georges's motivational system falls into two attractor regions with relatively different steepness. The degree of steepness and depth of attractor regions determines two aspects: (1) the strength of the attractors (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008a, p. 53), and (2) the degree of stability of the system within the attractor state (p. 55).

Figure 5.2. Representation of **Georges** as a complex system moving through the state landscape[10]

PHASE SHIFT 1 – Adult life / Frustration on trips to English-speaking countries – Strong prevention focus (avoid being misunderstood)
Period covered: *adulthood, from early 1990s onward.*

PHASE SHIFT 2 – Pre- retirement and retirement / Enrollment at Wall Street at 63 then ongoing one-to-one English conversation classes
Period covered: *third age, from 2013 onward.*

IC: Rural France in Limousin, unsuccessful learning experiences: 'I was ashamed of my accent and became shy every time I had to speak in English.' (Int_1/05:25) 'I was a farm kid and I didn't feel legitimate in those things... English was not part of my social standing' (Int_2/01:06:38).
Period covered: *early years, 1950s-1960s.*

SAS
- Underlying feeling of frustration: 'English was always at the back of my head' (Int_1/09:10);
- Early 90s: Failed attempts at learning and dropped out due to the inadequacies of learning material.
Period covered: *adulthood, early 1990s-2010s.*

G

Deep Attractor State

DAS MOTIVATIONAL + L2 USE ECOLOGY
- Undisrupted use and learning of English on a daily basis since retirement;
- Constant re-assessment of resources, learning tools;
- Opportunity seeker / 'I can compare myself to a hen: I peck at whatever I find to feed my passion for English' (Int_1/26:49);
- **High degree of Autonomy;**
- **Eudaemonic well-being.**
Period covered: *third age, from 2013 onward.*

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[10] **IC**: Initial Conditions; **SAS**: Shallow Attractor State; **MDAS**: Moderately Deep Attractor State; **DAS**: Deep Attractor State

Slow speed vector   Medium speed vector   Fast speed vector

G Georges's individual complex system

With this dynamic analytical approach in mind, I next dig into each step of Georges's individual system of self-organization in a chronological manner and associate periods of his life to their respective attributes in dynamic terms. As such, from a lifelong perspective, I first look at the initial conditions, which correspond to both Georges's early years and to the birth of his self-constructs. Next, I investigate the role of two key decisions he takes in adulthood, and the emotional triggers at stake, which I translate into two L2 motivational phase shifts. Finally, I dig into the nature of the attractor basins his motivational drive falls into after each shift, and more particularly the deeper attractor state he stabilizes into in third age. Notions of DMC and L2MSS further complement this dynamic-oriented approach, especially during key motivational phases. Note that in several instances, and in light of my narrative inquiry, I use Georges's own wording to describe the dynamics at stake.

5.2.2. Early years and initial conditions [IC]

Initial conditions (IC) are 'one of the most essential characteristics of dynamical systems'; they are also 'precursors of the development of a second language' (de Bot *et al.*, 2007, p. 15). As Figure 5.2 shows, Georges grew up in rural France, a context that did not particularly encourage language learning or high-level education. He was born and raised in a family of farmers with a very limited access to teaching and learning material. Georges describes his social background and discomfort in moving to town and experiencing a *gap* and a feeling of being illegitimate: 'kid from the farm, we get to the city, I didn't feel legitimate about this stuff. It seemed too much to me... Too much not of my background. That way, so it's a bit of a complex, the "Bledard complex"[11] (Int_2/01:06 :38). This

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[11] *gamin de la ferme, on arrive à la ville, je me sentais pas légitime de ces trucs-là. Ça me paraissait trop... Trop, trop pas de mon milieu. Comme ça, donc c'est un peu un complexe, "complexe du 'Bledard'".*

expression was recently made up by a French stand-up comedian and stems from the Arabic word 'bled', which means *country* or *region*. While it is usually used pejoratively to refer to people of foreign origins, immigrants, especially Africans, Georges here refers to the 'dump' he considers coming from, and the way it created a sense of social gap and inferiority complex. He later admits his initial preference for scientific subjects at school and his lifelong perception of being more gifted in mathematics than in languages: 'Science, I was kind of a scientist at first. But anyway, I think I learn math more easily than languages, eh. That's my hunch, isn't it?'[12] (Int_2/59 :16).

Georges's motivational tree drawing (displayed below in Item D_G) pushes him to further elaborate on his family roots and dual traditions combining intellectual curiosity from one side of the family, and passion for physical training on the other side, and the way they came to influence his overall trajectory.

Item D_G. Georges's motivational tree drawing

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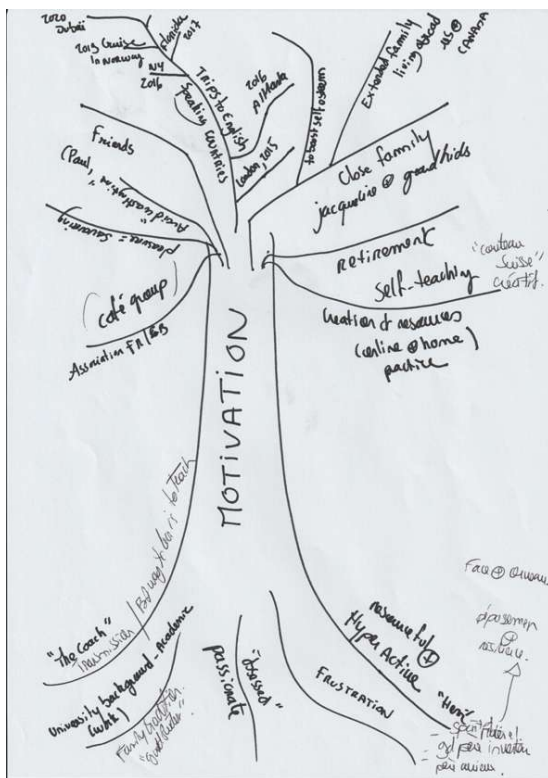
[12] *La science, j'étais plutôt science au départ [...] Mais bon, bref, je crois que j'apprends plus les maths facilement que les langues, hein. C'est mon intuition, hein.*

On the drawing above, Georges added the notes "Strength + Brain"[13] (bottom right-hand side) and "Family tradition « good student »" (bottom left-hand side) as additional indications on his family roots. He further explores the duality between brain and physical trainings by adding "grand-father inventor"[14] and "curious father"[15] (bottom right-hand side) on the one hand, and "sport/mother's side"[16] underneath "surpassing + resilience"[17] (bottom right-hand side) on the other hand. In other words, while the father's side of his family stimulated his intellectual curiosity, the mother's side nurtured his appetite for physical training, strength, and mental and physical resilience.

In the excerpt below, Georges further complements the drawing as he delves into how his family roots and background interests, which suggest they are key parts of initial conditions, in other words, strong social guidance *and* directions that influence his overall motivational trajectory:

EXCERPT G_1_Int_2

[00:57:05] There, I think there were two roots in my family, a family history on my mother's side so it was my grandfather who was the inventor. And on the other side, on my father's side, there was a grandfather who was of Parisian origin, who was the sportsman. [00:57:43] That was... The strength and the brain on this side... I think there are two roots to family history like this.[18]

5.2.2.1 Birth of self-constructs

Because of his Francophone educational and social backgrounds and his adult career commitments focused on sports, Georges took his first English course quite late in his life,

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[13] *Force + Cerveau*.
[14] *Gd père inventeur.*
[15] *Père curieux.*
[16] *Sport/maternel.*
[17] *Dépassement + résilience.*
[18] See original version in French, p. 284.

one year before retirement, thus expanding 'initial conditions' over a rather long period of his life. Georges further refers to learning English as an underlying obsession: 'and I had this kind of thing in my head, the desire to learn English that was dragging me somewhere'[19] (Int_2/06 :32). This rather vague and weak ideal L2 self in childhood interacts with strong ought-to imperatives from parents to remain at the farm. In reaction to those expectations, an anti-ought-to self (Thompson, 2017) emerges within Georges, for he *moves himself away* from his initial social background and leaves the countryside and the farm, opposing both his parents and older brother who, as opposed to Georges, decides to remain and work there.

Georges's vision of himself is not initially tied to a specific reference group, but rather consistently sticks to Dörnyei's (2009a) reconceptualization of the traditional notion of integrativeness, whereby achieving fluency in English has more to do with a future projected vision of himself as a fluent L2 user, nurtured by his 'self-esteem' (Int_1/32:11), rather than identifying with a particular cultural or linguistic group. These independence and emerging anti-ought-to self take root in his family's traditional fondness for autonomy, as Georges himself declares, "the gene of autonomy runs in the family"[20] ((BS), l. 31-32). Despite the absence of specific external role models in the beginning, Georges internalizes from the start his own creation of his perfect role, and progressively somehow develops an anti-ought-to self from the early years, as he detaches himself from the traditional trajectory his family members used to take (become a farmer). Although Georges describes his father's side as curious intellectuals, none of his family members actually ever left the countryside to complete higher studies. This detachment from his family geographical stability ultimately helps create a stronger ideal L2 self across the years.

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[19] *et j'avais cette espèce de truc dans la tête, l'envie d'apprendre l'anglais qui me traînait quelque part.*
[20] *le gêne de l'autonomie* runs in the family.

A metalevel of analysis looks at the transformative process of Georges's self-system within those dynamics and the interaction between general motivational selves and L2-related motivational selves, as generally illustrated in Figure 5.3. I divided the timeline of Figure 5.3 into three separate periods, namely (1) childhood/early adulthood, i.e., covering the period from birth to the university years; (2) adulthood, i.e., professional life, and (3) pre-retirement to third age, including the current phase Georges is now experiencing. For each period covered, I added the corresponding motivational states from Figure 5.2. Beneath the timeline, there are two layers of motivational self-constructs. The first one (in the green box) refers to the main self-concepts that are understood from the narrative, outside the sphere of L2 learning and use. The second one (in the red and white box) refers to the self-concepts in relation to L2 motivation.

Figure 5.3. Evolution of Georges' motivational selves across life
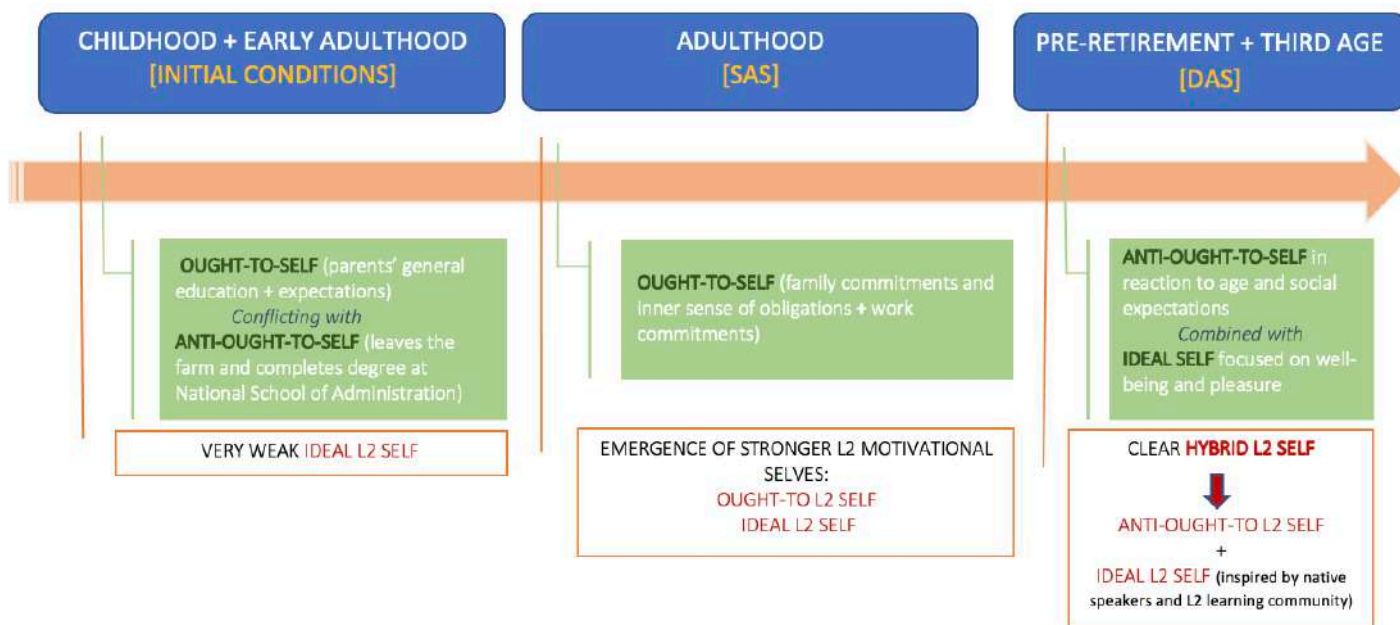
As Figure 5.3 shows, the initial conditions and early forays into L2 provide the directions of Georges's trajectory with L2. Furthermore, early self-constructs and traits shaped by

family and natural predispositions set the tone for key emotional triggers to progressively emerge and lead to motivational turning points and phase shifts, which we look at next.

5.2.3. Adulthood and phase shifts: Creation of L2 learning opportunities

Phase shifts represent 'the shifts that a complex system undergoes when its behavior is radically altered' (Thompson, 2017, p. 42). They are usually triggered by an event or a series of events, and in Georges's case, by clear emotional reactions. As Figure 5.2 displays, Georges experiences two main phase shifts or turning points that lead him to action. First, the trip to London in the early 90s, and its associated frustrating experience for being misunderstood are clear stimuli that alter his attitude towards L2. From a passive desire to improve with no concrete plans to get started, Georges immediately takes action on his return to London for the first time of his life, and starts looking for English-learning material.

Confronting frustration is a central theme during phase shifts and appears as a recurrent deep-seated emotional trigger during turning points throughout his narrative, as will become evident in the following examples. The word 'frustration' is repeated 17 times overall.[21] In the questionnaire, Georges agrees (4/5 on Likert scale) that reasons to learn English have always stemmed from a feeling of frustration. In fact, "frustration", the only word that Georges wrote on his motivational grid (Figure 5.1), is the permanent emotional stimulus of all motivational peaks he experiences across his life. For instance, he describes five bouts of frustration on five separate travelling occasions to English-speaking countries, and explains they were 'trips that exacerbated my frustration linked to my very poor English skills' (Int_1/42:19). Figure 5.4 below chronologically displays surges of frustration and

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[21] Int_1/10:44; 13:01 x2; 13:08; 20:50; 32:11; 42:19; Int_2/16:09; 17:02; 23:11; 23:34; 24:16; 42:58; 49:37; 50:08; 01:07:58; 01:16:32.

how Georges expresses them in his account.

Figure 5.4. Georges's emotional triggers across life
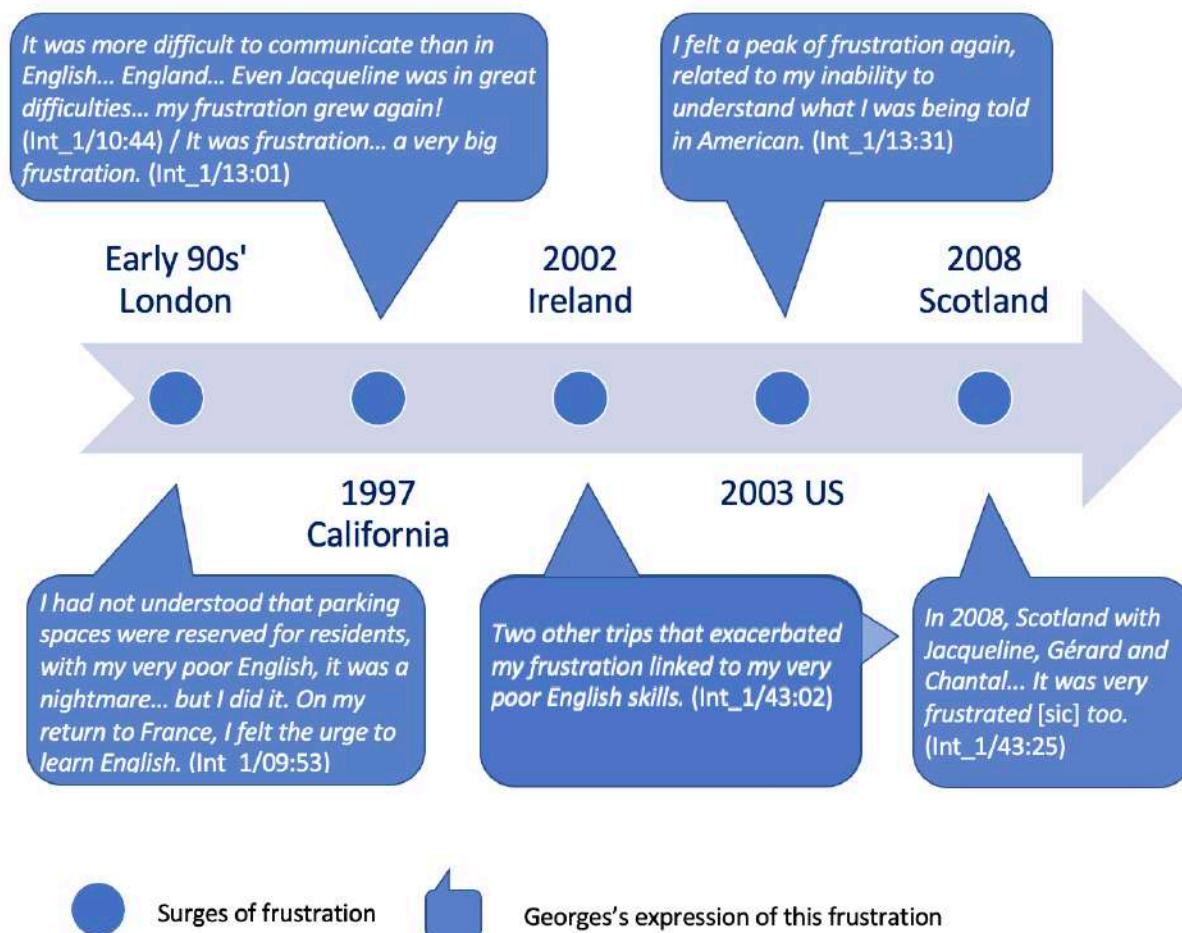
Phase shifts can also be looked as 'unstable modes of behavior' by which 'any small perturbation to the system is likely to push it off and downwards' (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008a, p. 51). Indeed, frustration bears ambivalence since it triggers both motivation and demotivation for Georges. On the one hand, it is associated with negativity. He describes his trip to London in the early 90s as 'a nightmare' (Int_1/09:53). Similarly, during his trip to California in 1997, he explains that 'it was more difficult to communicate' (Int_1/10:44), while again on his trip to the US in 2003, communication in English 'was

very, very difficult' (Int_1/13:08). On the other hand, frustration results in a surge of motivation. For instance, he narrates his first phase shift in an episode of him going on a family trip to London during which he faced the frustration of having misunderstood regulations for parking spaces. This aroused his urge to improve his English skills immediately upon his return to France. However, he quickly faced another type of frustration, as he soon realized that the only place where he could learn English in his hometown used defective material and audio cassettes. Below is the excerpt, which I've coded **FM+** in bold red, to indicate where frustration led to positive outcomes in terms of motivation (i.e., seek and find English learning material), and **FM-** in bold red, where frustration led Georges to a feeling of temporary demotivation (i.e., stop looking for English learning materials).

EXCERPT G_2_Int_1

[00:09:53] And in the early 90s, when I went on a trip to London with Jacqueline and our children, I counted on her to communicate. But one night I had to manage by myself to get my car that had been impounded due to a parking violation. I had not understood that parking spaces were reserved for residents, with my very poor English it was a nightmare... but I did it **(FM+)**. On my return to France, I felt the urge to learn English when I heard about a language lab with cassettes at the CACEL of St Augustin in Nice. I went there and noticed that the lab was working very badly and my desire to get back to English learning vanished **(FM-)**.

This anecdote typically emphasizes two aspects of frustration, the positively loaded one that propels him toward his first main phase shift, and has him initiate L2 practice, and the negatively-charged one that mobilises his practice, and has him get out of his shallow motivational attractor state (SAS). Georges narrates another similar anecdote with his trip to California in 1997, during which his 'frustration grew again' (Int_1/10:44), yet his busy schedule impeded him from attempting to get back to learning.

5.2.3.1 Shallow attractor state (SAS) in adulthood

In Figure 5.2, Georges's first attractor state (SAS) resembles more like a basin or a bowl, thus underlining a weak stability, whereas the second attractor state (DAS) is much deeper, and refers to his current motivational state. Note that the participant's triggering frustration resulting from his inability to be understood in English in Phase shift 1 may well have led him to run away from L2 use and learning by all means. In the figure, one would then have visualized such demotivation by the existence of 'repellers', i.e., the attractors' antinomies. However, Georges experiences an opposite reaction, since he decides to confront this frustration, which leads him to experience a shallow attractor state (SAS), by using this prevailing feeling to test English learning materials. Georges summarizes this SAS as a subtle 'shudder' that came to stimulate his motivation (**'**a little something that had shuddered in the early 90's'[22] (Int_2/00:26:13)).

Georges's *move* into this shallow attractor state is quite clearly described with words 'là-dedans' (*in there*) and 'basculé' (*tipping over*), quite visually reflecting the dynamics of the ball in the figure. His decision to *tip over* the SAS by going to a lab and using audio cassettes to get back to learning is as sudden as his decision to give up on this method, clearly illustrated with the use of rather abrupt words, such as 'vanished', as he refers to his immediate rejection of this learning approach: 'I went there and noticed that the lab was working very badly and my desire to get back to English learning **vanished'** (Int_1/09:53, emphasis added). While Georges does not provide any learning length there, it is clear that by the use of those specific words, he quickly made up his mind, and did not delve deeper into this motivational basin.

As Cameron and Larsen-Freeman indicate, 'the attractor gait does not occur at just single

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[22] *un petit truc qui avait frissonné début années 90.*

speed' (p. 59). As such, Figure 5.2 provides an additional indicator, that of the variability within the stability of the gait, shown topographically with the speed vector. Interestingly, the more sudden Georges's decision is in reaction to his frustrating experience in the UK, the shallower his attractor state is, and accordingly, the faster his motivational drive rolls over and gets out of SAS (Cameron and Larsen-Freeman, 2008).

As shown in Figure 5.2, Phase shift 2 occurs in 2013, one year before retirement, and launches Georges's directed motivational current (DMC) with his decision to take his first English course at the WSI for over a year. While we can assume this new shift is still partly triggered by the long-lasting feeling of frustration for not being able to communicate or use English in the diverse areas into which he is willing to venture, it also seems to happen in a more random manner, as he describes it, 'it happened a bit by chance'[23] (Int_2/06:30), and through the support of his friends and professional colleagues: 'So that's how [connecting with other students and L2 learners who were work colleagues and friends] it [joining the WSI] was done. And in addition to some... some friends from tennis who got involved in it [a course at the WSI] as part of their professional training. And it was the foot on the ladder'[24] (Int_2/07:16).

As Figure 5.3 shows, a strong ought-to-self emerges with adulthood and Georges's related family commitments and inner obligations, together with external requirements from his work life and family expectations. His family trip to the UK both triggers the reaction of his ought-to self (i.e., as 'the father figure', be able to handle a conversation in a foreign language and understand driving regulations in a foreign country), and the concomitant emergence of ideal *and* ought-to L2 selves, nurtured by the desire and duty to be

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[23] *ça s'est fait un peu par hasard.*
[24] *Donc ça s'est fait comme ça. Et plus des... des amis du tennis qui s'y sont mis dans le cadre des formations professionnelles. Et ça a été le pied à l'étrier.*

understood in English when travelling abroad with his family. Because he does not feel any *transfer,* as he names it (Int_2/09:55), with any native speaker or a model he could have created an ideal L2 self from, his projected ideal self remains an inner and self-made vision during adulthood.

Georges's decline of a job offer in New York in 1976 ('I had the opportunity to get a position as a PE teacher at the French high school in New York' (Int_1/08:18)), and the missed renewed opportunity in 2014 to work in the US as a tennis coach ('it [working as a tennis coach in the US] would have been my dream!' (Int_1/1:00:58) nurture 'an old frustration'[25] (Int_2/50:08) related to a failed international career opportunity. Moreover, his current family commitments limiting his schedule spent on L2 use and practice is an additional frustration that feed his current present ideal L2 self, which consists in compensating on past impediments and missed offers. In the excerpt below, Georges further explains his frustration for declining the offer to work as a tennis coach in the US in 2014:

EXCERPT G_3_Int_2

Georges [00:25:16] it wasn't much, but I would have dreamed of having a lot of English to teach... after, after, if I had. If I had grown up...continuing my tennis coaching business after retirement, everyone thought I would, but I got caught up in my grandchildren, all that.

Researcher [00:25:34] Okay.

Georges [00:25:34] That's it. I wish I had…[26]

The motivational system of Georges in adulthood thus goes over two transitional phases (Phases 1 and 2 in Figure 5.2) from which the foundations of motivational basins take shape. Those turning points impart first concrete and situational encounters with L2 (with the trips and the connection with other L2 learners and speakers). This period is

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[25] *une vieille frustration*
[26] See original version in French, p. 284.

particularly loaded in unstable emotions, the analysis of which is highly valuable to understand the formation of a stronger L2 self-system (Figure 5.3) that then remains fully stable in third age.

5.2.4. Third Age and Georges's DAS of L2-related behaviourial, emotional and motivational stabilities

5.2.4.1. DMC as a trigger to DAS and to anti-ought-to L2 self

As one can see in Figure 5.2, phase shift 2, i.e., pre-retirement, leads to a deeper attractor state (DAS), which gets deeper through Georges's enrolment at the WSI in his French hometown. During this period, his motivation to learn English seems to take over his life. Table 5.1 below summarizes the different motivational features and stages Georges narrates, and which strongly support the idea that his experience at the WSI might have then been his English learning DMC, as literature defines it.

Table 5.1. Description Georges' DMC

DMCs #	DMC #1
LAUNCH / INITIAL CONDITIONS	**Frustration:** 'I felt a peak of frustration... again, related to my inability to understand what I was being told in American.' (Int_1/13:08) **Support from colleagues:** 'I heard about Wall Street Institute from a tennis player I had coached. He was enthusiastic and enticed me to give it a try.' (Int_1/13:08)
SELF-CONCORDANT GOALS	**Aligns with his ideal L2 self:** 'the motivation comes from the bottom of my guts more than from my friends.' [27] (Int_2/01:10:53)
SALIENT FACILITATIVE STRUCTURE	'**I acquired a good basis** in different skills and **a good working method.**' (Int_1/15:03, emphasis added) **/** 'Now, what I liked was that it was very, very... well, the levels, it was good... well, when I saw the brochure at first, **I liked it because it was well structured**. That was **good**. At first, **I needed this.**'[28](Int_2/01:12:38, emphasis added)
POSITIVE EMOTIONAL QUALITY	'I **enjoyed** this method; I think I got the virus of English!' *(*Int_1/14:29, emphasis added)
IMPACT ON FAMILY REACTION	**Surprise and witness of Georges's behaviourial change and L2-related work intensity:** 'My wife told me, you have never been like that... even when you wanted to improve while playing tennis...' (Int_1/57:22)
END	Lasted one year until full retirement. Then feeling 'empty' (Int_1/18:10) and looking for another experience.

[27] *la motivation, elle vient du fond de mes tripes plus que de mes copains.*

[28]*Là, ce qui me plaisait bien, c'était très, très... enfin les niveaux, c'était bien... enfin quand j'ai vu la brochure au départ, ça m'a plu parce que c'était bien structuré. C'était bien. Au début, j'avais besoin de ça.*

As Table 5.1 displays, the phases Georges goes through are clearly narrated, and align with the facets of a DMC, namely (1) a clear launch, (2) the salience of self-concordant goals that align with inner convictions, (3) a facilitative structure, which he believes fits his needs ('I needed this because I was a beginner, seeking structure'[29] (Int_2/03:01)). Georges also experiences the positive emotional quality of this period together with its clear end, reflected in the completion of the course, and in Georges's sensation that he himself was reaching the end of a cycle of progression: 'I was at the end of the circuit'[30] (Int_2/17:23). Beyond the pragmatic aspect of the course's end, Georges's DMC at the WSI also ended during a turning point in his life, which is the end of his professional career, which carried a heavy emotional weight of 'emptiness' and 'an inner sense of lack' (Int_1/17:42) that needed to be filled in differently.

Georges's DMC introduces the premises of a deeper identity crisis related to ageing, and causes a shift in his L2MSS. While he does not name this period as a crisis, he uses words like 'shock'[31] three times (Int_2/03:01; 03:54 x2) and 'cracked down'[32] (Int_2/03:33), which clearly convey an idea of rupture and nervously violent response to the encounter with his new age group. A clear anti-ought-to self emerges in later life (Figure 5.3), both in general and in the specific field of L2 learning and use, and has maintained ever since the system within the current DAS. His decision to study at the WSI signalled Georges's refusal to be treated and to treat himself as 'an old person' ('I feel young'[33] (Int_2/02:04:55)). From the start, he experiences a clear resistance to social influence. For instance, while his definition of old age remains rather elusive throughout the two interviews, the dynamics he

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[29] *J'avais besoin de ça parce que j'étais débutant, bien structuré.*
[30] *J'étais au bout du circuit.*
[31] *Choc.*
[32] *Craqué.*
[33] *Je me sens jeune.*

feels with younger groups suits his personality better than the one within older groups of people ('I'm more comfortable with young people'[34] (Int_2/04:29)).

In fact, just as Georges felt *illegitimate* when he left the farm at a young age, yet persevered working hard at school and adapting to a new social environment, he seemed (and still does seem) to face a similar identity crisis when having to join an older group of retired people in which he feels inadequate. We then understand that his decision to study at the WSI a year before retiring *also* provided him with a smoother transition from working at university to the 'old age', and helped him *remain* in a mixed group of people, including younger ones:

EXCERPT G_4_Int_2
[00:03:01] It [socialising with old people] shocked me a little bit… it's these old people dating things […] [00:03:33] because I was used to a university environment with young people. I have a friend who started [attending social events for third age people] with me. He cracked down because we were too many... We weren't used to these seniors' assemblies.[35]

Georges further explains this social 'shock' and identity crisis as he relates the many deaths that he experiences in this new age group: 'my shock of the assemblies of the elderly [laughs] (…) There were some who died from time to time, others who disappeared [laughs]'[36] (Int_2/11 :57). As Figure 5.3 indicates, the anti-ought-to self thus nurtures Georges's ideal L2 self, which builds up in response to the social process of ageing, and eventually consists in mixing up with all age categories. For instance, Georges emphasizes on the importance of mixing groups of people, both young and old, 'I like the mix of population of, of, of... the mix of cultures, of ages'[37] (Int_2/05:44). In other words, his ideal

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[34] *je suis plus à l'aise avec des jeunes.*
[35] See original version in French, p. 284.
[36] *mon choc des assemblées de personnes âgées [rires] (…) Il y en avait de temps en temps qui mouraient, d'autres qui disparaissaient [rires].*
[37] *Moi j'aime bien les mix de population de, de, de... les mix de cultures, d'âges.*

L2 self amounts to merging young and old L2 learning communities and combining different ways of using the language across generations, regardless cultural and social challenges.

5.2.4.2. Nurturing DAS through HPMS and a strong L2 motivational self-system

Analysing Georges's dynamic system involves using and sticking together different *layers* of analytical stances. As such, not only can we look at Georges's motivational drive in Figure 5.2 as a ball rolling over the ages and occasionally coming to a temporary halt when a valley is too deep, but also as a continuously fluctuating self-directed current, which sequentially accumulates consecutive *high peaks of motivation* (later referred to as HPMs) throughout an extended period of time, from adulthood onward. Therefore, in this multi-layered perspective, and as we go through each phase of Georges' motivational system, it seems inevitable to explore as a parallel to the state's trajectory the nature and historical positions of Georges's HPMs, as a way to complement on a deeper level my dynamic approach. Georges indicates 5 HPMs from birth to the present days, outlined in Figure 5.5 below, and ranked in a chronological order, including one more intense peak, namely HPM2 (his experience at the WSI in 2013), which, as I argue in section 5.2.4.1, has all the characteristics of a DMC.

Georges's narrative follows a chronological order, and thus easily indicates a clear progressive evolution of his lifelong motivation with English learning (Figure 5.1). Historically, while early forays into L2 are rather inconclusive for him, he yet experiences a slight rise of L2 motivation around the age of 45, and a more drastic rise one year before retirement. This is further supported by the timeline he handed over during the interview (Figure 5.1). While Figure 5.1 provides a general and clear view on Georges's brutal motivational surge at the age of 63, Figure 5.5 zooms into key motivational peaks, and

evidences additional impactful peaks earlier during adulthood, before and after retirement, in light of Georges's account.

Figure 5.5. Pictorial and chronological representation of Georges's HPMs and DMC
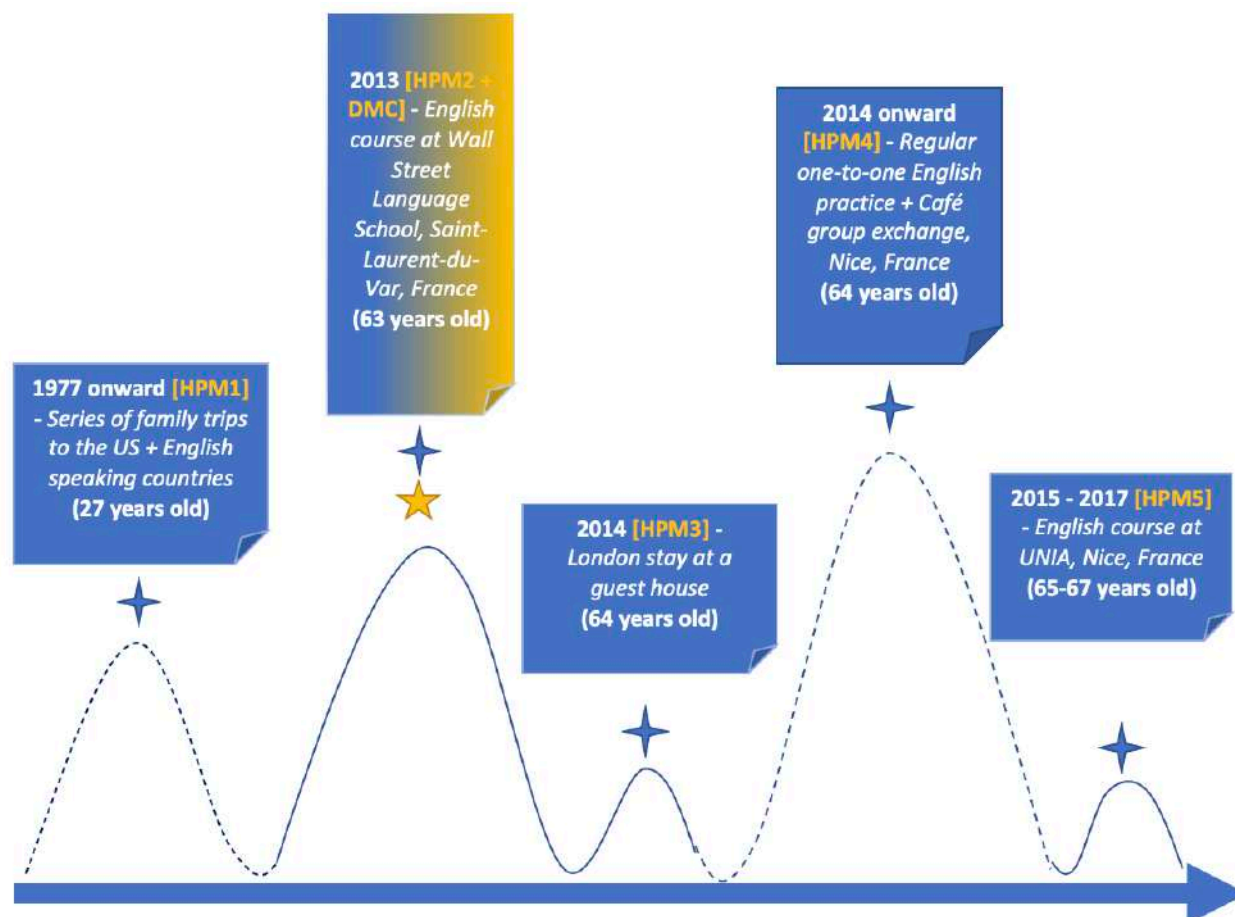
GRAPH LEGEND

Directed Motivational Current (DMC) – intense, clearly-set-in-time motivational trigger

High Peak of Motivation (HPM) – intense, motivational peaks with flexible duration

Ongoing Peak of Motivation (oPM)

Ended Peaks of Motivation (ePM)

Georges's account evidences similar components of his DMC (HPM2) in other HPMs regarding L2 learning, use and practice. In fact, his answers to the questionnaire, which draws inspiration from Muir's DMC assessment questionnaire (2020), clearly support the

idea that his attitude towards his HPM are very close to his attitude when experiencing his DMC. Table 5.2 below indicates Georges's answers with regard to his overall perception of his motivational peaks on the questionnaire.

Table 5.2. Features of Georges' HPMs according to questionnaire[38]

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	DON'T KNOW
1. I THINK SOMETHING SPECIAL HAPPENED TO ME DURING THIS EXPERIENCE – IT WAS AN AMAZING TIME				X		
2. DURING THIS TIME, I WAS ABLE TO WORK MORE PRODUCTIVELY THAN I USUALLY CAN				X		
3. I SURPRISED MYSELF WITH HOW MUCH I WAS ABLE TO DO				X		
4. AT THE TIME, THIS PROJECT BECAME A CENTRAL PART OF MY LIFE					X	
5. THE PEOPLE AROUND ME COULD SEE THAT I WAS EXPERIENCING SOMETHING SPECIAL					X	
6. I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE HARD WORK AT THE TIME – I WAS JUST CAUGHT UP IN THE FLOW!					X	

More particularly, a second obsessional period (HPM4 in Figure 5.5) appears one year after his experience at the WSI, and consists in having regular one-to-one English conversational classes from 2014 onward. Contrary to his DMC (English course at the WSI, HPM2 in Figure 5.5), this high motivational stream runs over the longer term, and is still ongoing at the moment of the interview. Unlike his experience at the WSI, HPM4 also consists in the multiplication of motivational episodes, which always carry strong positive loading; he uses words such as 'enjoyed' (Int_1/14:29) and 'natural and fun' (Int_1/23:20) in connection to these one-to-one English sessions.

In Figure 5.5, I decided to represent this *sum of ongoing motivational waves* as a dotted

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[38] The question was: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements regarding those intense motivational projects with English learning?*

line (just like HPM1, which represents the series of family trips to English-speaking countries) although its intensity and motivational weight are indisputably higher than HPM3 (London stay at a guest house in 2014), HPM1 (series of family trips from 1977 onward) and HPM5 (English course at UNIA between 2015 and 2017). In the questionnaire, Georges ranks the intensity level of this current experience with English as high as his first DMC (HPM2) (5/5), yet even categorizes this current period as 'the most satisfying/personally rewarding', 'the most intense in terms of workload', and 'the most influential/beneficial in the long run' of all peaks.

The characteristics of Georges's current motivational experience of English practice are clearly similar to those of a DMC. Frustration and obsession remain the motivational stimuli. Georges repeats the word 'obsessed' five times (Int_2/56:15; 56:53 x2; 57:22 x2), and 'virus' seven times in spaced intervals of times throughout both interviews[39], alongside the word 'contaminated' (Int_1/15:09). This metaphor of *contamination*, aside from being topical during the period of the COVID pandemic, has an emotional bearing in DMC terms, and complements Muir's (2022) recent study on the notion of 'emotional contagion'. Moreover, Georges' ongoing peak is characterised by a salient and facilitating structure with a daily routine of online practice ('because every day, in the afternoon, I'm registered at a web site... it's a good discovery... every day, I have an appointment in the evening for 25 minutes of training'[40] (Int_2/27:59); 'well, my morning routine, it's CNN right now, summarizing stuff info on my phone'[41] (Int_2/34:33)).

Since retirement, Georges's motivational dynamics has settled down into a routine that is relatively fixed and unlikely to change again. Georges is now in a relatively stable

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[39] Int_1/14:29; 20:50; 58:39; 1:00:40; Int_2/08:57; 34:33; 53:09.
[40] *parce que tous les jours, l'après-midi, je suis inscrit à un site... c'est une bonne découverte... tous les jours, j'ai rendez-vous le soir pour 25 minutes d'entraînement.*
[41] *bon ma routine du matin, c'est CNN là, à résumer des infos de truc sur mon téléphone.*

emotional state, with a constant obsessive need to improve his English skills that both nurtures and results from his lifelong feeling of frustration ('it feeds me'[42], (Int_2/16:56)), which is the recurrent emotional dynamic in third age too and becomes a full part of his practice and learning system, even after major turning points (professional transitions such as retirement, family events, trips, and so on). For instance, he mentions: 'if I don't work... if I don't have activities in English one day, I am *frustrated*...' (Int_1/54:29).

The retrospective account of the narrator's lifelong language learning is constructed in such a way that it also highlights other aspects of his experience, and most prominently, the various plans, scripts, and self-regulatory strategies (Dörnyei, 2009) he uses across the years to become highly proficient in English (Item LT_G below) and, as he describes with imagery, learn like a 'hen' pecking at any material he finds. As Item LT_G below suggests with the brackets and the numerous ellipsis (at the bottom), the number of online resources Georges uses is endless and non-exhaustive.

Item LT_G. Georges's list of online self-teaching resources

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[42] *ça me nourrit.*

In fact, this fixation with a particular field of study and practice is rather typical of other high motivational peaks Georges experiences outside English learning, especially with sports. Georges clearly demonstrates recurrent motivational patterns that punctuate each peak, and which transfer from one activity to another. For instance, he describes how his passion for judo was followed by a passion for tennis, which itself was replaced by his passion for English:

EXCERPT G_5_BS_I. 38-42

Personally, my journey into judo stopped (at the end of my sporting judo period of competition and coaching) when I was caught by my passion for tennis. My passion for tennis faded upon retirement when I was caught up by my passion for English.[43]

However, as opposed to his DMC at the WSI, this rather stable and continuous motivational intense experience with English learning cannot be delineated by a strong launch set by specific goals, nor is it possible to delineate it by an 'end', since it is ongoing and has had no interruptions ever since. The present trajectory highlights a sum of punctual peaks, including one-to-one English chat sessions with a tutor or with other L2 speakers at the Café Language group (HPM4), and a course he took in 2015 at the Third Age University in Nice (UNIA) (HPM5). Furthermore, and as we saw with the ambivalent bearings of frustration, Georges' current motivational state does not always carry positive emotional weight, especially as he describes the hardship of English learning ('But it's true that pleasure sometimes comes with the... with workload'[44] (Int_2/01:01:31)). For those reasons, the use of the term DMC to characterise this particular motivational phase in later life cannot fully apply. Furthermore, because of the rather stable and deep attractor state Georges's motivational drive is, we cannot fully claim a temporary high peak of motivation

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[43] See original version in French, p. 284.
[44] *Mais c'est vrai que le plaisir parfois vient avec la... Avec la quantité de travail.*

either. We need yet another concept to define this motivational threshold in the present, which remains both still and flat. This shall be further discussed in Chapter 8.

5.2.4.3. Ultimate L2 motivational stage: self-concordance and wellbeing

In his current attractor basin, Georges experiences a stable state of life-absorbing L2 motivation ('I must say that [the period] of my life [in which my passion for English] is the most absorbing is right here, right now, eh. That, it is clear to me'[45] (Int_2/09 :46)), associated to a practice that remains consistently self-concordant and identity-congruent with his passionate nature ('[I'm] a natural enthusiast… Besides, I've always been considered that way'[46] (Int_2/54:31)). Georges seeks long-term pleasure and eudaimonic wellbeing (Waterman, 1993; Waterman *et al.,* 2008), which is particularly acute in his current phase. Pleasure emerges as an emotional endpoint, and Georges' main self-concordant goal and life top priority: 'I always prioritize my pleasure' (Int_1/55:04). Georges goes on observing that his taste for exploring and 'inventing' now prevail over hard work, and form part of his most powerful motivational apparatus: "the pleasure and taste of exploring (even inventing) paths has been (and still is) my most powerful engine"[47] ((BS), l. 24-26).

From the start, Georges 'felt the pleasure to be able to communicate in German when I attended the Olympics Games in *Munchen*... Munich... *Munchen* is in German... in 1972' (Int_1/05:46). The word 'pleasure' is used 19 times during both interviews.[48] As Muir (2022) points out, 'the easiest way to understand the experience of eudaimonia is by considering it alongside *hedonic enjoyment'* (p. 168). At this stage of life, Georges's pleasure of

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[45] *Il faut dire que là où ça prend le plus de ma vie, c'est là, c'est maintenant, hein. Ça, c'est clair.*
[46] *passionné de nature…D'ailleurs j'ai toujours été considéré comme ça.*
[47] *le plaisir et mon goût d'explorer (voire d'inventer) des chemins a été (et est encore) mon moteur le plus puissant.*
[48] Int_1/05:46; 29:21; 30:51 x2; 50:55; 54:29; 55:44; Int_2/37:26; 38:53; 01:01:02 x2; 01:01:21 x2; 01:01:35 x2; 01:01:40; 01:02:06; 01:09:53; 01:15:17.

learning is interlinked with the pleasure of teaching through mutual transmission. In the tree drawing, he himself adds the sentence "Transmission: best way to learn is to teach" (Item D_G, bottom left). This ultimate eudaemonic experience involves a high degree of relatedness with people around him, as his final self-reflection unambiguously describes:

EXCERPT G_6_BS_I. 1-14

I then [in third age] **felt a greater pleasure** than the one I had felt during my competition-oriented period. I then [in third age] experienced the pleasure of good body sensations (kinesthetics) by making beautiful strikes, exchanges at a high rhythm with players younger and stronger than me whom I trained. **My pleasure also came from creating the best ball trajectories** that would trigger improvement from the player who was on the other side of the net. In this situation, one is a **partner** and no longer an opponent; it is a question of " **dialogue** " with a **partner** while in competition one tries to leave the opponent with no answer. **I can perhaps liken this pleasure to that of a writer who "sculpts" beautiful sentences (immediate pleasure and also pleasure to share them with his readers).** [emphasis added][49]

In terms of timescale, the deep attractor state has covered eight years of the system's functioning. In fact, the way Georges describes it, this *contamination* with English is almost a point of no-return. In other words, one may not only reasonably predict that Georges' motivational drive (i.e., the ball) will remain there, but also that the *well* that DAS represents may likely deepen in the forthcoming years. The system is not fully static though, since practical considerations involve Georges to constantly nurture and *experience* his motivation through active commitment. Rather, the system is in slow motion, as I have indicated with the slow speed vector (Figure 5.2), and unlikely to change. Such a stability is defined by Georges as continuous and unstoppable: 'I couldn't stop as long as I think I am improving my level... I am 71 and I think I will be very good when I am 18... 80... 80! Not 18! [laughs]' (Int_1/59:03) / 'I don't see how I could stop! [laughs]'[50] (Int_2/53:09). He

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[49] See original version in French, p. 284.
[50] *Je ne vois pas comment je pourrais m'arrêter ! [rires]*

further alludes to his dream of living abroad for a few months: 'my dream would be to live in a country in America for six months'[51] (Int_2/00:53:23), and to experience "slow travel", to immerse myself into the lifestyle and place'[52] (Int_2/00 :53 :39). His ideal future L2 self still lives with vibrancy.

Georges's fulfilled L2 self today consists in experiencing a life focused on well-being, pleasure and engagement (commitment to his family and friends), and emerges out of a combination of a general anti-ought to self and an ideal L2 self (Figure 5.3), both inspired from lifelong personal visions. From 2014 to the present days, Georges took one-to-one lessons with American and British native speakers, and particularly remembers one teacher with whom he organized chat sessions at a local café in 2018-2019, and whom he confesses having 'greatly appreciated [for] her competence, involvement and the fluidity of her writing' (Int_1/42:19). However, his ideal L2 self does not rely on any specific L2 model figures over the long run. He later describes his selection of online teachers as quite unplanned: 'I chose the videos a bit at random... hum... by listening to teachers on YouTube' (Int_1/26:49), and further admits, 'I use other teachers...it's a little bit at random uh! Sometimes with one teacher... it depends, I am not faithful! [laughs] ... It depends on the period...' (Int_1/30:08). This hybrid L2 self is powerfully experienced and encapsulated in the participant's own concluding words: '[English] It's my life. [English] It's part of my life' (Int_1/52:49).

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[51] *mon rêve ce serait de vivre six mois dans un pays en Amérique.*
[52] *"slow travel", de s'imprégner de la vie, de l'endroit.*

CHAPTER SIX: ANALYSIS OF JOSETTE'S LIFELONG HISTORY WITH LANGUAGE LEARNING

6.1. Brief biographical sketch

Josette was born in 1942 in Nice (France) to Italian parents, who had emigrated from Italy and settled in the South east of France. She was the middle child and only daughter. Because Italy was an ally of Germany during World War II, the three children would never speak a word of Italian at home, except with their grandmother, who would occasionally talk to them in the local dialect of Piedmontese and until she went back to Piedmont (Italy). Josette was 6 years old when her grandmother returned to Italy.

At 11, Josette spent one month visiting her grand-mother in Piedmont, where she practised both the local dialect and Italian. At school, while her parents predestined her to become a sewer, she disobediently enrolled to the trade department and, 'mad about Champollion' (Int_1/10:56) (having developed a fascination for the story of the famous decipherer of Egyptian hieroglyphs), she decided to learn shorthand, for which she developed a strong fascination, as she considered it was 'a new language' (Int_1/11:36). Between the age of

11 and 18, she studied a 'very poor English', and between 13 and 15 years old, she studied Italian, in which she excelled, although she found her teachers 'appalling' (Int_1/12:02). She did not bond with any of her teachers, and had no interest for English classes then.

Moved by 'a terrible sense of unfairness' (Int_1/12:56) due to her parents' educational differentiation with her two brothers alongside the total absence of 'investment in the girls' education' (Int_1/12:48), and in order to do 'exactly what [her] brothers did' (Int_1/13:01), Josette enrolled to the French Alpine Club (Club Alpin Français) to learn skiing. She successfully sat the exam and came out first. Her excellent skiing level gave her the opportunity to start teaching skiing on weekends. At 18, she met her husband-to-be and felt that her 'life was on rails' (Int_1/13:42). However, her regular meetings with her future husband's circle of male friends, who used to be part of a social elite, made her realize that to feel on par with male intellectuals, she could not stay in France. She then realized that to be financially independent, she needed to have a better job, and to have a better job, she needed to learn foreign languages.

In 1965, despite continuous strains in her family and no real career plans (Int_1/18:33), she embarked on a long journey to London, UK. The first contact with British people was kind, supportive and even 'tender' (Int_1/18:53), and her few encounters helped her find accommodation, from ladies' dormitories established by the Church Army, to the Hotel de France, where she rented a room in the cellar. She was then successively hired as a night watcher, an au pair girl and a chambermaid, and started taking English classes three times a week at a language school in London. Living in a big city as London had its negative counterparts, including high racism, heavy solitude and wilderness. Josette was then starting to face a series of disillusionments when she met her British boyfriend, Tony, at the language school, an English teacher, whose nudges got her to improve her skills and

remain in London until his departure to Italy (Item PH_J1). In parallel to her new relationship, another passion emerged, which was English literature, and with it, authors like George Orwell and Oscar Wilde. Within six months, she would read 44 books in English and track record of every book she'd read on a list with a brief review for each (Item NB_J, below).

Item PH_J1. Josette with British lover in Pompei, summer 1966

Item NB_J. A page from Josette's book review notebook
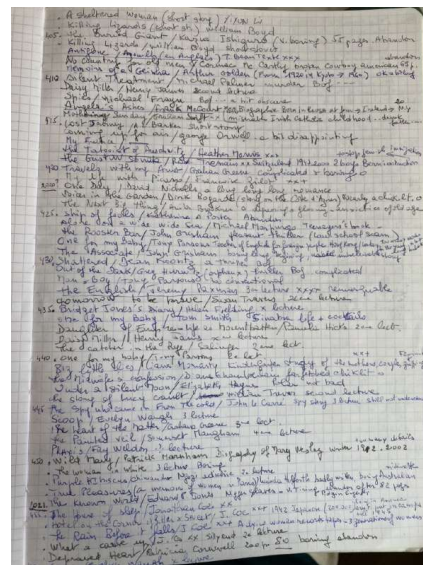
At 24, and six months after having first set foot in England, Josette detoured her language journey and decided to join her British boyfriend in Naples, Italy. She was hired at the Berlin school to teach English and French mainly to male students, making a life for herself. Despite strict rules against women in the South of Italy then, Josette befriended a group of male Italian artists, poets, writers and painters, with whom she could freely express herself and enjoy moments of carefreeness in Italian (see Josette's pictures of this period with her Italian friends in Items PH_J2; PH_J3 below). While she sometimes had to make up words in English during her classes due to some English language gaps, she had no difficulties with Italian language and was fluent then. It was a life she had always wanted (Int_1/54:35), but her English boyfriend's jealousy put an end to her five-month long stay

in Italy, and she eventually left Naples -and her boyfriend, and went back to France.

Item PH J2. Picture of Josette performing a hanging with the group of Italian friends and artists, Naples, 1966

Item PH J3. Picture of Josette having lunch with the group of Italian friends and artists, Naples, 1966

In September 1966, due to her newly acquired good level of English she improved as a teacher in Naples, Josette was hired at IBM, in La Gaude (French Riviera), specialized in import/export transfers and customs regulations, yet with no regular use of her language skills. Her workload then impeded her from doing any extra activities related to English or Italian uses. She completed her entire career there until retirement and 'enjoyed very much' (Int_1/01:02:20) most aspects of her position. Josette still 'took every opportunity' (Int_1/01:04:53) to speak English, especially with VIP international customers, whom she would volunteer to meet and greet at the airport. Josette eventually retired at the age of 58, in 2000. In parallel to her successful career, she married a German teacher and had a daughter who she regularly sent abroad for her to learn English and German.

In 2018, at the age of 76, Josette enrolled to the Dante School in Nice for four months in

order to brush up her Italian skills, but was highly disappointed with the management of the school and the level they had assigned to her. She spent a couple of years practising from time to time with Italian native friends. Sadly, their deaths put an end to her Italian practice, but she still travelled back and forth to Italy for cultural events and art exhibitions. Besides, Josette remained interested in taking English lessons, and between 2004 and 2021, she multiplied stays in the UK as a paying guest (Item PNI2_J, below).

Item PNI2_J. Josette's list of trips to the UK between 2004 and 2021 as a paying guest

Since 2004, Josette has been enrolled in AnimaNice (Organization of leisure and activities targeted at seniors, and based in Nice), where she has been attending an English course once a week continuously up until now. Disappointed with the level of teachers there, she decided to create her own English learning meeting group from home between 2010 and

2021, which had to stop due to Covid-19 restrictions and its aftermath. Besides the private English conversation group sessions she led, Josette also participated in other extra exchange conversations every week from 2005 to 2018 in both English and Italian in different locations in the region. More recently, and despite Covid-19 lockdown, Josette wholeheartedly strived to maintain English learning activities from home but was 'disappointed' (Int_1/01:12:21) by the silence of her other language partners due to the pandemic, and eventually gave up organizing private meetings, out of a general demotivation from learners and the absence of regular teachers. In 2010, at the age of 68, Josette joined a café language group in Nice (the same as Georges), which she still attends every week, and which she finds 'very exciting' (Int_1/01:21:57). Those local language groups still provide her with the impulse to pursue her practice outside home.

6.2. Analysing Josette's motivational trajectory as a dynamic system

I replicate my analytical structure applied to Georges (section 5.2) in this section dedicated to Josette. Figure 6.1 below aims to represent Josette's dynamic motivational system, as an analytical complement to the participant's motivational timeline displayed as Figure 6.2. Interestingly, the two motivational peaks Josette shows on her timeline in Figure 6.2 (in her early twenties and sixties) represent the two deepest attractor states (DAS 1 and DAS 2) in Figure 6.1. I also used RQM, departing from the participant's current deep attractor state (i.e., self-sustained L2 use and motivational ecology) and retrospectively looked at what led to her present attitude with English and Italian. Josette's *rolling* motivational L2 system is symbolized by the letter J in Figure 6.1. Josette's narrative naturally led me to divide her state landscape into three main phase shifts and their respective attractor states, which also present different speed and depth, as I further explain below. Overall, and as shown in Figures 6.1 and Figure 6.2, her motivation for L2 use remained rather high all

throughout. Below I analyze in a chronological fashion each period of her life and its associated motivational phase.

Figure 6.1. Representation of **Josette** as a complex system moving through the state landscape[53]
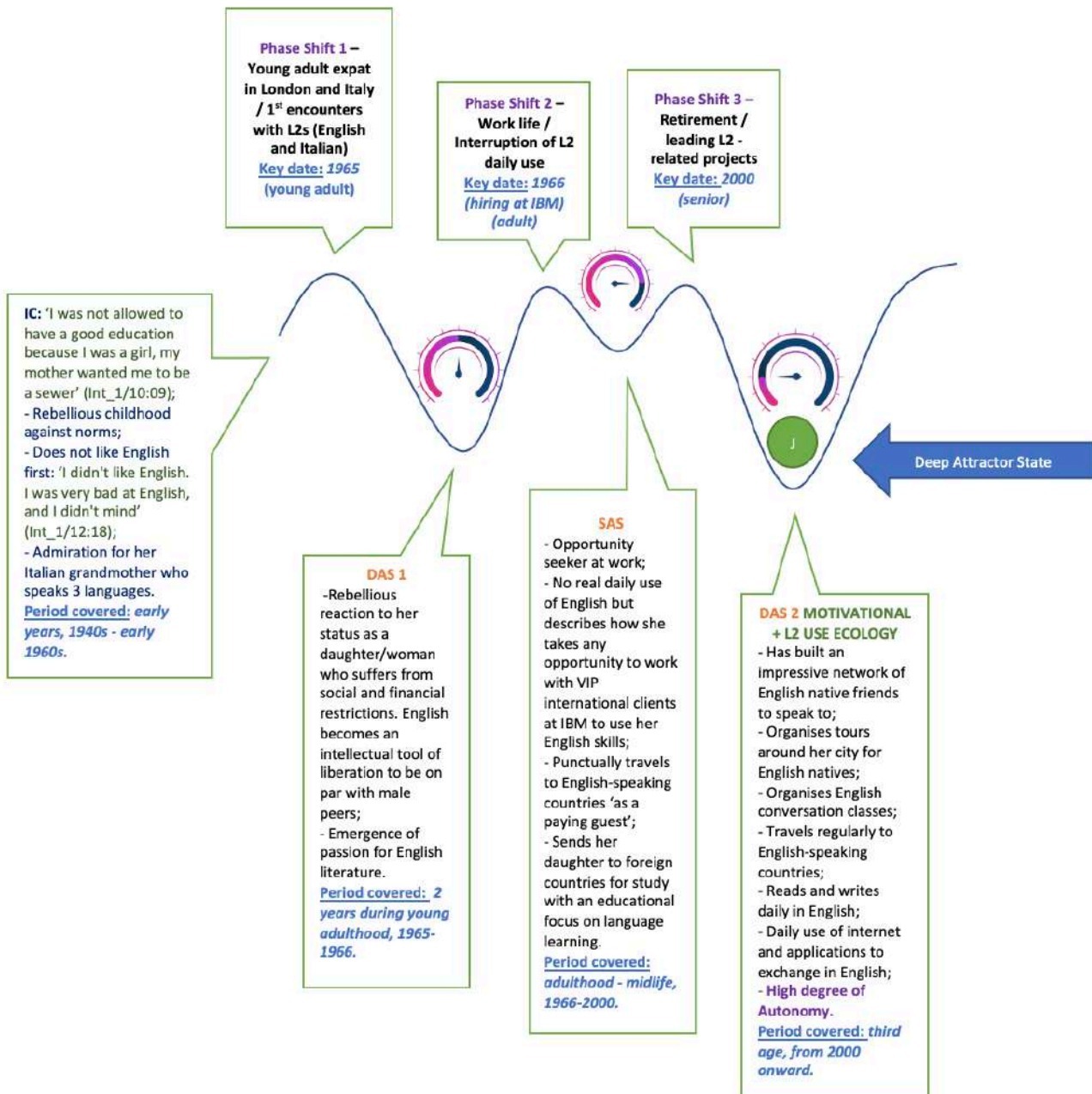
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[53] **IC**: Initial Conditions; **SAS**: Shallow Attractor State; **MDAS**: Moderately Deep Attractor State; **DAS**: Deep Attractor State

⟳ Slow speed vector ⟳ Medium speed vector ⟳ Fast speed vector

🟢 Josette's individual complex system
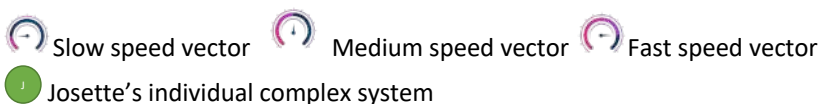
Figure 6.2. Josette's vision of her motivational trajectory throughout life
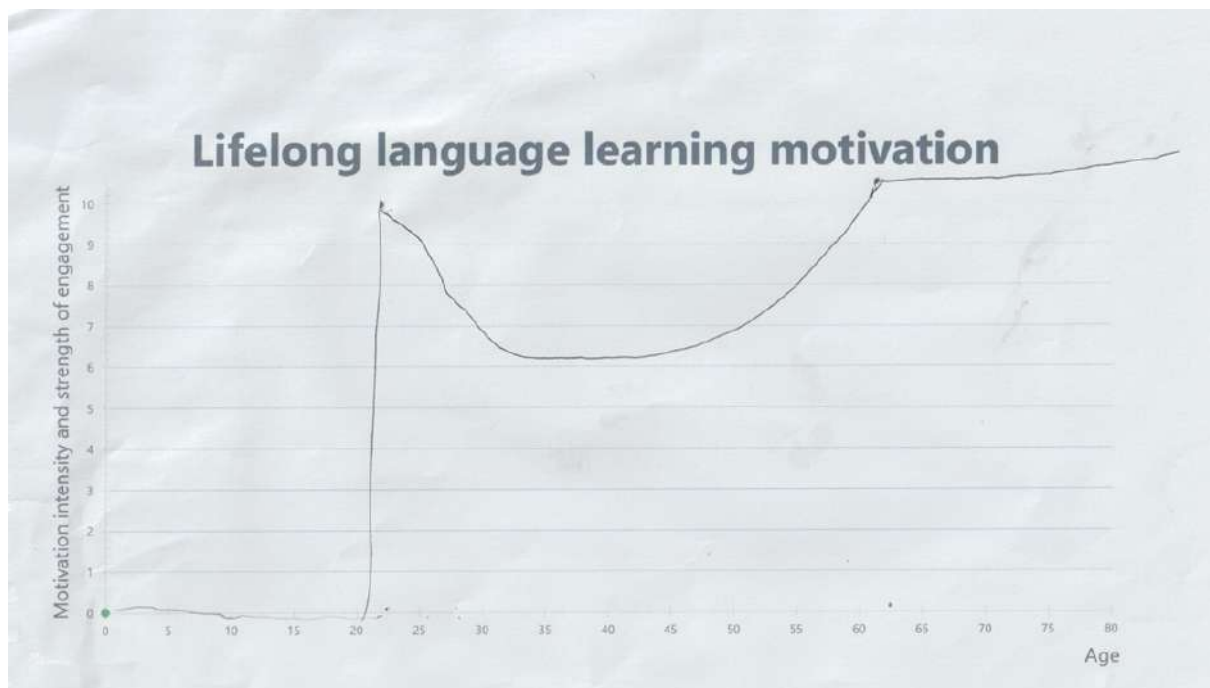
Interestingly, the speed indicators presented in Figure 6.1 do not represent the time spent within each attractor state, since for instance, DAS 1 covers a period of 11 months, while SAS covers 34 years of Josette's life (the whole work period at IBM). However, the vector represents the speed and strength of propulsion related to L2 motivational behaviour and choices. Josette surely spent 34 years working at IBM, yet however long SAS lasted in her life history, the perception of her motivational system, as she describes it in her narrative, putting emphasis on key events, moved faster during this period. In terms of the evolution of Josette's L2 motivation, SAS is less significant than DAS 1 and DAS 2, yet still plays a key role in her system of self-constructs. This is also a research indicator that although L2 motivation should be studied both horizontally (i.e., along a timeline and across the years) and vertically (i.e., in the shape it takes in terms of its intensity and nature), quantifying it in terms of its length probably matters less than qualifying it in terms of its dynamicity and evolution from one attractor state to another.

6.2.1. Early years and initial conditions [IC]

As Figure 6.1 shows, the initial conditions very neatly predict Josette's trajectory with languages. Josette was raised up in a highly patriarchal and male-oriented family in which girls' education was very limited. Her social background shapes the contours of her lifelong rebellious attitudes toward her parents, and triggers her motivation to disobey them by all means. Initial conditions also highlight Josette's emerging ideal L2 self through the admiration of her energetic multilingual and inspiring grandmother who hosted her for a month in Italy during her childhood. The level of emotional intensity Josette experiences at confronting family gender disequilibrium and social injustice during the early years is so high that it literally propels her to make radical choices at an early stage of her life. Her *anger* and desire for 'revenge' set the tone and the speed of her system's launch and trajectory.

6.2.1.1 Birth of self-constructs

The L2MSS framework that I use as part of CDST clearly situates Josette's self-constructs within a well elaborated, highly situated structure from the start. Josette's ideal and anti-ought-to L2 selves both initially take root in inspiring and adverse family figures, respectively. Overall, a dynamic approach helps look at the diverse layers of selves that interact together contextually, whether *in opposition to* or *in accordance with* one another at different times of her life. A simplified view of this dynamics is illustrated in Figure 6.3, and further described below.

Figure 6.3. Evolution of Josette's selves across life
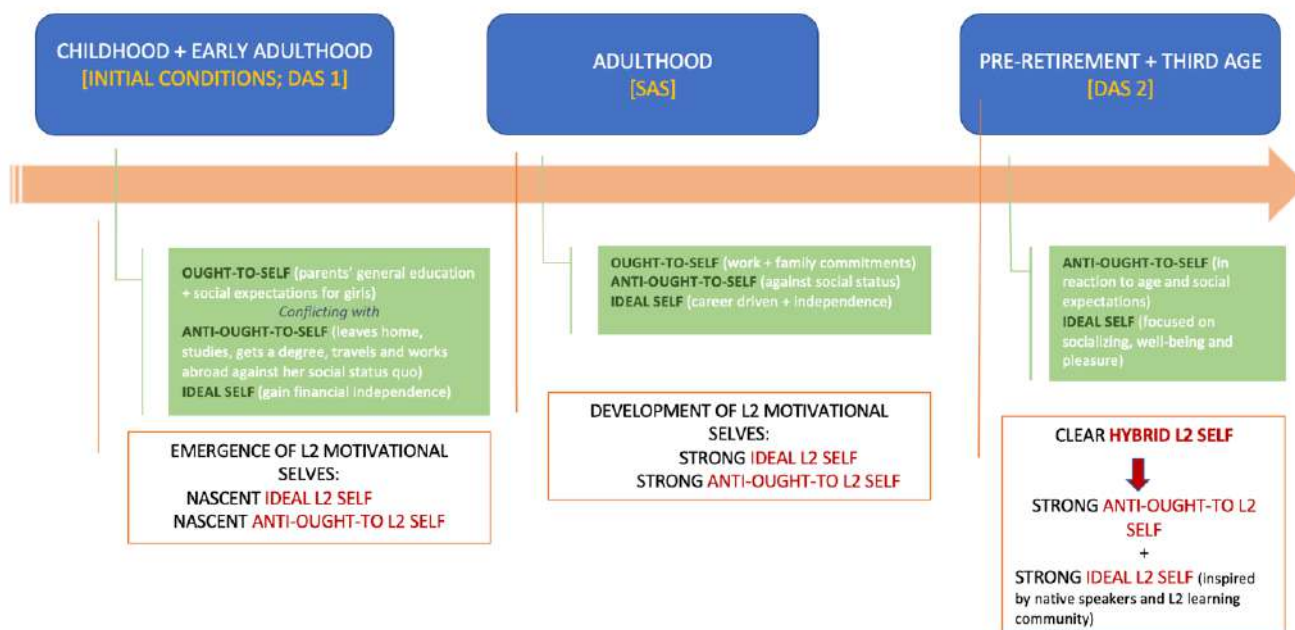
During childhood, Josette's ideal L2 self emerges thanks to the multilingual small group made of her Italian grand-mother and the latter's two sisters who 'spoke French, Italian and Piemonte' (Int_1/06:50). They embody a sense of rebellion, independence and freedom, which Josette clearly opposes to the inertia of the surrounding drunk men: 'men drank a lot. And they died. But these three ladies were so full of energy' (Int_1/06:50). At this point, Josette seems to associate freedom, positive energy, and independence to multilingualism. She further describes the emotional gap triggered between two opposite atmospheres and polarized views on gender; her grandmother's affectionate tenderness on the one hand, *versus* the cold rigidity of her parents at home, who force her to stay home, and impede her from learning anything else than sewing, as depicted in the two following excerpts:

EXCERPT J_1_Int_1

[09:35] My grandmother was a very joyful old lady with red dresses and dancing all the time. She was not clever, but very cheerful and very tender. So were the other ladies. You see... so the atmosphere was an atmosphere of kindness. At home, it was an atmosphere

of duty.

EXCERPT J_2_ Personal notes

My feeling: terrible sense of unfairness

My brothers were allowed to learn what they wanted: drawing, painting, riding a bike, cycling, skiing, playing the guitar, etc… Me = sewing and staying at home. Nothing else – My eldest brother was a bully.

This relational – and thus emotional – duality (friendliness *versus* coldness) remains important in determining the evolution of Josette's motivational selves, more particularly on every first contact she has with the language. Decades after her first contact with Italian at her grandmother's, she describes a similar positive experience when she meets and interacts with the first British people on the boat to the UK, who appear as 'sunny' (Int_1/29:06) figures, as well as those who help her set up once in London, and from whom she can feel kindness and help (Int_1/17:22; 18:53; 21:15). In the early years of her life, the people she emotionally connects with (Italian family, British strangers on the boat and in London, British boyfriend, Italian friends) help her grow her ideal L2 self, while the ones she opposes (parents, brothers) help her grow her anti-ought-to L2 self.

Josette's projected ideal L2 self begins at an early stage of her life, and later on thrives on resistance and reactance to social influence, and on the need to restore 'threatened or eliminated behavior' (Miron & Brehm, 2006, p. 10) imposed by a highly patriarchal and stigmatizing society. The words she uses as we drew the roots of her motivation (Item D_J, below) echo her narrative.

Item D_J. Josette's motivational tree drawing
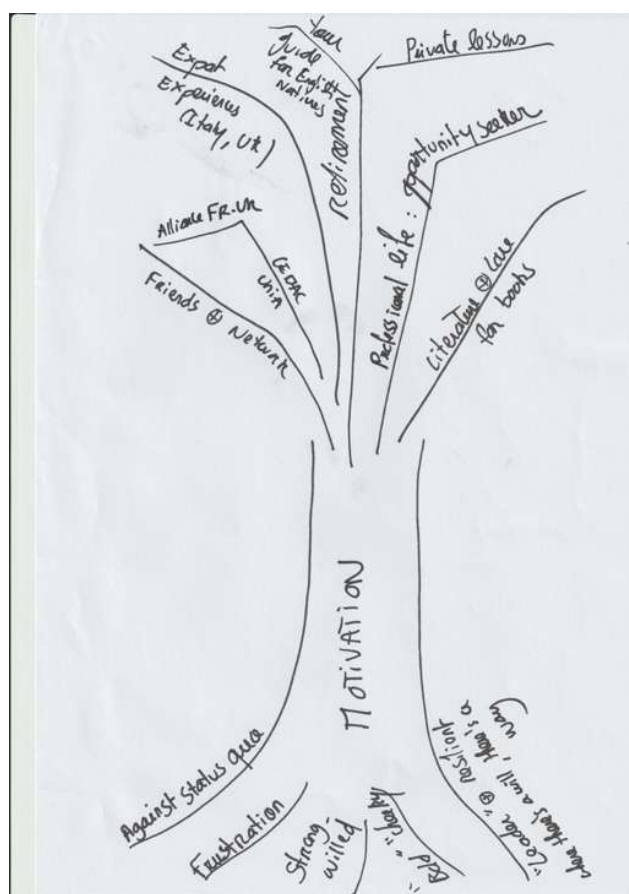
She describes herself as an ambitious, 'bold' (Int_1/1:03/36; Item D_J, bottom right) and 'very cheeky' (Int_1/49:08; 49:24; 1:03:36; Item D_J, bottom right) insubordinate young woman looking for freedom ('I wanted freedom' (Int_1/58:25)) and independence. In the tree drawing, and as one of the roots to her motivation, she writes "against status quo" (Item D_J, bottom left). Clearly, growing up in the early 1960s-70s impacts the deployment of her L2 selves inasmuch as it requires an almost survival-like attitude, which involves specific attributes, such as being "strong-willed" (Item D_J, bottom middle), self-assertive, loud and articulate ('I had the gift of the gab' (Int_1/01:02:25)).

As the story unfolds, we understand from Josette's narrative that she fought tooth and nail to demonstrate that she could live up to her own and against others' expectations right from the beginning. Her personal notes indicate that her motivation stemmed from a clear

desire "not to lose something which was MINE and that I had fought for" (Josette/ Personal notes, her capitalization). Her decision to learn languages indeed began with a clear desire to take "a revenge for not having had a good education" (Personal notes), and involved disobeying her parents ('without telling them' (Int_1/10:49) / 'they didn't know' (Int_1/10:56) / 'without my parents' agreement' (Int_2/Part1/18:43 / 'My first rebellion was from 15 to 17-18 years old, hitchhiking everywhere'[54] (Int_2/Part1/20:27). Furthermore, her determination to learn English and make the learning *hers* is evident in the following excerpt, where she explains that being told she could not do like her brothers had the reverse effect in that it motivated her to trace her own pathway and disobey her parents:

EXCERPT J_3_Int_1

[08:03] my two brothers were allowed **everything** […] I was forbidden **everything**. Okay? […] So, I cycled and I talked with people with no problem either in Piemonte, or in Italian...' [emphasis added]

6.2.2. Adulthood and phase shifts: Triggers of DMCs, DAS 1 and SAS

6.2.2.1 Phase shift 1

Josette's first major phase shift emerges from the acknowledgement of a deeply rooted self-discrepancy, as she ponders on her level of independence in France as she is socially and professionally active. Her first trip to England is presented in her narrative as an unplanned, and seemingly serendipitous event, since she does not have concrete plans for her journey. Paradoxically, her decision related to it is the result of a longer time spent on self-reflection, profoundly grounded in a heavily politicized and socially active life, driven by a profound desire for professional employability and material independence and a high degree of personal self-awareness that stresses a gap between her ideal self and her actual self:

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[54] *Ma première rebellion, ça a été de 15 ans à 17-18 ans, l'autostop de partout.*

EXCERPT J_4_Int_1

[00:13:42] so we [my future husband and I] had all these people [friends from their social circle] talking beautifully about everything, and me, mute. They had ideas. I had no ideas. 68 came, demonstrations on, and me I was... I didn't know what to think. […] What do I want? To be independent. How to be independent? To have money. How to have money? To have a better job. To have a better job? How? By learning new languages.

Dörnyei's (2009) third component of his L2MSS model lies in the language experience itself, which involves interactions with the external world related to L2. Quite clearly in Josette's narrative and life, L2 selves also merge with highly contextualized selves related to political, economic and gender issues. Josette herself writes in her personal notes, "in the 60s, politics were important" (Int_1/Personal notes), which makes her wonder straight in the next line of her notes, "where was I? What did I want?". In other words, she wonders on her position and motivation amidst political turmoil and social strife. Unconsciously, and beyond the practical aspect of ensuring future better employability, speaking a foreign language is instrumental and used as a compensation tool to palliate the intellectual gaps that she feels she has with the group of male intellectuals she regularly meets up with her husband-to-be. The context of this first phase shift is thus highly important to understand the rest of Josette's motivational journey. Her decision to move to London and then to Italy moves her both to a deep L2 attractor state, and her first DMC.

6.2.2.2 DMCs and DAS 1

Josette experiences two DMCs at a quite early stage of her adult life and one after the other, which represent the period covered in her first DAS (Figure 6.1). DMC 1 refers to her first expatriation to the UK from June to early December 1965, while DMC 2 covers her subsequent 5-months stay in Italy in 1966. Table 6.1 provides further details on the features of those two DMCs. Moreover, DMC 1 and DMC 2 are, according to Josette's written answers on the questionnaire, "the most intense in terms of workload", "the most

difficult/challenging", "the most influential/beneficial in the long run", and "the most satisfying/personally rewarding".

Table 6.1. Description of Josette's DMCs

DMCs #	DMC #1	DMC #2
LAUNCH / INITIAL CONDITIONS	**Feeling of injustice and social frustration:** 'a terrible sense of unfairness' (Int_1/12:26) / "to redress injustice." (Questionnaire, additional note)/ "a revenge for not having had a good education." (Josette/Int_1/Personal notes)	**Gain Independence:** "to get a sense of freedom" (Questionnaire, additional note) **+ a genuine desire to return to ancestors' roots + Italian naturally comes after English)** 'So I thought you have also to go to Italy to see the country of your ancestors. But if you go to Italy first you won't go to England, so start with England then to Italy.' (Int_1/15:58) **Join her English boyfriend to Naples:** 'I think he [Tony] was like, unfortunately, he was my opportunity.' (Int_1/46:19)
SELF-CONCORDANT GOALS	**Sense of possession:** "Skiing and English are mine." (Questionnaire, additional note)	**For mere pleasure**: writes "Naples" next to "for mere pleasure" (Questionnaire, additional note).
SALIENT FACILITATIVE STRUCTURE	**Self-disciplined:** 'From the moment I set foot in Britain, I no longer read a line of French. I didn't want to.'[55] (Int_2_Part1/05:26) **Welcoming support in London:** 'So, my first contact was **kindness** and **help**.' (Int_1/17:22, emphasis added) **Intense use of books:** 'I had read a lot. plenty of books. Oh, my goodness!' (Int_1/ 36:56)	**Use of bookshops, literature-related events and intense social life:** 'I wanted to learn Italian... no school to learn Italian in Naples, but there was a bookshop and er...behind this bookshop, there was a big place for lectures and they had good writer [sic] who came. And so, I was mixed with people of good level.' (Int_1/51:12) **Surrounded by a stimulating group of Italian artists and intellectuals:** '[Researcher] And you would speak in Italian obviously? [Josette] Only Italian. I don't know how I managed.' (Int_1/53:28)
POSITIVE EMOTIONAL QUALITY	**Passionate about the language:** 'I was so eager to swallow the language...' (Int_1/42:30)	**Enjoyable effort and sense of living different lives:** 'When you are young, nothing is difficult. Nothing is difficult.' (Int_1/53:44) '[Researcher] ...You had a lot of fun? [Josette]...A lot of... different lives. It was a life I wanted...' (Int_1/54:34)
IMPACT ON FAMILY REACTION	**Key figure of English boyfriend:** 'It was with him that I liberated myself from language learning blocks, so to speak, eh...'[56] (Int_2/Part1/04:17) **Absence of family reaction:** "they [parents] didn't give a damn"/ "No support from my family (neither with word nor with money)" (Questionnaire, additional note)	**SAME AS DMC 1** **+ Jealousy of English boyfriend that triggers the end of DMC 2**: 'It was a life I wanted but my English friend boyfriend was jealous.' (Int_1/54:35)
END	**Lasted 6 months / Feeling of loneliness in London:** 'My boyfriend away.... I was by myself, you see. Nobody left.' (Int_1/42:41)/ 'London is so wild... huge.' (Int_1/43:39)/ 'terrible solitude.'[57] (Int_2/Part2/04:32)	**Lasted 5 months / Break-up with English boyfriend**: 'five abominable months, we were just arguing, huh.'[58] (Int_2/Part1/04:50) / 'Five months, because I was fed up with my English boyfriend.' (Int_1/58:10)

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[55] *Dès l'instant où j'ai mis le pied en Grande-Bretagne, je n'ai plus lu une ligne de Français. Je n'ai pas voulu.*

[56] *C'est avec lui que je me suis déliée, entre guillemets, hein...*

[57] *solitude terrible.*

[58] *cinq mois abominables, on ne faisait que se disputer, hein.*

As Table 6.1 shows, the phases and delineations of Josette's DMCs are quite clearly expressed throughout her narrative. DMC 1 ends with the her leaving London due to the departure of her British boyfriend (and teacher), Tony, which immediately brings her to Italy so that she can follow him, which then launches her second DMC. DMC 2 then ends five months later, with the break up with Tony. Josette's DMCs are rather short (6 months and 5 months, respectively) yet intense, and they have a considerable impact on her L2 practice and obsession for the rest of her life. For instance, she describes those moments as a "turning point" and an "eye opener" (Questionnaire, additional notes). The launch for each DMC is as clear-cut as their end, especially since by the end of DMC 2, she is then hired at IBM for a position for which she will hardly ever use again English or Italian with the same intensity and level of commitment.

As Table 6.1 also indicates, both DMCs show common and recurrent motivational items that strongly correlate with the literature covered (Dörnyei *et al.,* 2014; Muir, 2020), especially with regards to the persistence of self-concordant goals (Josette clearly sets goals that align with her personality constructs and desires), the facilitative structure for learning (being abroad and forbidding herself from speaking any other language than the one she is learning; reading extensively in the foreign language), and the highly positive emotional outcome she experiences with both. Clearly, her family's absence of support remains the same in both DMCs. However, because of Josette's herd mentality ('gregarious instinct'[59] (Int_2/Part2/08:46)), she connects quite easily with natives and finds adequate resources around her. Her natural ability to connect and network not only helps her with the use and practice of English and Italian respectively, but also increases her FLL motivation overall. The only major difference Josette acknowledges between both DMCs is related to the intensity of 'hard work' and intellectual efforts. She writes, "it

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[59] *instinct grégaire.*

[learning the language] was hard work in England easier in Italy" (Questionnaire, additional note). She also uses strong imagery when she compares learning Italian as 'drinking water', as opposed to learning English, referred to as 'drinking whiskey' (Int_1/57:25; 57:28).

Both DMCs also provide a rather dysphoric emotional experience inasmuch as Josette experiences both highs and lows. In DMC 1, she is disillusioned when she realizes that brutal racism is striking England ('so that was really really something for me. Like hum... thunder, I was stricken by like a lightening. No coloured people. I couldn't think this possible', Int_1/26:12)), describes very 'expensive' life costs (Int_1/17:22 x2; Int_1/20:40 x4) and herself sleeping 'in the cellar with rats' (Int_1/23:08). Intense positive emotions emerge while struggling with English learning concurrently: 'that was very exciting to know how they [British friends] lived, you see, […] I could understand them in pubs [where] the noise was so enormous. I was at a loss' (Int_1/34:11). She even describes a difficult period during which she struggles with heavy loneliness:

> EXCERPT J_5_Int_2/Part2
> [00:04:32] I found myself in a terrible loneliness... In a cold, cold London. And then you remember everything you don't like about London. For example… Back then, there was smog. People who don't care about you. And I was alone.[60]

On the opposite side of the emotional spectrum, her encounter with her British boyfriend in London is a turning point in her life ('He was a teacher. I became the love of his life. And it is how it started. And we are still friends. Now we're still fond of each other' (Int_1/32:33)) and a fractal renewing her motivation within this highly intense period of her life with languages. This positively charged encounter correlates with her emerging passion for literature, and especially for George Orwell, another motivational fractal: 'But the imprint

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[60] See original version in French, p. 285.

of George Orwell was long ... and it's still vivid in me. And if I believe in something, I believe in George Orwell' (Int_1/40:36). Josette further emphasizes the intensity of her passion for reading books in English through the books and book review notes she comes up with during the interview (see the fiction book she brought in Item FB_J in Appendix I, and one page of her book review notebook in Item NB_J) and in the following excerpt:

EXCERPT J_6_Int_1

Josette: [00:42:30] No, no, no. I was **so eager to swallow the language**...

Researcher: [00:42:36] ...OK...

Josette: [00:42:37] ...that I could have read using night and days.

Researcher: [00:42:40] OK.

Josette: [00:42:41] I **wanted**, I **wanted** to learn English. I **wanted** to know the vocabulary... I **wanted** to talk fluently. [emphasis added]

Similarly, in one of her love letters to Tony in 1966 while he is in Italy and she is in London, she vividly describes her obsession for the language, and the emotionally charged period she is going through back then (Item LL1_J, below):

Item LL1_J. Love letter to Tony, 12th August 1966, p.1[61]

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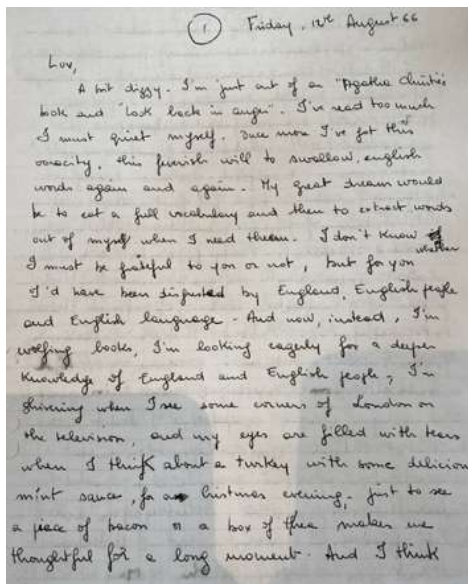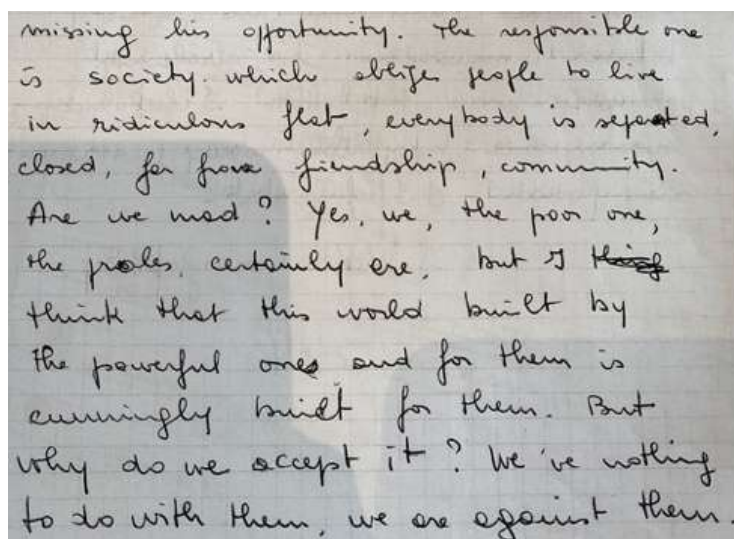
[61] *Friday, 12th August 66 Luv, […] I've read too much. I must quiet myself. Once more, I've got this **voracity**, this **feverish will to swallow** English words again and again. My great dream would be to **eat a full vocabulary** and then to **extract words out of myself when I need them** […]. I'm **looking eagerly for a deeper knowledge** of England and English people. I am shivering when I see some corners of London on the television, and **my eyes are filled with tears** when I think about a turkey with some delicious mint sauce for Christmas evening – just to see a piece of bacon or a box of [crossed out] **makes me thoughtful for a long moment.** (p.1) [emphasis added]*

6.2.2.3 Impact of DMCs on L2 motivational self

During both DMCs, Josette continuously strengthens her ideal L2 self (Figure 6.3) in the form of psychological reactance - being motivated by doing what others believe is not possible (Brehm, 1966; Brehm & Brehm, 1981). This rebellious attitude follows her throughout her journey in Italy (DMC 2): 'French wearing trousers. Oh yes. I didn't tell you that the first day [in Italy] I was stoned. Because I had trousers. In 1966' (Int_1/51:11). Her attitude is an interesting counterexample to the argument sustained by Thompson and Vásquez (2015) and a larger research community (e.g., Seeman *et al.*, 2004; Woller *et al.*, 2007), which supports that men tend to exhibit more psychological reactance than women (Seeman *et al.,* 2004, p. 171). She eloquently describes her opposition to society in one of her letters to Tony (Item LL2_J, below):

Item J_LL2. Excerpt of Love Letter to Tony, 12th August 1966, p.5[62]

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[62] *The responsible one is society which oblige people to live in ridiculous flat, everybody is separated, closed, far from friendship, community. Are we mad? Yes, we, the poor one, the* [illegible] *certainly are, but I think that this world built by the powerful ones and for them is cunningly built for them. But why do we have to accept it? We've nothing to do with them, we are against them.* (p.5)

Beyond her conflicting inner selves that are often confronted to social or gender gaps, Josette always clearly interacts with other selves too. As Noels (2009) supports, 'people within the learner's network play an important role in supporting (or undermining) the learner's needs, in effect providing the 'nutriments' for internalization and self-actualisation' (p. 302). Self-Determination Theory (SDT) posits that those needs are autonomy, competence and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2003). This is particularly illustrated in Josette's view of her influential close foreign relationships, such as her British boyfriend, perceived as a role model who paves the way for her DMC experiences. In her love letter to Tony, she clearly depicts how stimulating he was to her in her practice of English (Item LL3_J).

Item LL3_J. Excerpt of Love Letter to Tony, 12th August 1966, p.3[63]
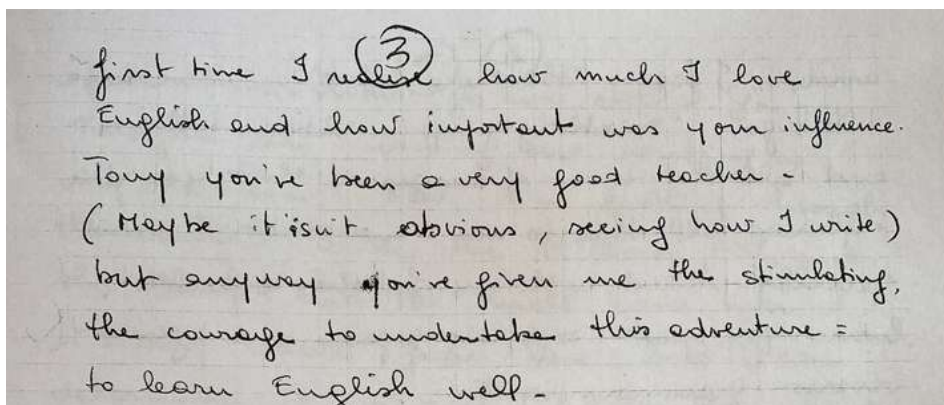
Along her journey, Josette also finds inspiring groups of intellectuals and native foreign speakers she befriends, and who inspire her. This is the case of intellectual groups in London and in Italy, which all contribute one way or another to her acknowledgement of

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[63] *I realize how much I love English and how important was your influence. Tony you've been a very good teacher. (Maybe it isn't obvious, seeing how I write) but anyway you've given me the stimulating, the courage to undertake this adventure to learn English well.*

her progress in learning the language, and help her reduce the discrepancy between her actual and ideal selves. The following excerpt shows the significance of one of those groups, the one based in Naples, in her overall motivation:

EXCERPT J_7_Int_1

Josette: [00:52:34] I met painters, and [she shows another picture of herself surrounded by men 'acting']. Look at my life...

Researcher: [00:52:42] Are you here? [points at young Josette on the picture]

Josette [00:52:22] Yes. They put a rope and there... this was my death, you see and we were playing... acting always fighting... The only picture I've got of them.

Researcher: [00:52:59] Were they friends?

Josette: [00:53:03] Italian friends.

An SDT-oriented perspective would contend that Josette's experience with L2 use over the years helps develop her sense of self characterized by 'the simultaneous processes of, on the one hand, becoming increasingly differentiated and refined as a result of new experiences, and, on the other hand, becoming more and more coordinated and cohesive as a result of the synthetic process' (Noels, 2009, p. 296).

As Figure 6.3 above visually indicates, in her early adult life, Josette's historical motivational self-construct and overall individuation indeed appears to form its basis on a balanced combination of ideal and anti-ought-to selves, especially during DAS 1, which covers both DMCs. As she relates in her story, her experience with language learning from childhood to the present days is both a lonely and a collective one, which forms a rather complete development. Furthermore, as literature tells, 'the more vivid and elaborate the possible self, the more motivationally effective it is likely to be' (Al-Shehri, 2009, p. 165). The visualized representations Josette brings during both interviews, with the photos (Items PH_J1; PH_J2 and PH_J3, in this chapter, 6.1), the books (Appendix I: Item FB_J), textbooks (Appendix I: Item LTB_J) and notebook (Item NB_J, in this chapter, section 6.1), which she initiates in early adulthood, and keeps using (for instance, she still writes book

reviews on her notebook at present), clearly define her ideal L2 self from the start, and the many L2-related 'selves' ('different lives', (Int_1/54:35)) she experiences across life (Figure 6.3).

6.2.2.4 Phase shift 2 and SAS

The second phase shift refers to the end of DMC 2, i.e., to Josette's return to France and her subsequent recruitment at IBM, leading to a rupture in L2 use and practice. She describes this second phase shift quite briefly as a rupture with her 'bohemian life' (Int_2/Part1/11:02): 'And finally, I got tired of it, huh. Comfort is nice, huh'[64] (Int_2/Part1/11:01). Note that her second L2 attractor state (SAS) is shallower than the two others due to a motivational focus on her career rather than on L2 use and practice. Josette characterizes this period 'a wind of opportunities' (Int_2/Part1/19:48), during which, and despite the absence of daily use of L2, she looks for as many opportunities as she can to practice her English: 'I think I was seizing all the possibilities'[65] (Int_2/Part1/00:01). For instance, at IBM, although opportunities to speak either English or Italian are rare, she *hunts* for English-speaking customers to work with, especially during international events:

EXCERPT J_8_Int_1

[01:04:53] And I became friends with people organizing [international meetings in Cannes]. They were either German or from Netherlands...from everywhere. So, we spoke at the airport in English. And then in the end, they took me to welcome the VIPs on the tarmac, you see, with the red carpet. And I spoke to them in English.

Because Josette experiences strong gender-related resistance all throughout her life, including during her career at IBM, her anti-ought-to self naturally merges with her anti-ought-to L2 self. In other words, the way she *drives* her life and considers her career

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[64] *Et finalement, j'en ai eu marre hein. Le confort, c'est quand même bien plaisant, hein.*
[65] *je crois que je saisissais toutes les possibilités.*

choices, whether *in opposition to* or *in relation to* male and female figures is similar to the way she learns English and Italian, always in relation to her external connections. Josette's conflicting selves is clearly explained through her ambivalent position in a society based on gender divisions, and the way she must cope with it. Because of her continuous emphasis on gender-related anecdotes during the first interview, I decided to question her on her view of gender in her life in our second meeting, and the way it impacted her motivation and use of English. The following excerpt departs on her sharing an anecdote on the way she had to negotiate with a police officer at the Belgian borders on a work mission, which eventually led the conversation to discuss on the influence of L2 use on her status quo:

EXCERPT J_9_Int_2/Part1

Josette: [00:25:27] I'm coming to the border post... [With] the fur coat... The customs officer was black. I was a woman. I said, my God, what is going to happen? […] But then, as a woman, you really had to play.

Researcher: [00:26:03] You talk a lot about it all along, even the first time we met, being a woman, the status quo, everything that is... Does […] the use of foreign languages somewhat enabled you to reach some sort of **readjustment**? […] Did the language allow you to be a little more on par with a man?

Josette: [00:26:28] I never thought about it... [...] But now, you remind me of it. **Yes, my answer is yes, definitely yes.** [emphasis added][66]

Throughout her career, Josette is also very conscious of her gender status and the way her language skills compensate on gender gaps, as she agrees, and rise her to the top of a male-dominated hierarchy. For example, the following excerpt describes how, in the mid 70s, she is given preferential treatment by her boss thanks to her English skills, and takes on responsibilities usually saved for male employees:

EXCERPT J_10_Int_2/Part1

Josette: [00:22:18] I was going all the way to the drop-off point to talk with the marketing

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[66] See original version in French, p. 285.

service in all countries. So [that was] in English. There, it lasted for 5 years. And when we went to Algeria…

Researcher: [00:22:44] ... yes ...

Josette: [00:22:44] ... I was the one who knew how to do the paperwork, how to organize everything. Well, once we've organized everything, the Algerians tell us, "Okay, who's coming?". So, we either put Madame [Josette] D. or no woman at all.[67]

6.2.3. Third Age and Josette's DAS of L2-related behaviourial, emotional and motivational stabilities

6.2.3.1 Multiplication of HPMS in third age

The third phase shift comes with retirement and in a less abruptly manner than the two first, leaving the system slowly evolve within a comfortable and ultimate deep attractor state (DAS 2 in Figure 6.1) that aggregates most of Josette's HPMs. This soft shift is partly explained by the already well-established L2 self-system throughout the years, and partly by her accumulated experience with L2 use. Figure 6.4 provides a more detailed analysis of Josette's HPMs in third age.

As the graph (Figure 6.4) shows, Josette experiences 9 HPMs, including the two DMCs in young adulthood and described previously, and 7 other peaks as a senior L2 user. She ranks all of them as 'very intense', except HPM8, which represents her course at the Dante School (and return to Italian study at the age of 75), for which her motivation scores 1/5 (1 being 'not very intense'). While she cannot recall anything positive about the course, she was still greatly involved, reading 18 books in a row (Int_2/Part 1/ 09:45), and experiencing 'an incredible motivation to learn all the regular [and] irregular verbs'[68] (Int_2/Part2/07:32). She would also do side practice with native speakers who either died or left ('So that is the end of my Italian', (Int_1/1:12:16)). She was highly motivated to enroll there although she

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[67] See original version in French, p. 285.
[68] *une motivation incroyable à apprendre tous les verbes réguliers irréguliers.*

was very disappointed by the school's functioning: 'I enrolled to the Dante [Italian language school], diving in head first. I thought, there, it's going to be wonderful. And cold shower. Zero'[69] (Int_2/Part2/ 07 :51).

Figure 6.4. Pictorial and chronological representation of Josette's HPMs and DMCs
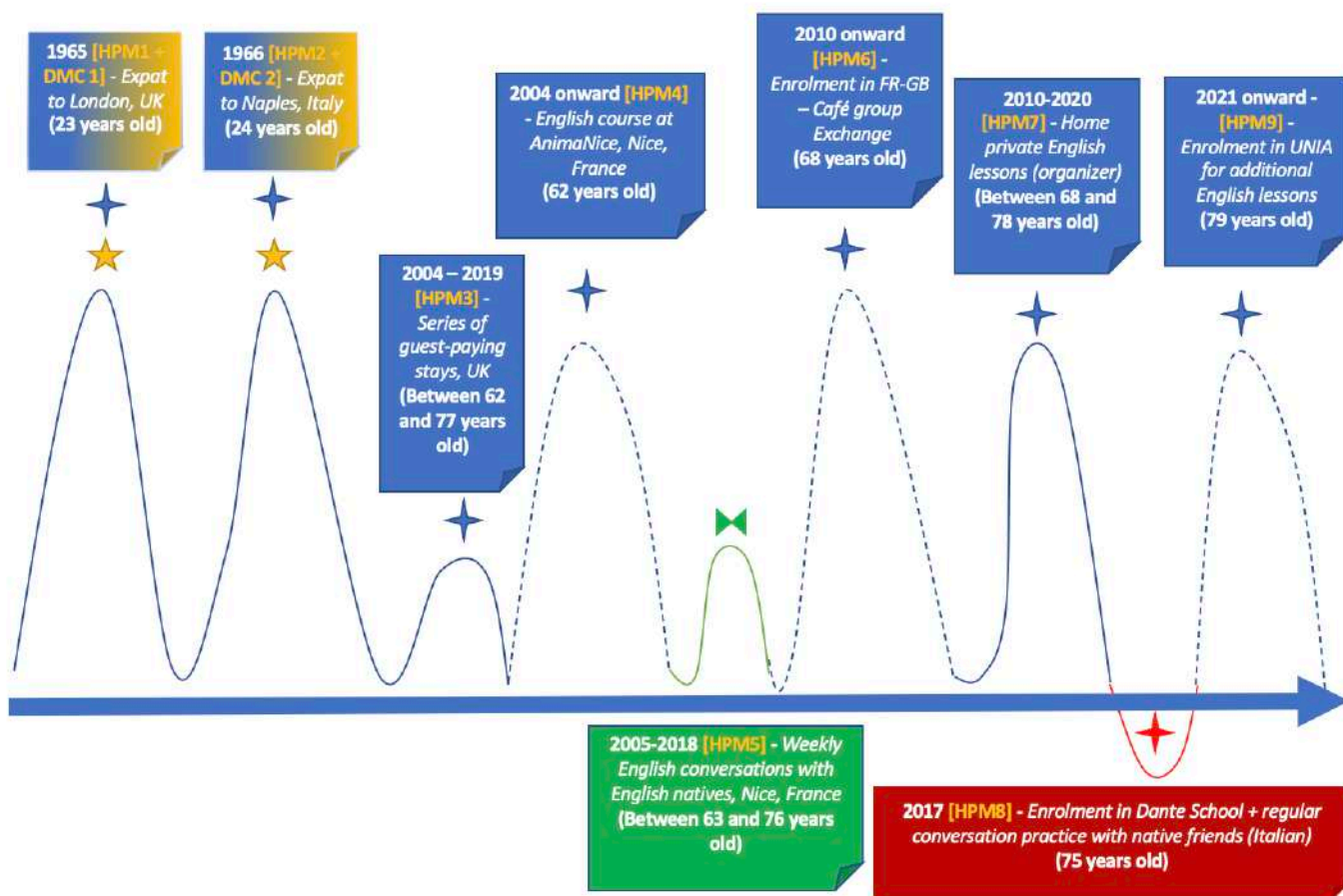
GRAPH LEGEND

High Peak of Motivation (HPM) – intense, motivational peaks with flexible duration

Directed Motivational Current (DMC) – intense, clearly-set-in-time motivational trigger

High Peak of Motivation (HPM) that was indicated but not ranked by participant

High Peak of Motivation (HPM) – perceived with 'negative' outcome yet still stimulating

Ongoing Peak of Motivation (oPM)

Ended Peaks of Motivation (ePM)

---

[69] *Je suis arrivée à la Dante bille en tête. Je me suis dit, là, ça va être merveilleux. Et douche froide. Zéro.*

Table 6.2 below indicates Josette's answers from the questionnaire with regard to her overall perception of her HPMs, when asked about reflecting upon her highest peaks. Note that her motivational peaks were quite numerous and diverse, thus making it difficult for the questionnaire to propose any specific statements focused on a just few. However, Josette recorded all of the ones indicated in Figure 6.4 except HPM3 (series of guest-paying stays in the UK between 2004 and 2019), which was discussed and validated later and only after the questionnaire was filled in. While the questionnaire did not refer to any particular peak, so as to keep a general view of her lifelong motivation, the statements quite clearly illustrate the overall intensity and importance of the peaks she pointed out in her life.

Table 6.2. Features of Josette's HPMs according to questionnaire

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	DON'T KNOW
1. I THINK SOMETHING SPECIAL HAPPENED TO ME DURING THIS EXPERIENCE – IT WAS AN AMAZING TIME					X	
2. DURING THIS TIME, I WAS ABLE TO WORK MORE PRODUCTIVELY THAN I USUALLY CAN					X	
3. I SURPRISED MYSELF WITH HOW MUCH I WAS ABLE TO DO					X	
4. AT THE TIME, THIS PROJECT BECAME A CENTRAL PART OF MY LIFE	X					
5. THE PEOPLE AROUND ME COULD SEE THAT I WAS EXPERIENCING SOMETHING SPECIAL		X				
6. I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE HARD WORK AT THE TIME – I WAS JUST CAUGHT UP IN THE FLOW!					X	

Furthermore, features of those HPMs often involve similar characteristics to DMCs and similar motivational reactions, yet they are not narrated with the same length of details as Josette's experiences in London (DMC 1) and in Naples (DMC 2). Josette indeed spends more time describing DMC 1 (a total of 31min) and DMC 2 (a total of 17min), than any

other peaks. Spontaneously, participants would devote the time they wished to for each peak, and I concluded they spent more time describing events that were most meaningful to them. This quick time calculation helps categorizing DMCs both separately from the other peaks of motivation.

Josette's HPMs come in addition to her two first DMCs, and are different from both DMCs. In that they come and fill in more technical aspects of her study that she could not tackle in any of her DMCs. For instance, Josette explains the structure of her course at AnimaNice (HPM4): 'But grammar, for me it was important because I started with zero, zero, and it was only at AnimaNice that I learned a little bit of grammar, well a lot of grammar'[70] (Int_2/Part1/08:09). Note that, as Figure 6.4 illustrates, three HPMs out of the nine that I've recorded are still ongoing today. Despite their self-absorbing intensity, they cannot therefore validate one central aspect of DMCs, which is their limitation in time. As opposed to DMCs, which have an end, Josette's FLL motivation is a never-ending story with ups and downs. As a good illustration, today, Josette's continuous participation at the Café group (HPM6) and her practice at the UNIA (*Université Nice Inter-Âges*) (HPM9) represent "the highlight[s] of [her] week" (Questionnaire, additional note). Josette strongly agrees (score: 5/5, Questionnaire) that those two peaks "highly influence her practice of English." However, Josette's present enthusiasm stemming from her current peaks (HPM4, HPM6, HPM9) is not as self-absorbing as DMC 1 and DMC 2. For example, she seems to be forced to a certain form of passivity with the current peaks she is experiencing, since she admits she sometimes gets bored and waits for something to happen ('[these classes are all about] how to fill in one hour and a half without feeling bored'[71](Int_2/Part1/35:25)) in the classroom at UNIA and AnimaNice:

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[70] *Mais la grammaire, pour moi c'était important parce que j'ai débuté avec zéro, zéro, et c'est seulement à AnimaNice que j'ai appris un peu de grammaire, enfin beaucoup de grammaire.*
[71] [les cours] *C'est, [...] comment occuper mon heure et demie [le temps] que ça passe?*

> **EXCERPT J_11_Int_2/Part2**
>
> **Researcher:** [00:09:06] So you're still [at AnimaNice]?
>
> **Josette:** [00:09:07] Oh yeah, yeah. […] For people who are nice... And then, I think, well, something has to happen at some point.
>
> **Researcher:** [00:09:14] Do you still learn something? […] It's more for socialization...
>
> **Josette:** [00:09:19] Yes, that's right, to socialise. And then, I tell myself, maybe I'll remember something.[72]

6.2.3.2 (Re-)Triggering groups and relatedness

As Excerpt J_11 above indicates, Josette refers to her need to belong to productive groups of learners and active foreign language users. She is obsessed with learning something from others ('Or I have to, like now, I'm travelling to Turin with this famous guide that I know... With him, I'm sure I'll come back with something [new] in my head'[73] (Int_2/Part2, 23:10)). These group triggers are what Muir refers to as 'socially rooted triggers' (Muir, 2020, p. 29), which also act as powerful tools to keep Josette's motivation alive. Such a need for relatedness not only brings Josette continual re-triggering maintaining the current in good flow, but also an emotional sense of social well-being (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016, Muir, 2022). She is looking for 'trigger' L2 groups that can strive for mutual FLL goals, and form 'an emotional bonding with collaborators liking each other's well-being' (Johnson, Johnson and Smith, 1998, p. 19). The influence of others (whether tutors or language learning peers) on Josette's motivated self is indeed critical and vital (she uses the word 'essential'[74] (Int_2/Part2/19:22)), so much so that, as people she used to practise her language skills with passed away in the last few years, she more recently started to show a few signs of demotivation ('I am fed up now' (Int_1/1:21:27)):

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[72] See original version in French, p. 285.

[73] *Ou alors il faut, comme là, je vais aller à Turin avec ce fameux guide que je connais... Avec lui, je suis sûre que je reviendrai avec quelque chose dans la tête.*

[74] *indispensable.*

EXCERPT J_12_Int_2/Part1

[00:37:24] Now I don't want [to organise language learning meetings] anymore. There's one [usual participant] who hasn't responded to my request [to participate in an English conversation group]. It's… It's violent, it's very violent. I said now, I'm sick of it. And then maybe it was time to turn the page.[75]

Despite the natural deaths due to ageing in her close circle of friends, the significance of language networking in third age is still particularly relevant in Josette's present experience, and is further exemplified in the following description of her networking skills (Excerpt J_13), and which I have represented in Figure 6.5. below. I have gathered and put members in a different colour according to the social circle and group they belong to:

EXCERPT J_13_Int_2/Part1

[00:02:49] So I had Philip, who died of cancer. All is well. I had Ian and Myra for two years, then they declined [laughs]. I had a Jenifer for a very long time and worse, but both [other two girlfriends] left before Brexit in England, for fear of not being able to buy something back in Britain. Well, since then, I haven't... Oh yeah. I had the "Mormon Girls"...[76]

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[75] See original version in French, p. 285.
[76] See original version in French, p. 286.

Figure 6.5. Josette's network (according to her story)[77]

* HMI – *Her Majesty's Inspectors*
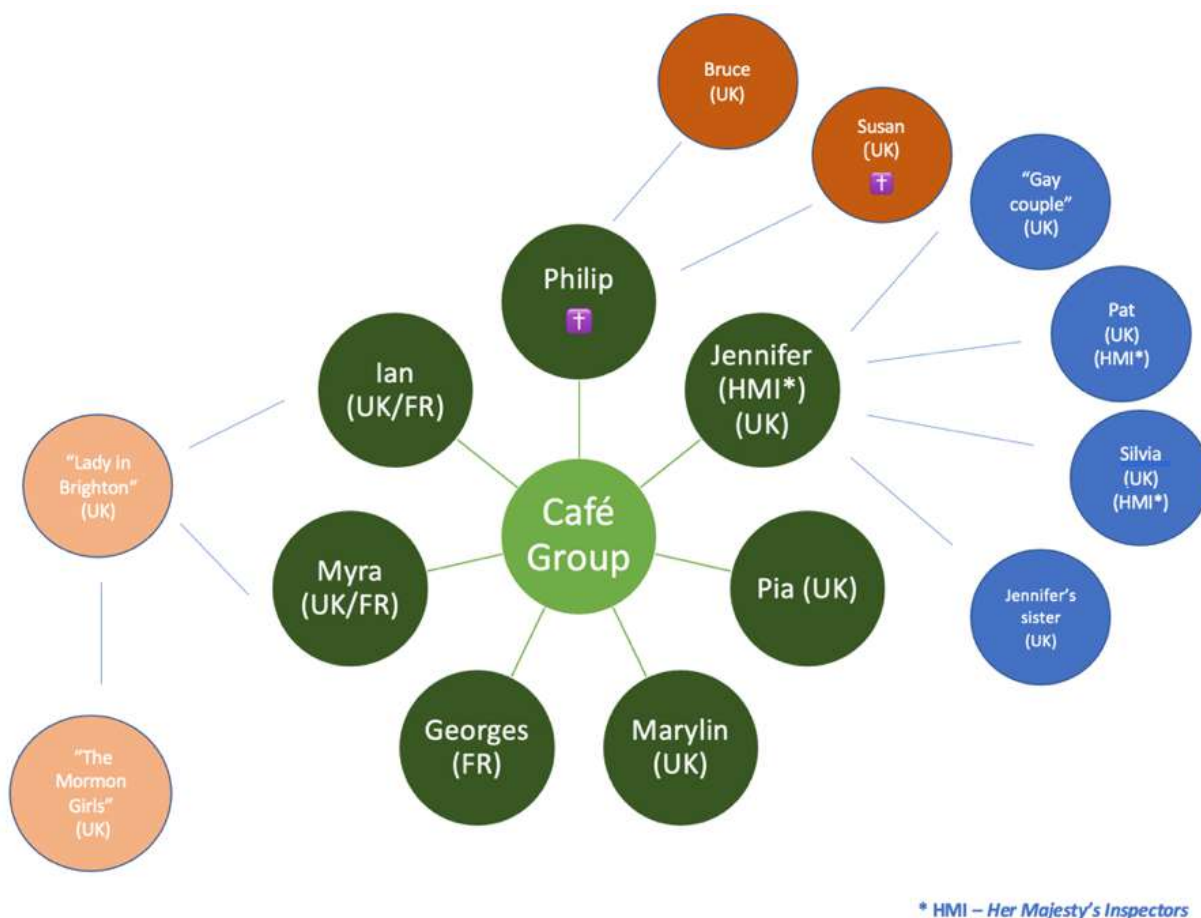
The Café Language Group (HPM6), which she joined in 2010, represents a central fractal of DAS 2 and is defined as 'very, very motivating'[78] (Int_2/Part2/07:09). In Figure 6.5, the Café Group circle is at the very centre, and its members are in green. To some extent, Josette's description of the group and its characteristics (put in bold in the excerpt below) summarizes her motivational triggers: knowledge-sharing, friendship, benevolence, laughter, book reading and overall happy dynamism. The positive energy that emanates from the group explains its sustainability, and the reason why Josette's motivational

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[77] I have divided groups of friends in different colours. Each group is represented in one colour. Overall, in Josette's social environment, there are 4 different groups of language speakers (i.e., the pink, dark green, brown and blue) Josette can practise her skills with, most of them, except Georges (in dark green) being native English speakers.

[78] *très, très motivant.*

system has remained there ever since:

EXCERPT J_14_Int_2/Part1

Josette: [00:12:51] [The Café Group] is **alive**, **friendly**... uh... **Instructive**.

Researcher: [00:12:58] Instructive…

Josette: [00:12:59] It's about **sharing**…

Researcher: [00:13:02] Yes.

Josette: [00:13:03] It's like potluck dinner, huh!

Researcher: [00:13:05] Oh yeah, right?

Josette: [00:13:05] We come up with what we have and we talk about anything. […] It's always **benevolent** and **animated**, **frenzied**. **We laugh, we learn, we share.** So yes, there is… we share a lot of books, huh…

Researcher: [00:13:30] Okay.

Josette: [00:13:30] Everyone brings something. […] They are people who read a lot.[79] [emphasis added]

6.2.3.3 Ultimate L2 motivational stage: self-concordance and wellbeing

Upon the accumulation of ideal and anti-ought-to L2 selves, mainly influenced by larger and highly situated layers of life-encompassing motivational selves, Josette has reached a deeper sense of ecological L2 self, focused on pragmatism (i.e., with the aim to always learn something new about the language), and well-being highly grounded on socializing and networking, as expressed in her endless participations in foreign language discussion groups from young adulthood to the present days. As Figure 6.3 highlights, Josette's prevailing anti-ought-to L2 self since childhood has remained consistent and now merges with her ideal L2 self, forming a hybrid L2 motivational self in third age. Her present anti-ought-to self is also expressed in her level of demand in L2 learning, as she describes several episodes in which she had to 'change' teachers or look for new teachers due to constant dissatisfaction: 'oh well, I am, forgive me about this, stunned by the ignorance of

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[79] See original version in French, p. 286.

teachers.'[80] (Int_2/Part1/32:29).

At present, Josette experiences integrated regulation, that is, 'the most internalized and self-determined form of regulation', by which her beliefs and activities are self-congruent, so much so that the practice 'is a realization and expression of the self' (Noels, 2009, p. 298), also referred to as authenticity (Ryan and Deci, 2003). This idea was already quite clearly articulated from the very beginning and in Josette's own words: 'I have summarized who I am […]. Skiing. Cycling. The mountains, English. In [chronological] order. Then my daughter plus my lovers […] Then my job. All this is me' (Int_1/01:07). Josette finds her own way to study and practise, whatever the setting and conditions, and has a remarkable sense of adaptability. She looks for a life equilibrium, especially now that her practice of L2 has replaced her skiing and cycling activities, and is thus largely due to compensating the void created by the interruptions of physical activities due to her age: 'Why do I have UNIA, why do I have all this... to fill the void!'[81] (Int_2/Part2/16:35).

Josette's goals today remain self-concordant and clear ('learning English is a part of...who I am' (Int_1/0:50), and so is her learning structure; she writes in her personal notes, "To summarize: I need a good teacher + a good book + meeting -> talking with natives + reading" (Questionnaire, additional note). Josette's L2 self and its related learning experience is congruent with her values and lifelong commitments. Josette's narrative thus conveys an eudaimonic emotional tone, which can be interpreted as a feeling of self-fulfilment and 'a sense of flourishing by acting in a meaningful manner' (Noels, 2009, p. 296). She proudly declares, 'all my life, I managed' (Int_1/1:03:22), and further summarizes her philosophical attitude about lifelong learning, 'you see, when there is a will, there is a way' (Int_1/1:03:36).

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[80] *Après, bon, je suis, excusez-moi, stupéfaite de l'ignorance des professeurs.*
[81] *Pourquoi j'ai l'UNIA, pourquoi j'ai tout ça... pour remplir le vide !*

CHAPTER SEVEN: ANALYSIS OF PATRICIA'S LIFELONG HISTORY WITH LANGUAGE LEARNING

7.1 Brief biographical sketch

Patricia was born in 1956 in the French northern-eastern region of Champagne-Ardenne. Because of the geographical position of her home near the German borders, the school she attended only offered German classes, which she started at the age of 12, followed by English at the age of 14. Although Patricia excelled in both courses, she initially preferred German to English, for it was her first foreign language, which gave her a sense of 'rigor'[82] (Int_2/03:10) that suited her hard-working personality better (Int_1/03:10). The study of languages remained a 'medium motivation' level all throughout her childhood (Int_1/04:28).

In 1974, at the age of 18, Patricia started studying radiography in Nancy, a period during which she regretted not being able to pursue language learning or have any contact with the language. In 1980, she moved to Nice and worked at a clinic as a radiography assistant for 41 years. As soon as she arrived in Nice at the age of 24, she enrolled in a German

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[82] *rigueur.*

course for she found the idea of learning a foreign language 'useful' (Int_1/06:28). However, after one year and a half, she decided to stop the course for she realized German, in particular, was actually not useful in her work, especially as most of the equipment she was using at the clinic came from the US, which meant that manuals were written in English. In the meantime, she married her husband in 1984 and gave birth to her daughter in 1986.

Two decades later, at the age of 44, Patricia enrolled in her first course of English at the leisure and cultural centre of AnimaNice, in Nice, 'only for pleasure and for travel' (Int_1/09:23), where she attended a one-hour-and-a half-long class every week and continuously ever since, which provided her with the language fundamentals. There, she met Josette and made new L2 learning friends. She soon realized the language fulfilled her professional needs better than German, since the course helped her improve her understanding skills so that she could more easily read the professional equipment's instructions she had to work with at the clinic. Furthermore, she started to grow a desire to speak with a good grammar and syntax, and looked for native speakers to speak to, seizing every possible opportunity she could. She enjoyed the friendly atmosphere in the classroom at AnimaNice, but found the level disparity disappointing. In 2010, she supported Josette's idea to form a new, smaller group of five to six people and organize a private course, alternating venues from one friend's home to another's. In 2012, she visited Scotland with two other 'motivated' (Int_1/27:43) friends from her English course at AnimaNice. While she does not consider the trip as a motivational peak, she still responds positive on its importance (Int1/26:40), as the photos on her memorable trip (see Items PH_P1; PH_P2 and PH_P3 below) also testify.

Item PH_P1. Cover of photo album to Scotland with English classmates from AnimaNice (2012)

Item PH_P2. Photos of Patricia's English classmates from AnimaNice at the airport on their way to Scotland (2012)

Item PH_P3. Patricia with English classmates from AnimaNice on their trip to Edinburgh, Scotland (2012)

2014 was a 'turning point' (Int_1/24:49) in Patricia's lifelong motivation with L2. Boosted by the private English learning community she had set up with Josette, Patricia became more eager to look for new L2 learning challenges on her own. A key milestone of her solo language journey was her decision to study for the TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) exam by herself. Without telling anyone, not even her closest relatives, she enrolled in the Wall Street Institute (WSI) 'to boost [her] progress' (Int_1/49:22), successfully sat the TOEIC exam, and obtained her diploma in 2015. The course she took at the WSI was very intense for she attended seven hours of English every week there for a year and a half. At the WSI, despite the weekly change of teachers, one English teacher in particular, Paul Bacon, deeply inspired her and maintained her motivation high thanks to constantly detailed student progress reports and constructive feedback, as Items AR_P1 and AR_P2 show below.

Item AR_P1. "Student Progress Profile", WSI, Feedback from Paul Bacon, 07/05/2014

Item AR_P2. "Student Progress Profile", WSI, Feedback from Paul Bacon, 21/05/2014

Patricia felt 'very sad' (Int_1/34:47) when Paul Bacon left the WSI after a few months, but his departure did not lead to any motivational decline. On the contrary, the feedback she would receive from every new teacher together with the full immersion she experienced when entering the WSI helped her keep her learning standards high, while nurturing her pleasure for L2 use and learning. She found English literature particularly enthralling and enjoyed reading fiction books in English, as highlighted in the books she brought in Items FB_P1, FB_P2 and FB_P3 below.

Item FB_P1. Book cover of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (Patricia's)
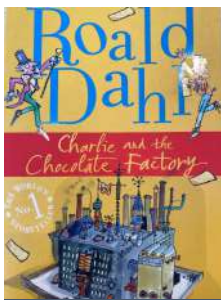
Item FB_P2. Book cover of The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me (Patricia's)
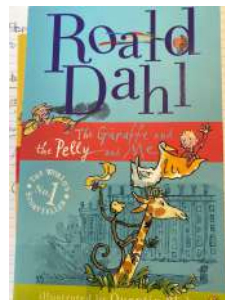
Item FB_P3. Book cover of The Pearl (Patricia's)

In 2019, at the age of 63, Patricia won a contest through the publication of an article related

to medical imagery in English, and was invited to present her paper in Chicago, where she travelled for 3 days and enjoyed an 'incredible' language experience (Int_1/43:48). More recently, a similar feeling of pride built up as she twitted a radiologist from New York once to ask him a question related to a surgery her team had to perform in France. His reply to her personally boosted her self-esteem and overall motivation in L2. In 2020, the Covid-19 lockdown forced her to stop the private English group meetings with Josette, to her deepest regret.

Today, at the age of 66, Patricia is very active physically and intellectually, she enjoys training her 'brain' as much as her 'legs'[83] (Int_2/45:31), and portrays herself as 'always motivated for everything' (Int_1/38:38). She is planning to retire in a year or two, and keen on visiting English-speaking countries then. Her forthcoming trip to Finland (scheduled in February 2022) with her daughter and grandchildren is her current stimulator. She is still enrolled in AnimaNice and finds English learning both enjoyable and challenging, especially as it requires a specific 'mindset' (Int_1/13:13). She multiplies participations in English-speaking webinars related to work, especially since the pandemic's lockdown. Other L2 activities involve reading widely on the Internet, especially newspaper articles, and watching movies in English on Netflix. She very much looks forward to being retired to be able to spend more time reading in English. As she puts it simply, 'the more old [older, *sic*] I become, the more I want to read, to learn' (Int_1/51:02). Patricia has always been a knowledge seeker and more particularly at present. Future plans involve her move to Marseille to be closer to her daughter and grandchildren but she reckons she will be missing Josette and her English learning community here: 'the ideal [English learning environment] is like with [Josette], but there is no [Josette] in Marseille to organize [private lessons]! (laughs)' (Int_1/01:03:00).

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[83] *La tête et les jambes.*

7.2. Analysing Patricia's motivational trajectory as a dynamic system

7.2.1. General view and multi-layered analysis

Just like Georges and Josette, Patricia's relation with languages evolves drastically from childhood to the present days. Unlike the two previous candidates, however, she provides key milestones of her motivation with L2 in her timeline, displayed in Figure 7.1 below. The motivational graph that she draws (Figure 7.1) shows that her motivation intensity and strength of engagement departs quite low, with a score of 4/10 at 11 years old, and keeps increasing to reach a threshold, 10/10 at 65 years old. When assessing the influence of each period on her overall motivation in L2 use and practice in the questionnaire, she rates her youth as not very influential (2/5), early adulthood as neutral (3/5) and mid-adulthood as slightly influential (4/5). Her late adulthood/pre-retirement period and retirement phase are both rated as very influential (5/5).

Figure 7.1. Patricia's vision of her motivational trajectory throughout life
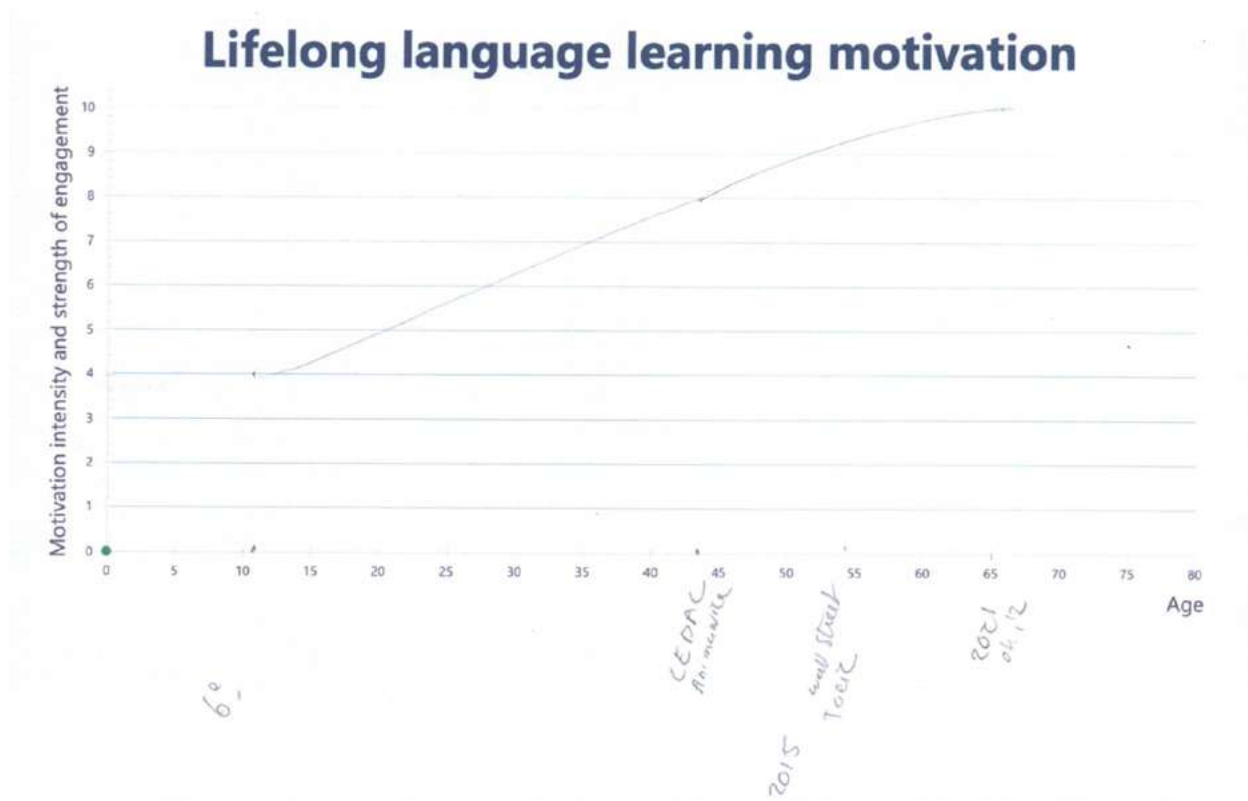
A complexity-inspired view of lifelong language motivation digs into Patricia's motivational flux throughout life with a focus on her motivational states for each period, and their respective triggering phases and speed. As I did with the first two participants, I departed from Patricia's L2 motivational current state, and traced back the system's trajectory up to its launch and initial conditions in a retrodictive manner, as shown in Figure 7.2.

Figure 7.2. Representation of **Patricia** as a complex system moving through the state space landscape[84]
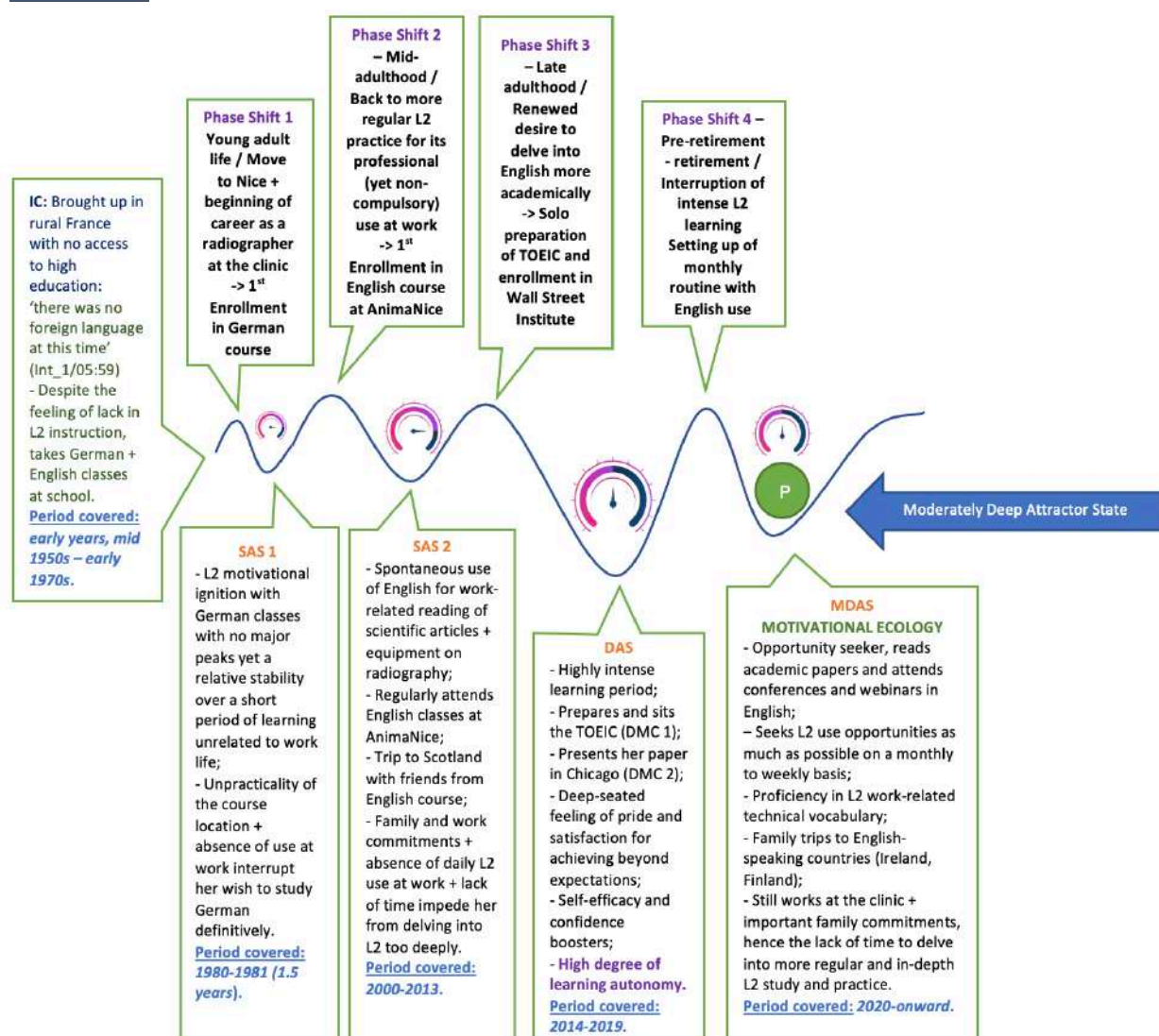
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[84] **IC**: Initial Conditions; **SAS**: Shallow Attractor State; **MDAS**: Moderately Deep Attractor State; **DAS**: Deep Attractor State

Slow speed vector   Medium speed vector   Fast speed vector

Patricia's individual complex system
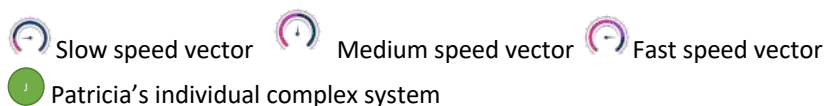
motivation, particularly intense periods of study and practice, and their impact on her L2 motivational self-system.

7.2.2. Early years and initial conditions [IC]

As with Georges and Josette, while the impact of early years seemed rather insignificant in the eyes of Patricia (she spent a total of 3 minutes out of 1h07 talking about her childhood and her relation with languages then), it became clear in the end, and as we drew her motivational tree together (shown in Item D_P below), that her roots and upbringing had a consequential influence in the shaping of her personality traits and the rest of her trajectory.

Item D_P. Patricia's motivational tree drawing
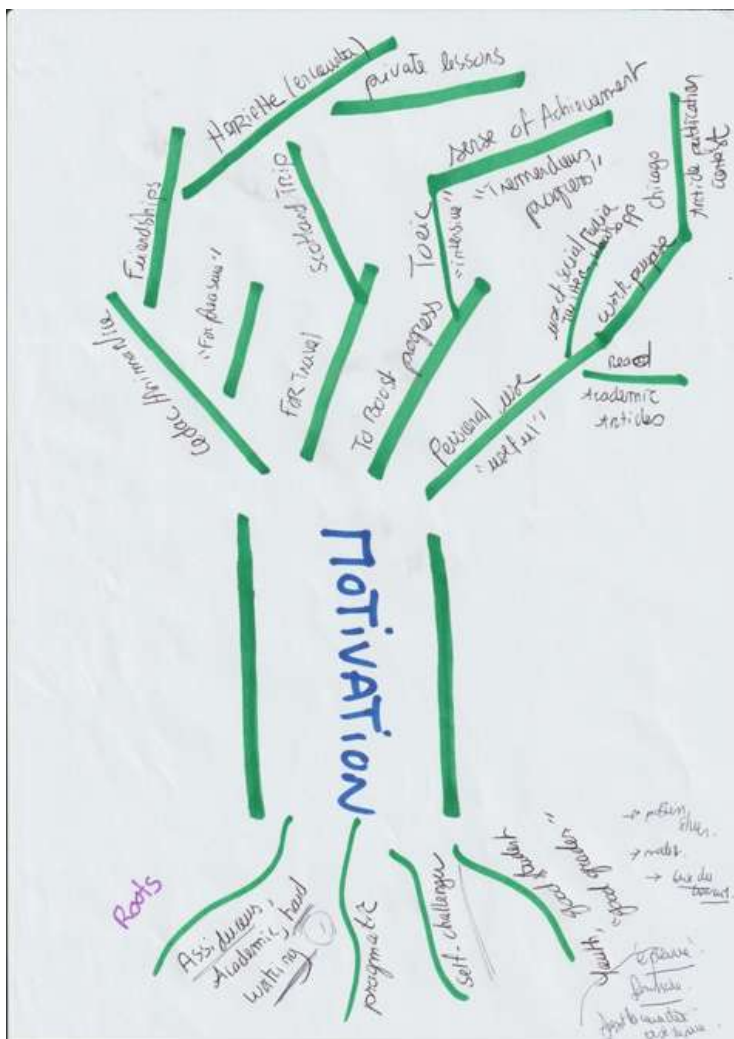
Patricia explains that her father died when she was two, and that she and her two brothers were raised up by her mother and grandparents:

EXCERPT P_1_Int_1

Researcher: [00:43:13] ... The roots, we didn't talk much about it, but what about the family in the end, the family context, back during your youth? In what way could it have been a trigger?

Patricia: [00:43:24] Oh yeah. Because... it [the death of my father] was a tragedy, anyway. Especially, especially for my mom, actually. I was only two, I don't remember… but, uh, it's a dramatic situation. Widowed at 32, with three children.

Researcher: [00:43:39] Yes.

Patricia: [00:43:41] But it's... at least we've never complained. My... my two brothers and I, we had nothing to play with. But we... we had a happy youth.

Researcher: [00:43:49] Yes.

Patricia: [00:43:50] It was our grandparents who raised us.

Researcher: [00:43:52] Okay.

Patricia: [00:43:53] But everyone was living in the village. And... but it builds character...

Researcher: [00:43:58] The events?

Patricia: [00:43:59] Oh yeah.

Researcher: [00:43:59] ...they build character.

Patricia: [00:44:01] Yeah, very important. Because that's actually the starting point...

Researcher: [00:44:08] Very well. And did your resilience emerge from this?

Patricia: [00:44:12] Yes, yes.[85]

Patricia repeats twice and with some pride that she paid her studies on her own (Int_2/41:57; Int_2/42:04), coming from 'a very poor'[86] (Int_2 /) family. To my question whether it had an impact on her lifelong motivation, her answer is positive. In the roots of her motivational tree drawing (displayed below in Item D_P), Patricia added "meaning of

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[85] See original version in French, p. 286.
[86] *très pauvre.*

work[87], "family hardship"[88], "build character"[89] and "resilience"[90] (bottom right hand-side). She further elaborates on her family roots during our conversation, and explains, 'what I get from my mother is the sense of duty. Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, that's for sure.'[91] (Int_2/42 :27).

7.2.2.1 Birth of self-constructs

Clearly, and as for the two first participants, Patricia's self-system – both related and unrelated to L2 – builds up throughout the years, as I show in Figure 7.3, which again includes the corresponding motivational phases taken from Figure 7.2 in the blue box, the general self-construct framework in the green boxes, and the more specific motivational L2 selves in the red boxes.

Figure 7.3. Evolution of Patricia's motivational selves across life

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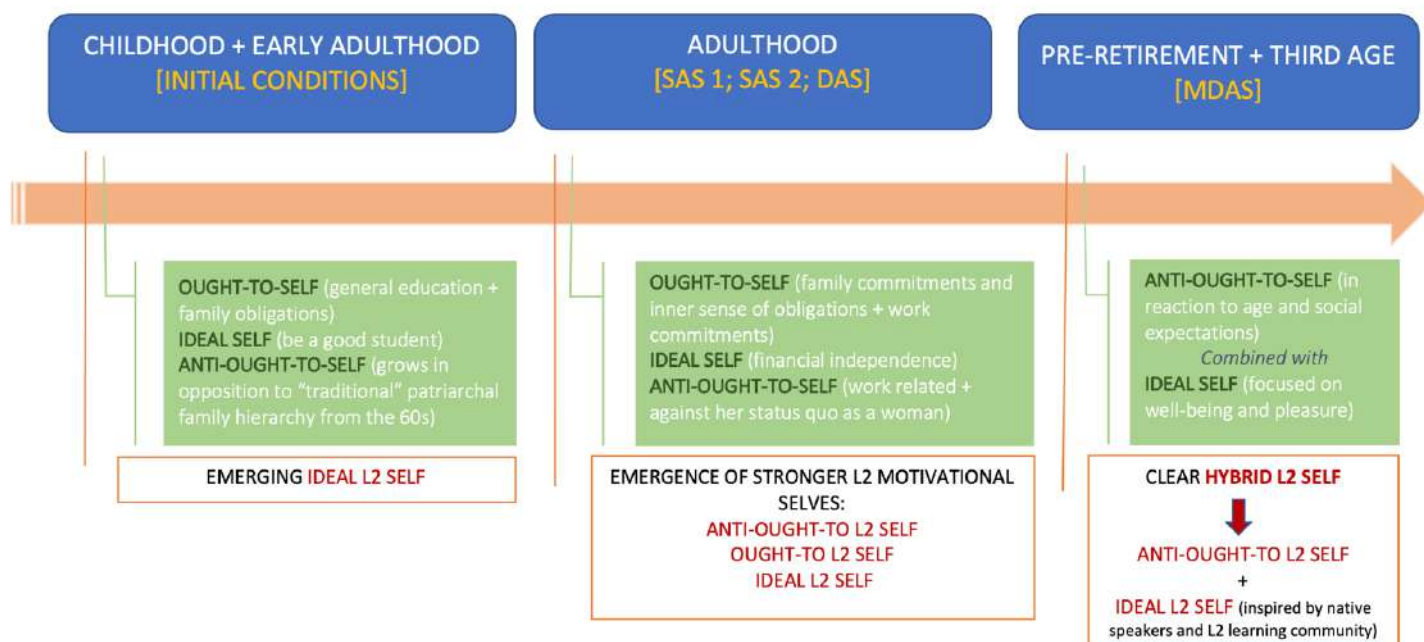
[87] *sens du travail.*
[88] *épreuve familiale.*
[89] *forge le caractère.*
[90] *persévérance.*
[91] *ce que je tiens de ma mère c'est le sens du travail. Ah oui, oui, oui, c'est sûr.*

Interestingly, since her early childhood, Patricia expresses a rather clear combination of three motivational selves. First, a general ought-to self emerges with the context of being raised up mainly by her mother in a poor social background. Patricia is left with no other choices but to *fight* and succeed through hard work (she writes "hardworking" in her tree roots, Item D_P, bottom left hand-side), and quickly develops resilience as a survival toolkit to compensate on the absence of her father and the appropriate educational and financial supports. In parallel to her general background context, the region she grows up provides a limited access to L2 instruction, with the obligation to learn German first before any other languages: 'as I lived in the East of France, in Champagne, I learnt German language first. It was... hum… we had no choice' (Int_1/01:51). This lack of L2 instruction choice – in her eyes –, and the general family obligations she is confronted with from an early age build up her ought-to-self quite early in life.

Patricia's early ought-to-self due to high responsibility from an early age has a counterpart; because she is much left on her own with her two other brothers, the self-determination she develops – she writes the word "self-challenger" in her roots (Item D_P, bottom-middle) – also helps her create an anti-ought-to self in opposition to other children of her age, including girls. She alludes to the gender issue, albeit very discreetly, and explains that she and her brothers bucked the trend of traditional patriarchal families from the 60s. While families would traditionally differentiate male from female educations, she and her two brothers did the same activities, and were raised up on equal terms due to the family context: 'my two brothers and I, we did the same'[92] (Int_2/42:41).

In parallel to her ought-to and anti-ought-to selves, there emerges a projected and ideal L2 identity from the start. Her initial portrait as a "good student" (Item D_P, bottom right

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[92] *mes deux frères et moi, on a fait pareil*.

hand-side) in her youth involves having 'good grades' in every subject (Int_1/03:34, also indicated in Item D_P, bottom right hand-side), including English and German. Furthermore, she writes "assiduous" (repeated in Int_1/1:06:29) and "academic" in her tree roots (Item D_P, bottom left hand-side) which both inform on the emergence of her ideal L2 self. This particular trait follows her throughout her life, as she often repeats in her account how much she enjoys homework because of her 'academic' personality (Int_1/15:08; Int_1/1:06:29; Int_2/40:44[93]). Thus, this clear sensitive dependence on initial conditions can definitely be 'extended to the utterance level' (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008, p.98), i.e., repeated and used over and over again as a fractal in other periods of her life.

7.2.3. Adulthood and phase shifts: Creation of L2 learning opportunities

As Figure 7.2 shows, there are three phase shifts in Patricia's adult life, which respectively result in two shallow attractor states (SAS 1 after phase shift 1, and SAS 2 following phase shift 2) and a deep attractor state (DAS after phase shift 3). In parallel to going through motivational basins of relative stability, Patricia experiences her first high peak of motivation (HPM1) in her mid 40s (in 2000), which will be followed by three others during adulthood, including two DMCs, as Figure 7.4 shows in detail below.

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[93] *scolaire*.

Figure 7.4. Pictorial and chronological representation of Patricia's HPMs and DMCs
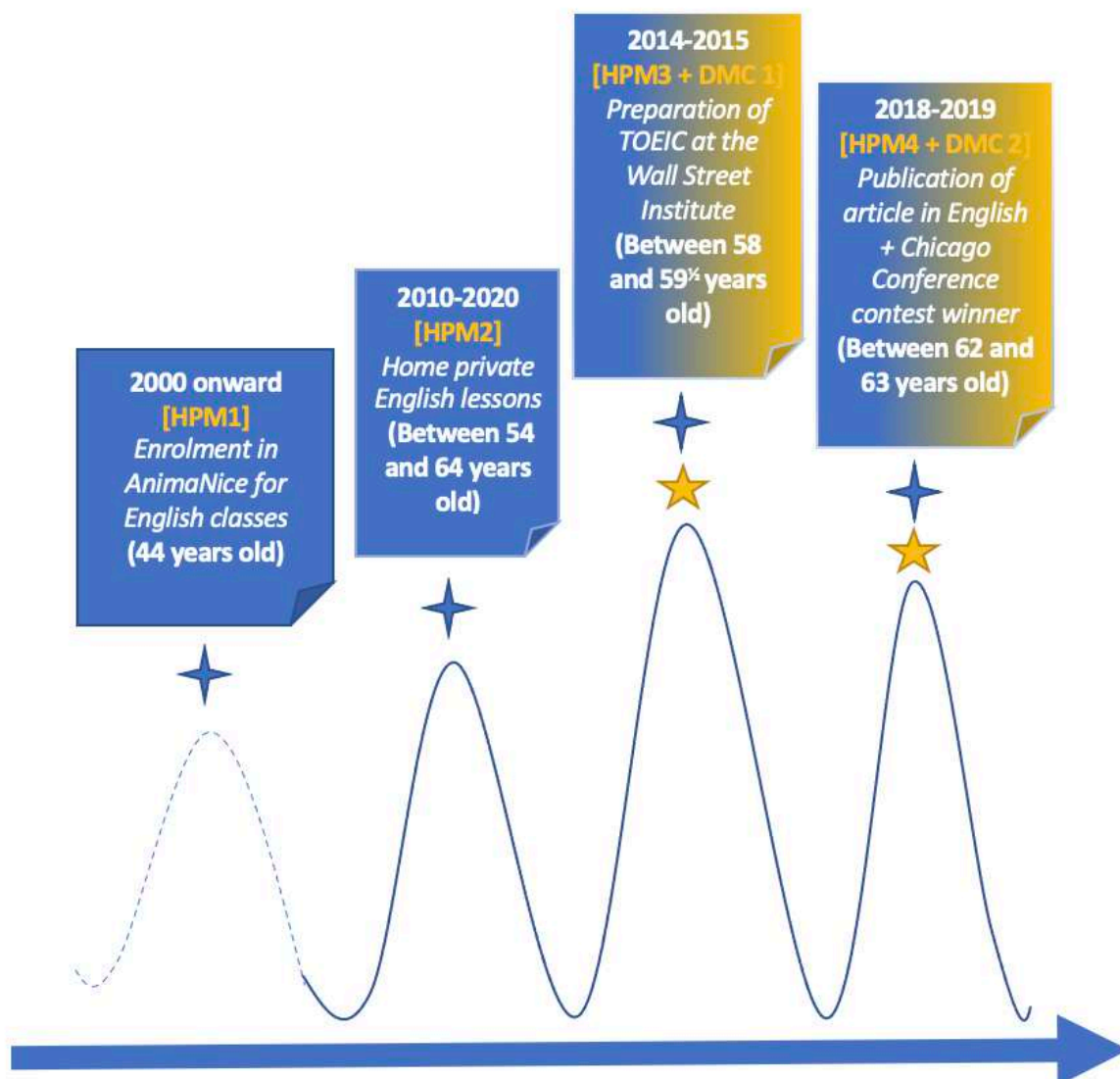
GRAPH LEGEND

⭐ Directed Motivational Current (DMC) – intense, clearly-set-in-time motivational trigger

✦ High Peak of Motivation (HPM) – intense, motivational peaks with flexible duration

Ongoing Peaks of Motivation (oPM)

Ended Peaks of Motivation (ePM)

7.2.3.1 SAS 1 and SAS 2

As both Figures 7.1 and 7.2 clearly show, Patricia's account describes a progressive setting into language motivation, with an increasing depth in the three basins she stabilises across adulthood. The first key shift refers to her move to Nice in 1980, which then

immediately leads to her decision to enrol in her first German course and propels her to SAS 1. The geographical move is a key milestone that provides her with the opportunity to start a new life, including a new job, and new activities outside work. As the speed vector shows in Figure 7.2, SAS 1 goes by rather quickly, as Patricia expresses it in the following excerpt:

EXCERPT P_2_Int_1

Patricia: [00:06:52] I stopped very quickly in fact German course.

Researcher: [00:07:02] Why?

Patricia: [00:07:04] Because I realized uh... that it would not be very useful for me.

Despite its short length, this first state is nonetheless a motivational catalyst for it increases Patricia's self-awareness by defining her objectives and needs better. Patricia indeed goes on describing this motivational phase of enthusiasm for language learning, resulting from a need to go back to formal study, for she was missing it:

EXCERPT P_3_Int_2

Patricia: [00:08:01] What I thought... I didn't do a lot of German, maybe a year in Nice, actually.

Researcher: [00:08:05] Yes.

Patricia: [00:08:06] Because I realized it wouldn't help me much, all that. Still, I've made friends too! [laughs]. There, it was fun.

Researcher: [00:08:15] Was it fun?

Patricia: [00:08:16] Yes, but it was not very practical, it was far away. It was at Magnan.

Researcher: [00:08:19] Okay. And why did you want to study German again? Was it that you were missing foreign languages?

Patricia: [00:08:23] Well, yeah… I… I like languages, actually.[94]

SAS 1 enables Patricia to understand herself better as an L2 learner, and transforms her motivation into an instrumental one. Her sense of "pragmatism" (Item D_P, bottom-middle) together with her increasing self-acknowledgement through her experience with German

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[94] See original version in French, p. 287.

make her realize that for her study to be optimal, it needs to be useful at work ('in my job, a lot of equipments [equipment, *sic*] came from America, so the operating manual [manuals, *sic*] are written in English... so I stopped German courses', (Int_1/07:39). To some extent, as Figure 7.3 shows, from this growing self-awareness, one can note the presence of an ought-to L2 self (related to Patricia's sense of duty to understand English equipment at work in order to be more performant) and an ideal L2 self that is concordant both with her growing interest for languages and her lifelong objective to achieve her career successfully.

Patricia's narrative describes a 'gap' between SAS 1 and SAS 2 due to her family commitments ('So after that [the German course between 1980 and 1981], we have a gap and uh... because my daughter, my work...' (Int_1/09:23)). As a result, her L2 motivational peaks come rather late in her life and start during SAS 2, with her enrolment in AnimaNice in 2000 at the age of 44, where she starts her first English course, indicated as HPM1 in Figure 7.4, and which is still ongoing to this day. More particularly, Patricia characterizes HPM1 as 'the most intense in terms of workload', 'the most influential/beneficial in the long run', and 'the most satisfying/personally rewarding' (Questionnaire), just after her preparation of the TOEIC (i.e., DMC 1, which occurs fourteen years later, in 2014), and as much as her publication and preparation of a scientific paper (i.e., DMC 2, in 2018). Realizing she made progress and gaining a strong feeling of achievement and success boosted her highly for this particular course. She scores 4/5 in the questionnaire when asked to rank the overall influence of HPM1. In her personal notes, she explains that her English course "was for pleasure and for travel", and adds, "I loved my courses, I didn't miss any classes". She further elaborates on the salient facilitative structure of this particular experience: "I have very complicated schedules and the Centre corresponded to my expectations. We worked with books and we had homework"

(Patricia/Int_1/Personal notes). Finally, Patricia's goals at AnimaNice remain self-concordant and denote a clear sense of independence as she explains that no one influenced her choices to study L2: 'it was myself. Only myself' (Int_1/10:10).

With all those elements in mind, one could easily put HPM1 in the DMC category. However, there are a few reasons why this study argues that it is more appropriate not to. First, because it is an ongoing experience that is not delineated in time. Second, Patricia provides more emotional nuances, including disappointment to her experience. She explains, "the drawback was that we were a group of 15 people with different levels. After a few years, we were fed up with these courses because we were too many." (Patricia/Int_1/Personal notes). She further describes the lack of occasions to speak fully in class:

EXCERPT P_4_Int_2

[00:47:27] I wasn't talking for an hour...... […] Because there are always students... well, students who are more... "talkative" than others. […] So, the teacher, if she doesn't interrupt, if she has no authority, it's always the same people who speak.[95]

To some extent, the underwhelming and ongoing aspects of HPM1 prevent the latter from becoming a DMC. Her experience at AnimaNice is however a highly positive trigger that naturally fosters more motivation and leads to a second high peak of motivation with the creation of private English lessons from home with Josette in 2010 (HPM2 in Figure 7.4).

Patricia ranks the private lessons with Josette (HPM2) as the 'most influential/beneficial in the long run' (scores 2 '+' in the questionnaire) with HPM1 and after her preparation for the TOEIC exam (DMC 1) later on. To my question whether she enjoyed her private lessons more than the ones at AnimaNice (HPM1), she replies 'yes... there was no

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[95] See original version in French, p. 287.

comparison' (Int_1/21:31). During the interview, she explains that HPM2 is the most motivating after DMC 1: 'and the lessons at [Josette's] come after [the TOEIC]'[96] (Int_2/09:55). She defines this peak as both useful and pleasant:

EXCERPT P_5_Int_2

Patricia: [00:18:24] These private classes... it's... it's fantastic, we combine the useful with the pleasant. There, that's it.

Researcher: [00:18:30] Very well.

Patricia: [00:18:31] Yes, we're with friends and... and we're learning since we're only four or five...[97]

In the questionnaire, Patricia scores 5/5 both to describe her level of improvement in L2 with the private course and her feeling of being socially more connected. However, just like for HPM1, I also had reservations to consider this peak as a DMC for a number of reasons. First, despite the emotional positivity and source of enjoyment Patricia draws from HPM2, she scores 0 in terms of workload, difficulty and personal rewarding remit in the questionnaire. Moreover, she devotes a short amount of time narrating this particular experience (a total of 5 minutes and 30 seconds in both interviews, triggered by my own questions since I knew about this course from Josette, against 17 minutes and 59 seconds for DMC 1 and 8 minutes for DMC 2). Her spontaneous description regarding this peak was relatively limited. For all these reasons, it is not appropriate to rank this motivational peak as a DMC.

Overall, the use of the Likert scale shows a close connection between attributes related to HPMs and those to DMCs. Using one part of Muir's (2020) questionnaire helped see how close characteristics of an HPM were to those of a DMC. Indeed, in Table 7.1 below, Patricia either agrees or strongly agrees with the following DMC-connected statements

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[96] *et après [le TOEIC], c'est les leçons chez [Josette].*
[97] See original version in French, p. 287.

regarding the two high peaks described above. The answers in Table 7.1 highlight the intensity of Patricia's L2 use enterprises, and clearly indicate that she was then having close-to DMC-related motivational experiences.

Table 7.1. Features of Patricia's HPMs according to questionnaire

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	DON'T KNOW
1. I THINK SOMETHING SPECIAL HAPPENED TO ME DURING THIS EXPERIENCE – IT WAS AN AMAZING TIME					X	
2. DURING THIS TIME, I WAS ABLE TO WORK MORE PRODUCTIVELY THAN I USUALLY CAN				X		
3. I SURPRISED MYSELF WITH HOW MUCH I WAS ABLE TO DO					X	
4. AT THE TIME, THIS PROJECT BECAME A CENTRAL PART OF MY LIFE				X		
5. THE PEOPLE AROUND ME COULD SEE THAT I WAS EXPERIENCING SOMETHING SPECIAL						X
6. I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE HARD WORK AT THE TIME – I WAS JUST CAUGHT UP IN THE FLOW!					X	

As Figure 7.3 shows, adulthood enables Patricia to experience a combination of L2 motivational selves that determine her trajectory. For instance, she alludes to her independent demeanour to learn and use English in different ways at work, as opposed to everyone else in her staff:

EXCERPT P_6_Int_2
Patricia: [00:19:05] I'm the only one who did this...
Researcher: [00:19:07] Really? Of all the staff...?
Patricia: [00:19:08] oh yeah, of all the people from work... Oh yes, I'm the only one from the gang.[98]

More importantly, according to Patricia's experience, there seems to be a strong hierarchy in the medical field. She explains that her decision to study English helped her move to the top of her team, and even rather proudly access the rather exclusive sphere of doctors

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[98] See original version in French, p. 287.

and radiographers, as she would study English with some of them at the WSI ('Oh yes, I am the only person in my group [at work] who is interested [in understanding English] […] There are the radiologists and I! [laughs]'[99] (Int_2/21:24)). Her allusion to her professional ambition through English study provides the first glimpses of an emerging professional and L2 anti-ought-to self – against all odds, she decides to go beyond her role as a clinical radiography assistant and, without being forced nor even told to, she takes the initiative to improve her English skills to work closer to doctors. Just like her friend Josette, L2 study helps Patricia prove herself *worthwhile* at work and rise to the top of her hierarchy as she handles the English instructions of the equipment at work better than her peers.

7.2.3.2 DAS and DMC 1: a cradle for L2 self-constructs

In late adulthood, Patricia experiences a third phase shift that leads to her deepest motivational attractor state (DAS) (Figure 7.2), and to her first DMC (Figure 7.4). Note that in Patricia's case, her HPMs come earlier than the DMCs, and help foster her overall motivational state.

A powerful surge of motivational energy indeed occurred in 2014, when Patricia decided to prepare and sit the TOEIC exam at the WSI (DMC 1) (**'**Well the most motivating [peak] till remains the TOEIC'[100] (Int_2/09:53); 'It's still the basis, as I said. It's definitely the TOEIC, uh. Oh no, that definitely was the most intensive. The trigger. The TOEIC'[101] (Int_2/02:07)), and four years later, when she found out that she had been accepted to present her article at a Conference in Chicago (DMC 2, Figure 7.4), and had won the contest for "the biggest Congress of Radiology in Chicago (Radiology Society of North

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[99] *Ah oui, je suis la seule personne dans mon groupe à être intéressée […]. Y a les radiologues et moi ! [rires]*
[100] *Bon le plus motivant, c'est quand même le TOEIC.*
[101] *C'est quand même la base, comme je l'ai dit. C'est vraiment le TOEIC, hein... Ah non c'est vraiment ça qui était intensif. Le déclenchement. Le TOEIC.*

America)" (Patricia/Int_1/Personal notes). From those two motivational turning points, which had a clear launch and end (Figure 7.4), she understood her life was going to revolve around practising and using English whenever she would have the occasion.

In her questionnaire, Patricia ranks both DMCs as the most influential in motivating her (5/5), and as the two major boosters in making her realize she made progress and had the greatest feeling of achievement and success. DMC 1 and DMC 2 both score 3 '+' (highest score out of all the peaks) on being 'the most satisfying/personally rewarding' experience and 5/5 on 'realizing you made progress/ a feeling of achievement and success' (Questionnaire). Table 7.2 below provides more details on the motivational features of those two motivational turning points. Note that her two DMCs are part of her solo journey, while HPM1 and HPM2 are part of more integrative collectively-triggered L2 motivation. However, note also that Patricia was nurtured by a sense of satisfaction with the private course (HPM2) at Josette's, which clearly boosted her motivation and confidence to study on her own and reach her DMC: 'I was very happy with this private lesson, course... I decided to prepare the TOEIC...' (Int_1/22:55).

Table 7.2. Description of Patricia's DMCs

DMCs #	DMC #1	DMC #2
LAUNCH / INITIAL CONDITIONS	**Spontaneous desire to improve rooted in self-challenging nature:** 'I decided to prepare the TOEIC... by myself, to boot [boost, *sic*]... to boost my progress. Yes. It was a challenge... I uh... I like challenges.' (Int_1/22:55) **Initiative spurred by group study dynamics (HPM1 and HPM2)**	**Member of a professional association for radiographers:** Decided to publish an article in English on her field of expertise and in the context of her work as a radiography assistant at the clinic
SELF-CONCORDANT GOALS	**High self-commitment, hard-liner:** 'All my day off... all my days off... I was uh... in Wall Street.' (Int_1/25:41) **/** 'So I, when I commit to something, well... especially if it's expensive. Like I said, we're paying from the start, so I wasn't gonna give up either. Oh, and then I like it too!'[102] (Int_2/13:50)	**Project instructor:** 'No, no it was my idea; I chose the topic, myself... yes...' (Int_1/47:43)

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[102] *Donc moi, quand je m'engage dans quelque chose en plus, bon... C'est onéreux. Comme j'ai dit, on paye du début, je n'allais pas abandonner non plus. Oh puis en plus j'aime ça alors !*

SALIENT FACILITATIVE STRUCTURE	**Intense coursework at the WSI + strong self-discipline study at home:** "The courses were intensive but I've made tremendous progress." (Personal notes) **/** 'I had 7 hours of class per week [...] plus homework. I listened to the BBC, I watched BBC learning on [the] Internet and other websites.'(Int_1/24:26)	**Published the article in the context of her work:** 'Radiology and medical imagery is [are, *sic*] very... wonderful... that's wonderful... *oui*. I am passionate by [with, *sic*] my job! Even in my... at my age!' (Int_1/49:52) **Self-directed management:** '**[Patricia]** I read.... I read but it's not my article... **[Researcher]** No. But that helped you... so you're using academic material in English, right? **[Patricia]** Yes. Yes.' (Int_1/49:07)
POSITIVE EMOTIONAL QUALITY	**Turning point:** '**[Researcher]** Do you think that was the most intense time? **[Patricia]** Yes... yes, for the... it was the "déclic"... comment on dit? **[Researcher]** The turning point? **[Patricia]** Turning point... *voilà*. We have to put it on this [shows the timeline]' (Int_1/24:40) **/** "It was a stimulus (un déclic)" (Patricia/Int_1/ Personal notes) **Pleasure:** 'I was not very stressed because it was... uh it was only for my pleasure' (Int_1/36:26). **Sense of achievement:** Items AR_P1; AR_P2	**Pride + high degree of self-satisfaction:** '**[Researcher]** Very well. And the last [peak], the article : did you mention the pride? **[Patricia]** Oh definitely there: pride! [laughs]. Yeah, let's say... [laughs]'[103] (Int_2/18:40) **/** 'Yes! *Non mais*... Incredible! I... Yes... Incredible. I won the opportunity to registration for going [to register and go, *sic*] to Chicago... I have not the paper but I took the photo... [laughs]... [looks for her picture]... with my photo... *voilà*. To Chicago... *alors*... it's my photo *hein*... it was the article...' (Int_1/43:48)
IMPACT ON FAMILY REACTION	**None:** Scores 0 (Likert Scale) on the statement "the people around me could see that I was experiencing something special" (i.e., doesn't know) **/** **Does not tell anyone:** 'I didn't actually tell a lot of people, eh' (Int_2/11:43) / '[my husband] doesn't care [laughs]. No, but that's true, I didn't want to bug peope with this. There we go, that's it. No, no, my family, no, they don't even know. No, no.'[104] (Int_2/11:41)	**Same as DMC 1/ None but social/professional recognition with mention to her boss:** '**[Researcher]** Yes, such a pride, didn't you talk about it to a lot of people? **[Patricia]** No, no, np. I only told my bosses about it, because... it was about my work. So, they could congratulate me! [laughs] **[Researcher]** So there's also a kind of professional recognition... **[Patricia]** Yes, that's it.'[105] (Int_2/18:48)
END	Lasted 1 year and a half until completion of TOEIC	Lasted 1 year until end of conference

The impact of those two DMCs on Patricia's overall L2 practice are quite relevant. Patricia's TOEIC achievement results in a sense of pride, which is underlined through her repetitions ('Yes, I was proud because I am not young [laughs]. I was not young' (Int_1 /37:53); 'I was very proud!' (Int_1/52:42; Int_1/53:21); 'Boy was I proud!'[106] (Int_2/49:17)), and in both self-acknowledgement and self-assertiveness ('This [completing the TOEIC] gave me self-confidence'[107] (Int_2/14:40). Her first DMC experience also enables Patricia to reach an ideal L2 self that brings some stability in her L2 routine and study, nurtured by intense reading ('yeah and then now I can read articles without any problem' (Int_1/49:07)), and

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[103] *[Researcher] Très bien. Et le dernier : l'article. Vous aviez parlé de fierté ? [Patricia] Oh bah là : La fierté ! [rires]. Ouais, disons... [rires]*
[104] See original version in French, p. 287.
[105] See original version in French, p. 287.
[106] *J'étais fière quand même !*
[107] *ça [l'obtention du TOEIC] m'a donné de l'assurance.*

an increasing desire to interact with people in English:

EXCERPT P_7_Int_1

Researcher: [00:39:33] OK, OK. So, you received that and uh... the TOEIC you managed successfully, and then what happened next?

Patricia: [00:39:44] Next, I realized I have made a lot of progress.

Researcher: [00:39:47] Uh-hm.

Patricia: [00:39:48] Ah yes.

Researcher: [00:39:49] So... […] what was your feeling about the language at that moment? Was that like very high?

Patricia: [00:39:53] No, no. Not very high. No, no, no. Not very high but... I was more... it was easier for me to understand people, to read articles, and uh... so I... yes... I made a lot of progress and I read more and more, and more, and more...

Following DMC 1, Patricia's resulting intense reading of academic papers empowers her with the confidence to write an article herself, and apply for the American contest that she then wins, and which triggers DMC 2 (Figure 7.4). As such, both DMC experiences quite quickly follow one another during Patricia's DAS.

In terms of self-constructs, and as Figure 7.3 shows, three L2 selves (ideal, ought-to and anti-ought-to) also build up in parallel to one another during adulthood, and especially during the DMCs Patricia experiences then. More particularly, there is a remarkable surge of stronger L2 ideal and anti-ought-to selves which combine with one another. The rise of those two types of L2 selves is particularly salient during DMC 1 (TOEIC preparation at the WSI). First, her ideal L2 self grows through the positive feedback she receives. Feedback on her performance is clearly one of Patricia's lifelong motivating tools, and its relevance is particularly acute in the academic reports from the WSI she brings up (Items AR_P1; AR_P2). As she presents the items, we further discussed their value:

EXCERPT P_8_Int_1

Researcher: [00:35:24] OK. So you were, in a way, more motivated to receive more

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> detailed feedback?
>
> **Patricia:** [00:35:29] Uh-hm, oh yes.
>
> **Researcher:** [00:35:31] ... And more personalised as well... this is very tailored to you... it's very personal.
>
> **Patricia:** [00:35:34] Yes, because uh... because it's not useful if I have no feedback.

During DMC 1, Patricia's ideal L2 self also relies on external role models, and grows thanks to the support of her English tutor Paul Bacon:

> EXCERPT P_9_Int_1
>
> **Patricia:** [00:29:54] Yes. Hum... the atmosphere [at the WSI] was very... very fine. And at the beginning... there w... the manager was.... his name was Paul Bacon... he was excellent, excellent. And uh... his courses were excellent. He was very good in grammar, very strong. And after a few months, he moved to Dublin.
>
> […]
>
> **Researcher:** [00:35:00] Would you say Paul Bacon was your main... the best teacher you ever had?
>
> **Patricia:** [00:35:03] Yes. Yes, yes, yes, yes.

In addition to the drastic take off of her ideal L2 self during this highly intense period, Patricia also strengthens up her anti-ought-to self, which sustains her self-motivation, *no matter what*, even if, after the departure of Paul Bacon, the teaching quality was not satisfying anymore ('Even if the teachers were not so good... I continue [continued, *sic*]. I never gave up', (Int_1/38:36)). This is further illustrated in the following excerpt, in which she describes how the regular change of teachers did not affect her motivation:

> EXCERPT P_10_Int_1
>
> **Researcher:** [00:30:59] OK. Would that [departure of Paul Bacon] put you down or would you still be motivated?
>
> **Patricia:** [00:31:01] Ah no, I was still...
>
> **Researcher:** [00:31:02] Your motivation was still high...?
>
> **Patricia:** [00:31:03] Yes, I was.
>
> **Researcher:** [00:31:04] So the teachers would not really influence your motivation?

Patricia: [00:31:05] No. No, no.

Researcher: [00:31:08] It was really like self-motivation.

Patricia: [00:31:08] Yes. Yes... oh yes. Yes, yes.

Patricia's strong independent self emerges throughout her DMC experience; she remained persistent in her study, as opposed to some of her top hierarchy colleagues, who gave up and stopped attending the course at the WSI. Her resilience and anti-ought-to L2 self (i.e., do not do like her colleagues) gave her additional pride and boosted her confidence:

EXCERPT P_11_Int_1

Patricia: [00:12:36] Because I met a lot of surgeons there. Of course. I realized... Well, yes, it's quite expensive. So... well, they can afford [the course]... They all enroll... well not all but a lot of their children study there...

Researcher: [00:12:52] Yes.

Patricia: [00:12:52] ...Actually. And I met one [surgeon], then two...

Researcher: [00:12:55] So colleagues of yours, then…

Patricia: [00:12:57] Yeah, yeah, who I work with.

Researcher: [00:12:59] Okay.

Patricia: [00:12:59] Surgeons... mmh-mmh. And we'd talk about it. One of them passed the TOEIC, like I did, so we talked a lot every time I went to work with him in the OR. […] Oh yes. Others... There are others who gave up. A lot of them gave up [completing the exam].

Researcher: [00:13:15] Really?

Patricia: [00:13:16] Oh yeah, yeah yeah. Not many of them have persisted, eh...[108]

Beyond her wish to overcome L2-related challenges ('it was a challenge… I uh… I like challenges' (Int_1/22:55)), which is a clear indicator of her strong-willed personality, Patricia decides to embark on her journey to study for the TOEIC without telling anyone from her family and closest friends, in particular as she decides to study for the TOEIC (DMC 1):

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[108] See original version in French, p. 287.

EXCERPT P_12_Int_1

Researcher: [00:38:56] OK. Excellent. Hum... just as you prepared the TOEIC, was there someone else helping you in addition to the teacher? Were there like friends, or...

Patricia: [00:39:04] No, I told nobody, in fact.

Researcher: [00:39:05] Really? So, you were like self-teaching?

Patricia: [00:39:10] I told nobody, except at the end when I... when I... successed.

Researcher: [00:39:15] OK.

Patricia: [00:39:18] No, no. Nobody. No, no. My husband... I told him "I'm going to have English courses"... but [laughs], he don't [doesn't, *sic*] take care... no. [laughs].

Patricia's anti-ought-to L2 self is clearly expressed as she repeats the project was her own, and clearly only for her own intrinsic pleasure ('it was only for me' (Int_2/11:41; Int_2/11:49))[109]. She further explains, 'Oh, yeah, it was just me, huh. But I don't know if you noticed, but I did… I didn't actually tell a lot of people, did I?'[110] (Int_2/11:28).

Likewise, in DMC 2, Patricia decides to submit the paper in English also on her own initiative and with no help:

EXCERPT P_13_Int_1

Patricia: [00:47:43] No, no it was my idea; I chose the topic, myself... yes... […] I did a publication in French and one year later in English.

[…]

Researcher: [00:59:34] Did you have any training at the clinic in English or no training?

Patricia: [00:59:48] No. No.

Researcher: [00:59:41] So everything you did was on your own? Your own initiative?

Patricia: [00:59:43] Yes. Yes. It's on my own. Yes uh-huh.

In the case of Patricia, there is an additional feature that characterise her DMCs, and which is missing in the two other participants' DMCs: the interest and mental readiness to create a recurrence of the DMC experience. While Patricia's two DMCs are ended, she describes

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[109] *C'était juste pour moi.*
[110] *Oh oui, c'était juste moi, hein. Mais je ne sais pas si vous avez remarqué, mais je l'ai... Je ne l'ai pas dit à grand monde en fait, hein.*

a projected ideal L2 self that considers repeating a similar experience to DMC 1, i.e., sit the TOEIC exam again:

EXCERPT P_14_Int_2

Patricia: [00:36:18] First I think I forgot a bit, if I were to sit again the TOEIC now. Yes, yes, sit [the exam] again, why not [laughs]

Researcher: [00:36:26] Would you sit again? The TOEIC?

Patricia: [00:36:28] Well why not, yes, yes, but well…

Researcher: [00:36:29] Would you have the motivation to do again... a...

Patricia: [00:36:33] Oh yes.

Researcher: [00:36:34] Really?

Patricia: [00:36:34] Oh yes, yes, yes. I am motivated. I am passionate and motivated.

Researcher: [00:36:38] How do you explain it, this motivation? […]

Patricia: [00:36:42] If I decided to do it...... I would go up to the end. Yes, yes, I'm pugnacious.[111]

Likewise, following DMC 2, Patricia is willing to nurture and feel again the emotions that resulted from this intense experience, and thus write more academic papers in English:

EXCERPT P_15_Int_1

Researcher: [00:49:50] And are you planning to write more articles?

Patricia: [00:49:52] I have one in my mind but... you need time.

7.2.4. Third Age and Patricia's MDAS of L2-related behavioural, emotional and motivational stabilities

At the time of the interview, Patricia was pre-retired, which left her with a moderately deep motivational state (MDAS), as Figure 7.2 displays. The current state cannot be shallow, because of the impact of her two rather recent previous DMCs on her practice, and her sustained wish to keep a routine. It cannot be considered as deep as her DAS in late adulthood either, since there were no other signs of high peaks or very active L2 activities

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[111] See original version in French, p. 288.

since 2017 due to her busy schedule at work and family commitments. Furthermore, as the slow speed vectors shows in Figure 7.2, phase shift 4 introduces a medium speed state, which goes more slowly than SAS 1 and SAS 2 due to the depth and continuity length of her L2 study over the long run.

Patricia describes her current self-regulatory strategies (Dörnyei, 2009) and her capacity to 'glean' information wherever she can (Int_2/48:20)[112]. She clearly depicts an ideal L2 self that lies in the 'pleasure to speak, the opportunity to speak' (Int_1/11:56). Her present ideal L2 self (Figure 7.3) is the result of a lifelong journey she experienced both on her own, and through collective stimulation, especially via her role model, Josette:

EXCERPT P_16_Int_1

Researcher: [01:05:07] Uh-hm... hum... in general, if you were to think about someone who influenced you, whether a teacher, a friend, anything or a person you met... would there be someone who really influenced you... you mentioned Paul Bacon? Could he have been someone very important in your learning?

Patricia: [01:05:27] It's [Josette].

Researcher: [01:05:28] It's [Josette]?

Patricia: [01:05:29] Ah yes, it's [Josette]. Paul Bacon at Wall Street and [Josette]. Oh Yes. She is very clever... very... everything... funny...

Researcher: [01:05:45] So she's inspiring uh?

Patricia: [01:05:45] Yes. Uh-hm.

Patricia remains stimulated by the challenges L2 study brings along: 'I like this language. But I think it's a difficult language to learn' (Int_1/12:03). She further describes the characteristics of her ideal L2 self that is quite clearly complemented by a strong anti-ought-to L2 self related to her love for challenges: 'if there's something that is very difficult […] at work, […] I will not avoid it, on the contrary. […] And that's how I solve all the

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[112] *Je pioche un peu partout.*

problems. And that is the same […] for English' (Int_2/40:48)[113]. She repeats how resilient she is in the following excerpt, in which she associates study as a victory:

EXCERPT P_17_Int_1

Patricia: [00:38:38] I'm always motivated for everything. Even uh... for my job. It's a difficulty I am going to work, to learn, to work, **to win**...

Researcher: [00:38:54] OK. So, you're stimulated by challenges.

Patricia: [00:38:54] Yes.

Researcher: [00:38:55] You're a challenger.

Patricia: [00:38:55] Yes. Uh-hm.

[emphasis added]

Hardship ('I fight fire with fire'[114] (Int_2/46:17)) is clearly part of Patricia's lifelong journey with L2, and also a source of enjoyment. This anti-ought-to-self is strongly connected to her ideal self (Figure 7.3) to connect with English doctors, publish articles and attend and participate in English webinars. While the mastery of English was key to accessing a higher hierarchy at work in adulthood, Patricia more recently found pride in tweeting a doctor from New York, although she thought he would never answer her because of her status and language skills:

EXCERPT P_18_Int_1

Patricia: [00:52:42] Ah yes! I was very proud! [laughs] Because I wanted to know uh... what kind of material... of... uh... items he used for samples... because we didn't know what to use in Nice. My radiologists didn't know. So, I asked him and he had the answer, and we could uh... buy the item he used... I was very proud! [laughs]. I thought he would never answer... but I'm not...

Researcher: [00:53:31] Why did you think he would never answer?

Patricia: [00:53:32] Because I am not a doctor... because I'm... but he didn't know in fact [laughs].

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[113] *s'il y a quelque chose qui est très difficile dans mon service, dans mon travail […], je ne vais pas l'éviter. Au contraire. Et c'est comme ça, en fait, que je résous tous les problèmes. Et c'est pareil pour... voilà aussi pour l'anglais.*

[114] *Moi, je traite le mal par le mal.*

As Figure 7.3 indicates, Patricia experiences a hybrid L2 self, which is composed of ideal and anti-ought-to patterns. Finally, she projects a future ideal L2 self for after she retires: 'when I will be completely retired, I have a lot of books […] at home. Yes, to read. Uh-hm' (Int_1/41:48). The following two excerpts clearly describe her ideal L2 self, or at least the way she sees herself as an L2 learner when she retires:

EXCERPT P_19a_Int_1

Researcher: [01:02:17] OK. And what do you think will be your project in terms of language learning?

Patricia: [01:02:27] I don't know. Because uh... we... we... we are certainly going to move to Marseille because our daughter is living in Marseille... but if I can, I will enrol in an English course in Marseille *hein*!

Researcher: [01:02:46] You think you're going to do an English course in Marseille?

Patricia: [01:02:46] Oh yes.

Researcher: [01:02:48] Would you rather go for the private course?

Patricia: [01:02:50] A private...

Researcher: [01:02:50] A group? How would you... what would be the ideal learning or practice area for you?

Patricia: [01:03:00] The ideal is like with [Josette], but there is no [Josette] in Marseille to organise! [laughs]

EXCERPT P_19b_Int_1

Researcher: [00:50:16] Do you think you'd be passionate after you retire? Do you think you'll still be as passionate and you'll keep on reading?

Patricia: [00:50:22] I think yes. Yes... yes, yes, because I will be able to read articles after that...

Patricia's geographical position in the upcoming years is uncertain, for she is planning to move closer to her daughter in another French region. In terms of L2 learning, her L2 motivational role model (Josette) will thus not be nearby. However, and despite challenges ahead, she remains clearly motivated to continue on her own, and repeat her experience as an L2 student, while enjoying her passion for reading in English.

CHAPTER EIGHT: GENERAL DISCUSSION

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 focused on the individual language learning narratives of three highly motivated senior L2 users. I explored their respective distinct sets of historical and motivational circumstances, drawing from the origins of L2 motivation (RQ1) to its present expression and remit (RQ2), through carefully documented DMC and HPM experiences located in attractor states with different levels of depth and speed. As ID research argues, 'different personality characteristics not only interact with each other within their own level but also cross-dimensionally (Dörnyei, 2017, p. 93). Not only have the three learners developed different selves across their lives at different levels of situatedness, but also common ones. While Chapters 5, 6 and 7 emphasized the intrinsic independence of each narrative from one another for their specific contextual and personal content, this chapter should thus also highlight, as a fair balance, the intrinsic bond and connection between those stories.

I divided this chapter into four sections. I first propose a synthesis of the emerging motivational patterns in all three narratives with an emphasis on commonalities (8.1), then discuss their broader implications in light of my tripartite theoretical framework, whose relevance I discuss further in light of RQ3. More precisely, I discuss my three case studies by looking at the way they shed light on the limitations and the opportunities to expand

aspects of the L2MSS (8.2), CDST (8.3) and DMC (8.4).

8.1 Synthesis of commonalities in the three case studies

Beyond the unique quality of each story, there emerged a constellation of common motivational patterns that connected each story. Table 8.1 below, inspired by Thompson and Vásquez (2015), summarizes the prominent themes that are integral to participants' motivation for language learning, and illustrate the interacting components in their motivational profiles. I divided those components into the following categories: primary (i.e., past) and present L2 motivations, L2 role models, future L2 imagery, L2 obstacles across life up to the present ones, and lifelong L2 action plans.

Table 8.1. Interacting patterns in the participants' motivational profiles

	GEORGES	JOSETTE	PATRICIA
PRIMARY L2 MOTIVATION	Be able to be understood in English and to understand native speakers on his trips abroad.	Get a job and become financially independent.	Read work-related papers in English + instructions of the equipment at work.
PRESENT L2 MOTIVATION	**Pleasure;** **Part of his well-being.**	**Pleasure;** **Part of her well-being.**	**Pleasure;** **Part of her well-being.**
L2 ROLE MODELS	Several language teachers; Native speakers.	English boyfriend; Native friends.	Josette; Paul Bacon (English native teacher from the WS Institute).
FUTURE L2 IMAGERY	Future bilingual self; Anti-stereotype.	Anti-stereotype	Future bilingual self; Anti-stereotype.
L2 OBSTACLES ACROSS LIFE	Modest upbringing with poor L2 instruction; Unrelated professional impediments; Family commitments.	Patriarchal upbringing with poor education for women; Social *status quo*; Partially unrelated professional commitments; Family commitments.	Modest upbringing with poor L2 instruction; Unrelated professional commitments; Family commitments.
L2 PRESENT OBSTACLES	Lack of adapted teaching structures + appropriate L2 learning material for his age; Family commitments; Busy schedules.	Lack of adapted teaching structures + appropriate L2 learning material for her age; Busy schedules.	Professional commitments (pre-retired); Family commitments; Busy schedules.
L2 ACTION PLANS	Self-teaching + creation of self-made learning spaces; L2 immersions through trips.	Self-teaching + creation of self-made learning spaces; L2 immersions through trips.	Self-teaching + creation of self-made learning spaces; L2 immersions through trips.

The table shows that past obstacles differ from one participant to another, yet present ones are quite similar and relate to problems in finding adequate L2 teaching material and learning resources adapted to their age and interests. While there is a wide range of different L2 role models among Georges, Josette and Patricia across their lives, all three commonly share a rather similar future L2 imagery that directly connects with their anti-ought-to L2 selves. Interestingly, participants' current action plans, i.e., self-regulatory strategies, are very similar in that they refer to the creation of self-made hybrid L2 learning environments. There emerges a clear sense of creative receptivity and present self-realisation through the common creation of personalized and evolving L2 learning spaces that form part of both a solitary and collective pathway. More importantly, while past motives differ from one participant to another, the present aims (i.e., present L2 motivation in Table 8.1) are strikingly similar; they all refer to the search for pleasure and for optimal L2 experiences, with the final focus on personal well-being.

Whereas it is widely acknowledged that third age is a period of transition (Marshall & Taylor, 2005), the three case studies clearly indicate that (1) it is a phase in which motivation may rise and stand out, and (2) participants' motivational sustainability largely relies on the search for wellbeing. While literature on third age abounds with studies that explore the notion of wellbeing in later life through different general angles related to cognitive, physical, social and relational aspects (Charles & Carstensen, 2010; Depp *et al.,* 2010, Havighurst, 1961; Morrow-Howell & Greenfield, 2015), a few have dug into specific areas, such as lifelong learning, and even fewer have specifically looked into the lifelong experience of language learning, and how it can positively affect the overall psychological vitality in later life. According to Smith & Ryan (2016, p. 314):

Subjective well-being is one of the central indicators of psychological vitality in late

life. It reflects the remarkable adaptive capacity to remain satisfied with life and to sustain a positive balance of positive versus negative affect, even when challenged by illness, physical and cognitive decline, and social losses (e.g., widowhood, deaths of age peers).

All three participants clearly align with the above definition since they have achieved subjective well-being. They have clearly sustained a remarkable adaptive ability to remain enthusiastic about foreign language learning despite the challenging times described in their narratives. Their motivational lifelong resilience is further supported as I next dig into their motivational commonalities in light of the three theoretical frameworks.

8.2. L2MSS framework in light of lifelong L2 learning

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 commonly revealed patterns of strong ideal and anti-ought-to self constructs (Thompson, 2017) that evolved toward hybrid and mature L2 selves in later life, associated with DMC-formed self-concordant goals, and eventually generating abiding motivational perseverance and long-term striving. This study has tried to reach two aims: (1) compensate on the lack of research on the interrelationships between the model's components (Al-Hoorie, 2018; Csizér, 2019) and (2) further discuss the 'somewhat neglected component' (Csizér, 2019, p. 77) of the L2MSS construct, which is the L2 learning experience. This component, if researched in depth, can bring significant contribution to the longitudinal understanding of L2 motivational experience (Csizér & Kálmán, 2019). One way to delve into the breadth and complexity of the L2 learning experience over life is to explore its evolution across historical phases and milestones in interaction with the other components of the system. As such, below are some observations on the historical development and dynamic combination of motivational selves and identity constructs in the case of the three participants.

8.2.1 Constellation of interacting and historically shifting L2 selves

This study investigates the role of personal history in developing the different selves of three senior English learners, in light of the L2MSS, each narrative highlighting different aspects of the motivational framework proposed by Dörnyei. Findings from the data collection show that all three participants display strong anti-ought-to selves in Thompson's (2017) definition, in that they chose to study English against the social norms that were imposed upon them across the years, from their early years up until retirement. Indeed, the anti-ought-to-self pervades throughout the three narratives the way it pervades their life, from their upbringing to the present days. Moreover, this lifelong anti-ought-to self construct builds up through external 'historical triggers', which prompt those senior learners to move into the permanent state of L2 motivation in which they are today.

According to Dörnyei and associates (2016), by definition, a DMC ends with a deeper sense of self and the merging of present and future ideal selves. Muir (2020) also argues that 'at any point in time we each have multiple *possible* selves, both L2 and non-L2-related, and it is simply not possible that all might be held concurrently' (p. 30). Participants' single life stories thus integrate a conglomerate of selves, which psychologist William James first recognized as the 'one-in-many-selves-paradox' (Knowles & Sibicky, 1990, p. 676). This combination of selves propels the three senior users into the attractor states (i.e., high motivation and learning autonomy) they are in at the time of the interviews, at 65 (Patricia), 71 (Georges) and 80 years old (Josette).

Like Dörnyei *et al.* (2016), Thompson (2017) also highlights the combination of selves and explains how the ideal, ought-to, and anti-ought-to selves are 'three potentially conflicting attractor states, which eventually engage in a synergistic relationship' (p. 42). The narrative

data collected for this PhD also reveals that the three participants' motivation remains high over the long run through the merging of different selves, and more specifically, through the combination of their ideal and anti-ought-to L2 selves in later years. Participants' lifelong anti-ought-to self merges with their present ideal self and forms a hybrid L2 self (see Figure 5.2, Figure 6.6, and Figure 7.3). This hybrid L2 self is nurtured by all the selves from the past, and consists in having exceeded expectations related to gender or class in the past as much as keeping exceeding expectations and stereotypes related to age today. In fact, their stories commonly display a strong desire to appear as the "anti-stereotypes" with regards to ageing, as well as with regards to the cultural and social norms each faces in his/her respective context from birth to adult life.

The ideal L2 self (internal projection) and anti-ought-to self (reactions against external expectations) progressively take precedence over any ought-to self (resulting from external expectations in early years or family commitments in later years). Figure 8.1 below visually shows the historical shifts and interactions of L2 selves. More precisely, I indicate the influence of others, whether as *ought-to* triggers or as *role models* shaping the L2 self in later years.

Figure 8.1. Historical shifts of anti-ought-to L2 self for Georges, Josette and Patricia in interaction with other L2 selves
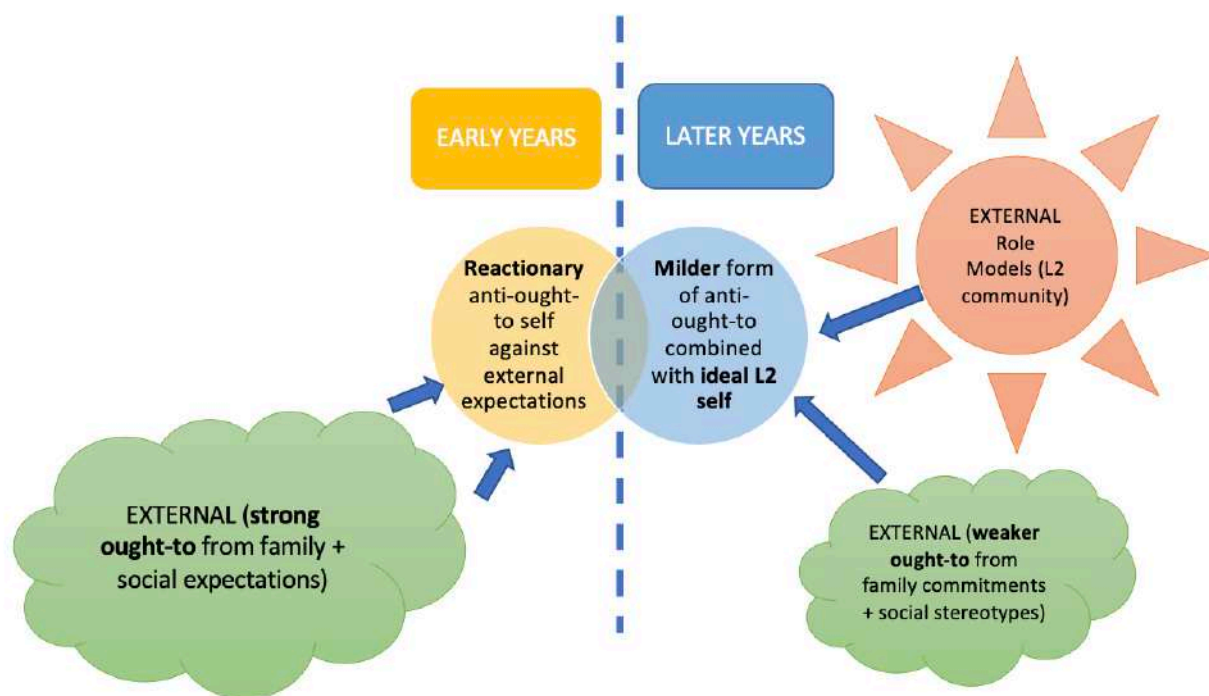
Note that while others' *ought-tos* trigger the shaping of my participants' *anti-ought-tos* in the early years, the anti-ought-to keeps building up throughout the years until third age, and this independently of any *ought-tos* around them. According to Thompson & Vásquez (2015), 'psychological reactance can originate in either the ideal L2 self or the ought-to L2 self, although it will always be the 'other' dimension of self-discrepancy theory, in the form of either a physical or psychological entity' (p. 171). At present, while no one explicitly tells Georges, Josette and Patricia to stop learning, they nevertheless learn and use a foreign language that is not naturally taught or used at their age and in their monolingual family context. As Thompson (2017) puts it, this anti-ought-to self is conceptualized as 'dominant', pushing against societal expectations (the more "submissive" element) as an impetus for motivation' (p. 47). Indeed, the stories show how Georges, Josette and Patricia all enjoy defying expectations, whether external or internal.

In the context of the three narratives, the 'other' dimension (indicated by the clouds and the sun in Figure 8.1) can either take the form of psychological entities (external and underlying psychological pressures triggered by society at a given time), or physical entities (parents, writers, friends, teachers, i.e., personal encounters with specific persons). Those influences embody external ought-to-selves (in the green clouds) that trigger a reactionary anti-ought-to self in all three case studies and are dominant in the early years of life. Yet, in either case, they also tend to lose weight over time and are overridden by external ideal selves in adult life. In other words, role models take precedence from adulthood onward, thanks to friendly native and L2 non-native speakers, motivational L2 groups and other inspiring figures, such as teachers, L2 speaking friends and conversation partners.

8.2.2. Emergence of a mature L2 self in third age

Participants' present hybrid L2 self is very much related to the notion of the mere and 'instant' pleasure they are seeking while using L2, and presents high levels of metacognition and perseverance that enable them to express precisely, what type of L2-related content they want to learn, and how they want to learn it. Josette clearly selects books and native L2 speakers to speak to, while Georges 'pecks' here and there, at whichever topic in English he finds interesting in the moment, and also selects different L2 native speakers according to his mood. Patricia focuses on studying grammar, and ensures her practice remains centered around professional and technical matters. All three of them usually select travel destinations that can help them practice their English skills. More generally, in their present position as advanced L2 learners, they keep maintaining their motivation high, in order to create new ways to use and improve their language skills outside classrooms and beyond the traditional forms and infrastructures of teaching and

learning. Regardless the challenges they face due to the inadequacies of the teaching material and offers formal institutions provide seniors with, they keep (re)-inventing new ways of learning, from YouTube broadcasts for Georges, coffee chats and WhatsApp exchanges for Josette, to the use of Twitter and webinars for Patricia. All three use and share L2-related knowledge and teaching content in a very personalized learning ecology of their own.

Results from the three narratives confirm what Dörnyei and colleagues (2016) have described as the merging of present and future ideal selves in third age (see Chapter 3, section 3.3.2). By experiencing regular FLL DMCs throughout their lives, high motivation among all the three participants operates a 'back-to-the-future' sort of move, empowering them with a sense that their ideal future selves, however uncertainly reachable they might be at an advanced time of their life, are actually more clearly shaped and projected into their 'present' ideal selves. In other words, ideal future selves and ideal present selves fuse and form only one single entity in the three cases I studied. This mental ideal L2 self combination is a key feature in the mature L2 self, and results in a deeper sense of enjoyment and self-fulfilment, because positive mental imagery largely focuses on present activities.

The concept of *hybrid self* that appears in later life seems to articulate rather autonomously, yet narratives show that there is a natural ordering of motivational selves and profiles, from the least motivating to the most motivating, i.e., from the least accomplished to the most complete version, as Figure 8.2 shows below. As the figure indicates, if one were to scale motivational patterns according to the hierarchization of L2 selves across the three stories, we could come up with the hierarchization of four levels of L2 selves, as shown below.

Figure 8.2. Scaffolding of motivational self-constructs
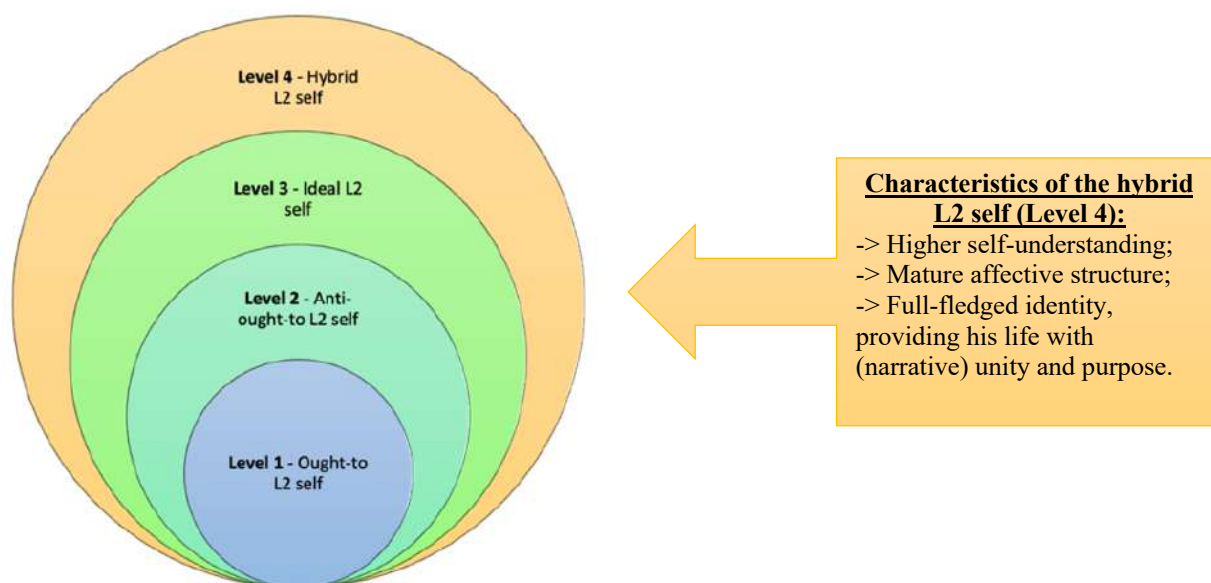
Figure 8.2 indicates that while Level 1 (i.e., ought-to L2 self) is probably the most exposed to external influences, and thus the *weakest* version of all motivated selves in the case of my participants, Level 4 (i.e., hybrid L2 self) is the most self-complete, and thus the strongest version of motivated selves that involves detachment from external pressures, a high degree of maturity, self-acknowledgement and an overall sense of unity thanks to stable self-concordant goals.

8.2.3. Limitations of the L2MSS framework implementation

MacIntyre (2022) recently offered a word of caution on the sometimes 'nebulous' and 'illusive' use of the concept of self, its too often poorly worded definition, and the multiplication of "selves" in the field of SLA. Just like Damasio (2010), Al-Hoorie (2018, p. 738) also shares a similar view:

> *The language motivation field is witnessing more and more selves being*
>
> *introduced, […], but without sufficient attention to their construct validity or their*

overlap. In fact, it has become fashionable to introduce a new construct and suffix it with a "self" even when existing constructs seem to exist (e.g., anti-ought-to self versus reactance, and feared L2 self versus fear of failure). Adding a new dimension to an existing construct (e.g., L2 reactance) may be more appropriate than introducing yet another "self".

Therefore, detecting which particular self was predominant in a given situation and from a lifetime perspective may make little sense, whereas understanding the historical evolution of motivational selves in interaction with other *forces* and variables seems to be a stimulating angle of research. Moreover, while my analysis underscores the intricacies of defining all the selves at stake, the narrative approach I take also brings full credibility and legitimacy to seniors' 'autobiographical sense of self' (MacIntyre, 2022, p. 86), in which the self is a mental representation of the learner's experience in permanent re-construction. MacIntyre brings nuances to his argument by adding that 'the self applies best to those situations in which the past, present and future are all integrated' (p. 89). This research indeed shows that participants' self-system should be considered in its historical and circumstantial entirety as an integrated unit that contains past, present and future motivational constructs.

This study also aims to go beyond the above-mentioned limitations. One way to do it is to complement and further expand Lamb's (2012) argument to connect ideal L2 selves with the language experience component. I contend that there is a similar reciprocal relationship between learners' hybrid and anti-ought to selves and their language learning experiences across life. In other words, all stories show that participants' L2 self-construct antecedents play a prominent role in their overall language experience, although Dörnyei's third component has often been discarded in L2MSS theoretical discussions. As such, I

next explore further the third component of the L2MSS, and assess what it consists in from a motivational dynamic and complex standpoint.

While there remains clear 'confusion about the operationalization and labelling of this component' (Csizér, 2019, p. 78), the language experience surely has a pivotal role in a study like the present one, which embraces Ushioda's (2009) 'person-in-context relational view'. This study considers the language experience as the accumulated experiential processes of L2 learning over life, involving both positive and negative attitudes within specific contexts. The three narratives show that the language experience should thus be researched in a situated manner, that is both in their historicity, i.e., by looking at the accumulation of past experiences (de Bot *et al.,* 2007), and in their accumulation of evolving contexts, including the carefully crafted historical combination of solo and collective intertwined trajectories.

We saw that all three participants have enough individual resources to make their learning journey a solitary one. This supports most studies on wellbeing, often assessed at the individual level (Hoppman & Gerstorf, 2016), which makes sense given the prominent role of subjective perceptions, evaluations, and experiences in shaping well-being. However, the language experience also involves well-being that is found in collaborative learning and motivational group connections. This reciprocal motivational growth helps connect all three narratives into one, monolithic story on highly motivated lifelong language learning.

As described in my methodology, Georges, Josette and Patricia know each other, whether directly (Georges and Josette are friends, and Josette and Patricia too) or indirectly (Georges and Patricia have never met each other yet, but they have heard of one another through Josette). Beyond common – resilient, self-challenging, resourceful, knowledge-

seeking and curious – personality traits, they share common aspects of L2 learning experience, which conveys a sense of motivational "group" and collaborative learning. For instance, both Patricia and Josette are disappointed by the course at AnimaNice and thus decide to form another private group together. Likewise, on several occasions, both Georges and Patricia portray Josette in their narratives as an inspirational figure. While each participant meets external role models in their lifelong journey, which often are part of a community of L2-related friends or teachers, they also represent, for one another, those 'possible selves' set forth by Markus & Nurius (1986), which clearly impact the development of their own individual L2 motivational self-system and language experience.

Recent discoveries from the neuroscience on the development of humans' mirror neuron capacities, which help emulate and imitate one another, clearly support one's instinctive inclination to *collaborate* with others in both reciprocal moves, i.e., by teaching and learning from them. Motivation contagion has been recently explored in a recent study, in which the dynamic interplay of language teachers' and learners' motivation in classroom was highlighted (Gregersen & Al Khateeb, 2022). Likewise, Fukada *et al.* (2022) have recently addressed this issue of collaborative language learning outside the context of classrooms through their focus on situated language communities, in which 'helping others learn may trigger social motivation within the self' (p. 226), and can reinforce personal self-concept, i.e., build up a sense of self-worth and belongness to the community. I argue that such an inclination is further enhanced in the case of the motivated senior L2 users in this study and spread across a variety of L2 learning environments. This motivational circle is key in the language experience of all three participants of this study.

Group interaction plays a key role in participants' language experience and search for well-being. Part of Ryan and Deci's (2018) SDT is the relationships motivation theory (RMT),

whereby the quality of relationships and interactions impinges on learners' motivational trajectories (Quint Oga Baldwin & Hirosawa, 2022), and thus on their overall language experience. The dialectical interaction between senior learners and their teaching counterparts, may they be friends, natives or teachers, enhance engagement, both as L2 learners and as L2 knowledge *sharers*. That is the reason why within the language experience, the notion of well-being is strongly rooted in a two-sided move: the well-being participants get from learning a new language, and the well-being they wish to provide to others they coach and share L2-related knowledge with.

Once fully emerged in third age, the older learner's hybrid L2-self can better experience the reciprocal motivational growth within the motivational community it is thriving in. In other words, this individual hybrid and mature L2 self becomes subject of / object of other hybrid and mature L2 selves' motivation through what Murphey *et al.* have termed 'reciprocal idealizing' (2014). The external motivational influences, or better said, the external motivational interactions help shape and sustain the hybrid and mature L2 self through ideal "classmates"' visioning. Patricia herself mentions that her ideal L2 learning environment would always flourish with the leadership of Josette, another L2 learner, and through mutual L2-related interactions.

In return, and upon full attainment of his hybrid and mature L2 self, each L2 senior user under study here better helps nurture this motivational collaboration (displayed in Figure 6.3) in three ways:

(1) by *helping* and *teaching* their L2 learning peers, which both Georges and Josette do in the case of this study, by coaching their respective friends. This corroborates previous literature that highlights the importance of connections in learning engagement (Quint Oga-Baldwin & Hirosawa, 2022);

(2) by visualizing success even better through the learning success and language achievements of the peers they interact with (both as they learn from them and teach them). This is the case of the interactive nature of reciprocal learning between Josette and Patricia, and to a lesser extent, between Josette and Georges, who correspond by email and text messages in English outside their regular meetings at the café group;

(3) by eventually growing their overall L2 motivational self-system on a reciprocal level with their peers through the sharing of common concordant goals and motivational visions. This is clearly illustrated with the private L2 group sessions Josette and Patricia organize on their own.

Figure 8.3. Collaborative learning and mature L2-self strengthening
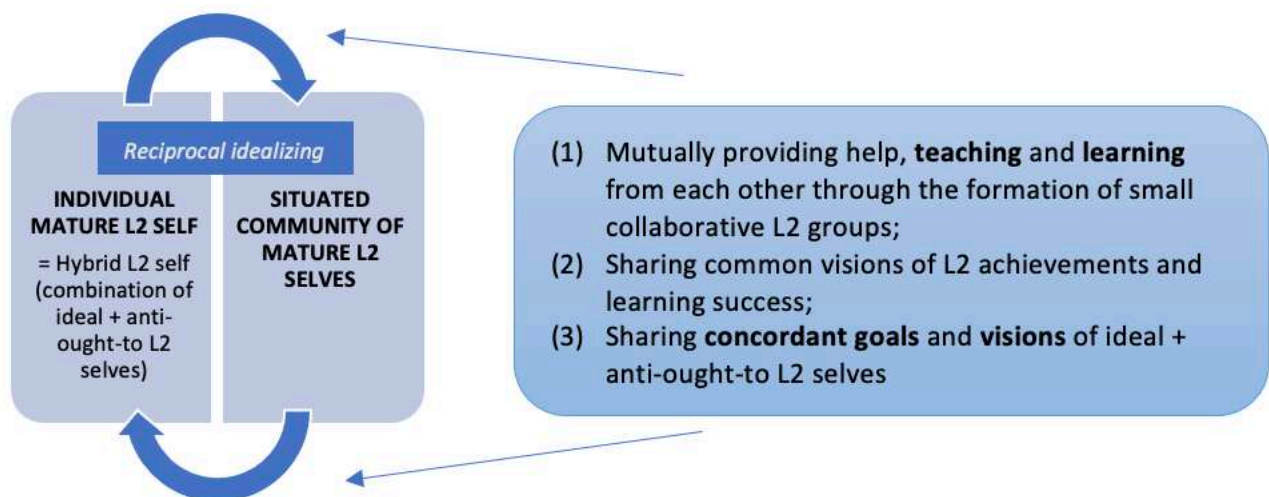
8.3. Lifelong development of motivational profiles from a CDST perspective

The language experience taken as a historical whole and from a CDST perspective

involves analyses of participants' respective motivational states' landscape (i.e., their lifelong motivational trajectories). Results from the individual analyses of each self-organization show that while there are clear patterns of self-constructs at common phases of life whether in childhood, adulthood or third age, different moves (i.e., phase shifts and attractor states (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008a) throughout life can also lead to the same outcome, i.e., high motivation in third age. A striking parallel element to the three profiles is that at least one attractor state, whether shallow (SAS) for Georges or deep (DAS) for both Josette and Patricia precede the present one. This means that their current high motivational state is the result of an accumulated motivational L2 experience provided by attractor states, which themselves involve one to several peaks (HPMs and DMCs) at different stages of participants' life.

8.3.1. Initial conditions

In the case of the three participants' life stories with FLL, the origins, i.e., the initial conditions of their L2 motivation (RQ1), have an impact on the intensity of their present L2 commitment (RQ2). Coincidentally, while all three participants were born in different regions of France and raised up in different social backgrounds, they commonly share certain personality traits, which are responses of their initial states (i.e., rebellion against their educational conditions, or at least the wish to move away from external expectations). The elements influencing the individual complex systems of each participant in early life do not especially motivate them to learn a language; all three participants commonly report having no good memory of English classes at school, nor any specific interest in the subject. However, their initial background heavily impacts their personality as lifelong resilient and hard-working self-challengers, in other words, the overall skeleton of their life self-constructs.

During participants' respective childhood, no parents or family relatives/teachers actually 'pushed' them to learn languages specifically. Yet family and society 'pushed' them to follow the traditional path suited to their social class and gender, which shaped and strengthened their anti-ought-to self from an early start in life, as largely discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. In many respects, this concept, whereby the learner is 'motivated by the opposite of what the external pressures demand' (Thompson, 2017, p. 39), nicely fits with the present study for all three participants. Both Patricia and Josette developed very strong anti-ought-to selves from an early age against their status quo as women. In fact, many of the challenges both female participants encountered in their life had to do with others doubting their ability, which was related to the external factors that the ought-to-self generally involved. For both Josette and Patricia, the study of L2 was associated to financial independence, professional promotions, and more generally to their wish to go beyond all expectations they grew up with.

Like Josette's and Patricia's starting points, Georges's initial conditions (i.e., that of a farm boy growing up far away from any L2-oriented education) could not have possibly predicted a motivational growth in L2 use and learning. As we see in the development of each story, the initial conditions impact on the construction of dominant selves and identities, yet they do not determine the way the L2 will be used and learned in the long run. However, participants' lifelong motivational behaviour clearly begins with a strong general psychological reactance against the initial expectations from their surroundings. This general anti-ought-to self then develops and progressively relates to L2 matters. Indeed, all three have had to fight against the odds to keep the motivation high, and reach their L2-related objectives.

8.3.2. Phase shifts

Phase shifts differ from one profile to the other, except for the last one, which refers to the retirement transition phase. Retirement emerges as the final turning point that crystallises senior participants' motivational behaviour and resulting learning ecology. In L2MSS terms, phase shifts are the manifestations of self-assertiveness, and to some extent, the last phase also triggers the full emergence of the hybrid mature L2 self. While the task to record motivational phase transitions on the scale of a lifetime seems rather arduous, I have attempted to simplify the process the way Thompson (2017) did, by delineating them in accordance with the main phases of HPMs instead. Phase shifts thus represent 'key decisions' participants take with regards to their practice of English, and the way it impacts their motivational behaviour overall. They indicate a new window of opportunity that then helps the system get closer to an attractor state and a period of intense L2 activity. The learning and L2 use experience aggregate an accumulation of phase shifts, which themselves trigger the multiplication of attractor states, which eventually result in the final deep attractor state of high motivation. An attractor state immediately follows a phase shift, as I summarize below.

8.3.3. Attractor states and empowerment

Capturing attractor states and exploring their level of depth enable a closer analysis of participants' behaviour and emotions within a more or less HPM or DMC experience. Furthermore, the scrutiny of attractor states helps set out common identity patterns that emerge in each profile. Every DAS, for instance, involves a high degree of intensity, autonomy, pride and passion related to the use and practice of L2. Characteristics of attractor states, measured in terms of variability, stability and speed, depend on the nature of the system's actions and behaviourial decisions, and vary according to their related emotional intensity, degree of commitment and external conditions (i.e., the influence of

the environment and people). For instance, Josette's *thirst* of revenge against her family's pressures and restrictions impacts the depth of her first deep attractor state, just like Patricia's clear and intense commitment to sit the TOEIC exam transforms this period into a deep attractor state as well. Likewise, Georges's emotional engagement with L2 in third age propels him into a deep attractor state.

The urge of participants' decision to undertake L2-related activities, the degree of intensity and its impact on other activities (whether the latter are put aside or not), in other words, the *space* taken by L2 activities in their daily schedules, also determines the speed vector and the depth of each state. All three senior learners are now in a comfortable position of slow speed L2 use in the most recent attractor state they have settled. By slow, I mean that the system is still *alive* yet works in slow-motion, meaning that with such a slow speed, and unless there is a dramatic phase shift in their life (serious health issues for instance forcing them to stop all activities), it is very unlikely that the *ball* (i.e., their complex motivational system) from Figures 5.2, 6.1 and 7.2, could be launched to another stage. As such, and except for Patricia, who remains in a moderately deep attractor state (MDAS) due to her pre-retirement status that could likely change again when she retires, another motivational phase shift for either Georges or Josette seems rather unlikely.

The accumulation of attractor states also somehow builds up on participants' initial selves at stake, more particularly the anti-ought-to self. Georges underlines his strong reluctance at being formatted by a single teacher. He clearly refuses to do what traditional teaching would tell him to do. On the contrary, autonomy is particularly conveyed in Georges's last self-written narrative in which he expresses his need to remain autonomous. This constant 'fight' against the norms echoes in both women's narratives too. During her professional life, Josette's anecdote of her being exceptionally selected by her boss among other male

colleagues to attend a meeting, for she was the only person able to speak English, made her become, for once, on par with her male peers, nurturing her initial anti-ought-to self, and combatting family and social expectations she grew up with. She even realizes that learning English has probably helped her 'compensate' on those earlier battles against social female stereotyping she experienced in her first DAS in Italy. Similarly, Patricia sits the TOEIC exam during her DAS, and finds pride in having succeeded in L2 where some of her top male bosses (and doctors she used to assist) failed. Again, learning English empowers participants to position themselves at a higher level personally (they achieve beyond their own expectations), socially and professionally.

More generally, while the anti-ought-to self emerges in their earlier years as a general response to their social upbringing and family expectations (unrelated to the direct learning of languages), it further develops in their older years in response to their age and relates more clearly to the learning of English, since, and as attractor states indicate, it has by then become an all-consuming activity for the three of them. The study of DMCs and HPMs within those attractor states brings additional specific details on key motivational periods, which I discuss next.

8.4. General discussion on DMCs and HPMs

This study initially aimed to demonstrate the opportunities for wider empirical use of the DMC template, outside classrooms, among an elder population and over a lifetime. However, as the research unfolded and data was collected, a new orientation regarding DMCs' definition and structural peculiarity arose, which clearly indicated that the taxonomy had to be better elaborated, and a clearer definitional distinction had to be made in the description of each participant's motivational landscape, especially when looking at individual lifelong motivational trajectories.

Because participants' enthusiasm and motivational energy do not clearly tail off over time, assessing the motivational intensity and level requires careful attention and a more sophisticated categorization. As Muir (2022) already recently envisaged, 'the significance of DMCs is rooted in their being comprised of *the same building blocks* as other experiences of long-term motivation more broadly' (p. 166). More precisely, research needs to distinguish characteristics that are typical of DMCs from those typical of what I name in this research HPMs and add, as I argue below, the concept of Self-Directed Motivational Reservoir (SDMR). All three concepts are not only different but complementary as well. As such, they need to be analysed together in order to provide a more accurate overview of an individual's lifelong trajectory of L2 motivation.

My data align with previous literature that categorizes DMCs as 'an intense burst of motivational energy [that] functions *over and on top of* the steady motivation which a good student will exhibit throughout the year' (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016, p. 3). A DMC is further strengthened 'in an *ongoing* manner and its flow is maintained by various structural properties [such as] *behavioral routines* and *progress checks*' (p. 16). Indeed, participants clearly show that the DMCs they experience trigger a mechanism of recurrent actions, behavioural patterns and habits.

The content and the form (i.e., the regular laughter and exclamation points are recurrent in all three transcripts) that emerge from each narrative clearly support that the way participants talk about English learning is due to their intense history with the language, and therefore to the obvious presence and impact of FLL DMCs and HPMs throughout their life. Beyond academics' view on DMCs, this research supports that both DMCs and HPMs favour metacognition and self-knowledge. For all three participants, there is a clear

acknowledgment of their language abilities and a sense of achievement, which they proudly describe and rank as high when assessing the impact of their DMCs. The notion of 'linguistic self-confidence', also associated to the notion of 'self-efficacy' (Bandura, 1997; Muñoz, 2019), clearly emerges in each narrative as a result of their DMC and HPM experiences. Georges describes 'the trips that allowed [him] to calibrate [his] progress and strengthen [his] motivation' (Georges/Int_1/42:19) while Patricia decides to sit the TOIEC exam in 2015 by herself in order to 'boost [her] progress' (Patricia/Int_1/22:55).

While both DMCs and HPMs appear rather similar at first, since they both carry highly positive emotional loading, a 'highly efficient re-triggering mechanism' (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016, p. 71) and a high level of intensity and self-propelling quality in the experience of L2 practice and use, my data also show that there remain undisputable differences between the two. As Dörnyei and his colleagues (2016) note, 'a DMC is not equivalent to high levels of motivation in general' (p. 2). Table 8.2 below summarizes the distinction between DMCs and HPMs in terms of duration, features, emotional scope and overall impact on the individual's impact.

Table 8.2. DMC *versus* HPM

	Temporal structure	Duration	Components	Environment	Emotional experience	Impact on individual
DMC	Temporary, short-lived, has an end.	Middle term (a few months to 1 year maximum).	Precise focus on a project with specific targets to be achieved under a limited amount of time.	More likely group-oriented (Muir, 2020, 2021). In classrooms mainly. Structured and organized externally.	Effortless, the objective is short-term satisfaction upon project completion.	'all-consuming preoccupation' (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016, p. 2) Other unrelated activities are left aside.
HPM	Not always with a clear end.	Either short, middle term, long term or ongoing – can be one same event (trips, lessons) repeated over the long run.	1 to several projects run simultaneously with more flexible targets and completion deadlines.	Individual-oriented, mainly with potential external support. Outside the context of classrooms.	Effortless <u>or</u> effortful, the objective is long-term pleasure and savouring.	Not as self-absorbing as DMC, other activities around considered equally (sports, family commitments, etc.).

One key difference is the emotional tenor that HPMs or DMCs carry. Research into emotions in SLA has gathered significant steam and grown in recent years (Dewaele, 2022; Dewaele & Li, 2020; Gregersen & Al Khateeb, 2022; MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Maher & King, 2022), yet a parallel focus on the evolutive emotional trajectory in a DMC is a rather novel line of inquiry. More particularly, authors have dedicated some, albeit limited, consideration to the positive emotional tenor of DMCs both at an individual (Ibrahim, 2016a) and group level (Muir, 2022). However, I argue that DMC-oriented research would do well in also addressing highly charged *ambivalent* emotional experiences within HPMs. As Muir (2022) points out, 'the highly marked, positive emotional tenor of DMCs is one of several key characteristics' (p. 168). In the case of my study, I aim to swap the term *positivity* with the word *intensity* to describe emotions experienced during the HPMs. For instance, Georges displays intense feelings of frustration, which, while being perceived as positive boosters to his overall lifelong FLL motivation, also bear more negative aspects.

The overall accumulation of incidental HPMs helps strengthen the longevity of DMCs' effect and sustain learners' motivational demeanour, while equipping each individual with a 'chronic capacity to block out competing directions for action' (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016, p. 75). DMCs act as boosters or motivational triggers that will keep the FL study flow, but they are nonetheless fewer than high motivational peaks. In this regard, Figure 8.4 further looks at the quantity of HPMs across the ages, which one can compare with Figure 8.5, which shows the quantity of DMCs over the life of each participant.

Figure 8.4. Number of participants' HPMs across the ages
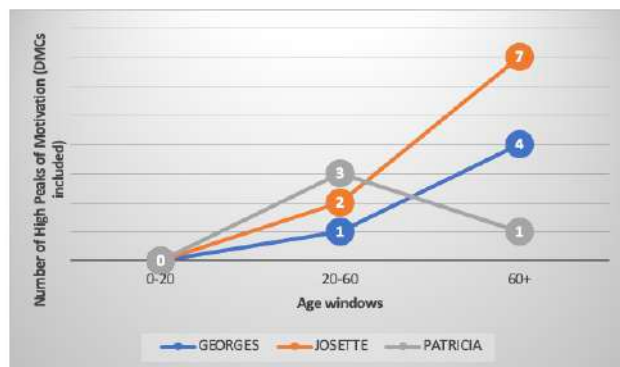
Figure 8.5. Number of participants' DMCs across the ages
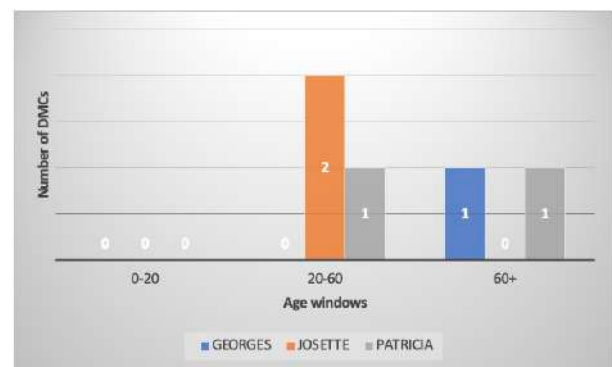
As we can see, most HPMs occur after 60 years old (2 HPMs for Josette between 20-60 years old against 7 HPMs after 60+; 1 HPM for Georges between 20-60 against 4 HPMs after 60+) , except for Patricia, whose number of HPMs in adulthood (3) is higher than after 60+ (1). This could be partly explained because of her age, since she is the youngest of all three and still in the early phase of third age. On the other hand, all DMCs occur between adulthood and third age across the three cases. HPMs clearly outnumber DMCs for all participants overall. This would confirm that HPMs are less exceptional than DMCs, and therefore more frequent.

Note that as participants' self-made motivational timelines commonly showed (Figures 5.1, 6.2 and 7.1), motivation keeps rising over the years, independently of the presence or absence of DMCs and the number of HPMs during each period. The aggregation of both, however, has a transformational power in the learning behaviour and motivational mechanisms of the learner over the long run, since it fills in their motivational capital, which very likely explains the progressive rise in their own eyes. DMCs and HPMs are integrated parts of a wider, dynamic and complex motivational superstructure (Henry *et al.*, 2015), yet they do not fulfil the same role. A DMC usually triggers an HPM, but HPMs, because of their frequency and more ordinary nature, do not systematically lead to new DMCs.

8.4.1. Limitations of DMCs and HPMs: Towards the complementary concept of Self-Directed Motivational Reservoir (SDMR)

The application of the concept of DMC clearly has its limitations in this research, not only due to the limited sample of participants, but also due to the scarcity of studies that define DMCs outside the very specific context of collective group projects in L2 classrooms and among an older population. According to literature, a DMC is an intense period with a clear beginning and an end. Because of their common fixation with reaching well-being, which is a permanent "aim" in all three case studies, the DMC does not appear clearly at participants' current stage of life, or at least it does not fully explain their motivational landscape over the long run.

The participants of this research are opportunity seekers, who use and practice their language skills whenever they can and out of pure enjoyment. They consider hard work and full commitment in language learning as key elements to self-fulfilment. These are not exceptional and punctual behaviours. While all three candidates have specific goals (for instance, improve their grammar or pronunciation skills), the intensity of their practice has no limits over time.

Likewise, an assessment of HPMs clearly requires refinement in the context of this study on lifelong and sustainable L2 motivation among senior users. In fact, participants' stories suggest that high motivational peaks are as automatic and self-directed as DMCs are. They are composed of facilitative learning structures and self-concordant goals. Describing senior learners' current practice simply as a motivational peak would involve there is a clear declination at some point, which is not the case for any of the three participants. As I pointed out earlier in each pictorial and chronological representation

(Figures 5.5, 6.4 and 7.4), several HPMs are still ongoing. We therefore need an additional concept to understand participants' present motivational state. Furthermore, as Georges clearly expresses while retrospectively recalling the structural quality of his course at the Wall Street Institute (DMC 1), 'at the beginning, I needed that [a learning structure]. Maybe less now'.[115] (Georges/Int_2/01:12:38). So, what is it that Georges, Josette and Patricia need and enjoy the most at their current stage of L2 use and practice? In other words, what comes after DMCs and HPMs for highly motivated senior L2 users?

HPMs and DMCs represent "peaks" and intense motivational moments of L2 use, while the senior participants project a certain sense of motivational stability and calm that is yet as intense and positively loaded, and more everlasting than what HPMs and DMCs imply by definition. Furthermore, while DMCs refer to a clearly single-oriented L2 project, HPMs convey a certain confusion with regards to the number of L2 projects that are running simultaneously, and which form a bigger motivational landscape over the long run. I argue that the missing link that combines both the movement of a DMC and the recurrence of punctual HPMs, which still involves a high degree of motivational intensity, is what I term a **Self-Directed Motivational Reservoir** (**SDMR**). This can be viewed as a motivational 'plateau' or threshold the senior learners under study have reached and remained at retirement. By 'reservoir', I understand a slower, peaceful and constant motivational state that encapsulates the accumulation of motivating experiences from the past (DMCs and HPMs), and today leads to several daily L2 uses and practices. This state is characterized by a high degree of self-awareness and metacognition in later life.

As I discussed earlier in the literature review, academics have used the metaphorical image of an oceanic current (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016) to describe a DMC that is a focused

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[115] *au début, j'avais besoin de ça. Peut-être moins maintenant.*

stimulator or 'formidable flow of energy' (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2014, p. 11), which, in the case of this study, *moves* the participants towards HPMs. Figure 8.6 below displays currents (DMCs) that shape and form waves (HPMs) up to a certain extent in life. Data shows that each DMC indeed represents a motivational trigger or impulse, with a beginning and an end that aims towards the same direction, which is a 'highly valued end-goal' or fixed and clear-cut objectives (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016, p. 6). This motivational jet stream often results in pushing the L2 learner towards a high peak and thus to more autonomy in L2 learning.

Figure 8.6. Representation of lifelong motivational landscape in light of DMCs, HPMs and SDMR
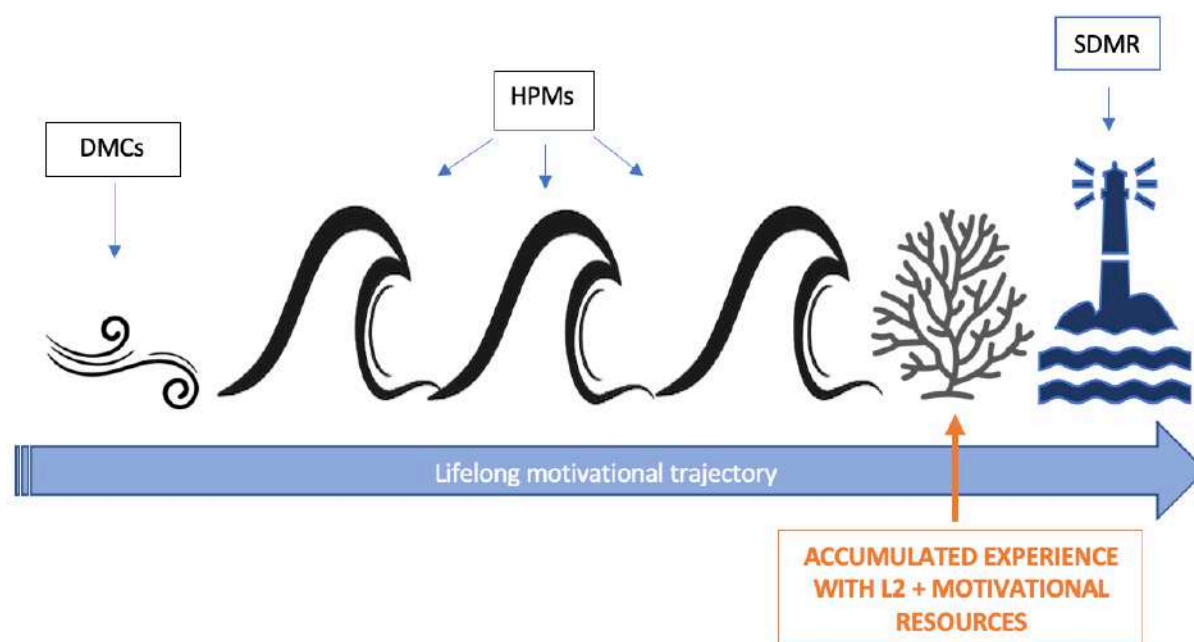
If we keep the image of currents as DMCs and waves as HPMs, we can also think about the natural barrier that a coral reef builds up in order to *break* the waves and ensure safer waters close to the shore. In this sense, the accumulation of motivational "peaks" across life are eventually neutralised in late adulthood by an accumulation of maturity and lifelong experience with L2 use and learning (i.e., the coral reef in Figure 8.6 above) and motivational resources, which then acts as a rampart and ensure the maintenance of a high level of SDMR. This SDMR is represented by the lighthouse in the figure, which is

built up securely and thus deprived of any motivational decline. This particular motivational stability, in which older L2 learners similar to Georges, Josette and Patricia find themselves once they have retired, maintains L2 motivation high in their daily routine thanks to the accumulated experience and motivational resources they have gathered throughout their DMC(s) and HPMs earlier in their life. SDMR somewhat appears as a motivational *reservoir* or capital that is constantly full and unlikely to empty.

Well-being has long been mentioned in SLA motivation research as the ending point of motivation and as one positive consequence of nurturing self-concordant goals (Dörnyei *et al.*, 2016). A sound and operational SDMR results in well-being. For Georges, Josette and Patricia, reaching well-being currently means reaching a profound sense of self-fulfillment and self-efficacy, and pursuing self-concordant goals, in other words, goals that are 'personally meaningful' (Henry, 2022, p. 62), and adapted to their present needs as senior learners.

To summarize this chapter, all three participants experience FLL through collaborative and motivational L2 groups of study on the one hand, and through the individual formation of hybrid and mature L2 selves over the long run on the other hand. In answer to RQ3, the use of the tripartite theoretical framework L2MSS/DMC/CDST efficiently sheds light on key motivational patterns impacting the overall L2 trajectory of the participants, thus providing answers to RQ1 and RQ2. Participants' motivational state landscape contains high peaks of motivation and attractor states associated with DMC-formed self-concordant goals throughout life, which eventually generate abiding motivational perseverance, long-term striving and well-being. These dynamic components form as many variables that can be included as parts of the language experience and the motivational capital accumulated over the years, which then form the overall lifelong SDMR. They also represent conditions

for motivational sustainability in light of an all-encompassing context that includes individual situated processes that evolve and respond to collective environments and group motivational dynamics.

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION

I shall conclude my research by presenting a summary of the key findings in 9.1. A summarized note describes the contributions this study provides in terms of theory and conceptual building and methodological endeavours in 9.2. Practical considerations of direct application to L2 educational systems for the elderly are subsequently further discussed in 9.3. I eventually acknowledge some of the main limitations this study holds in 9.4. These are examined simultaneously with resulting research implications and potential directions for future investigation. I end my reflections with some final remarks on the concept of well-being in later life in 9.5.

9.1. Summary of findings

The primary objective of this study was to explore the non-linear and dynamic nature of advanced senior learners' language learning journey across life through the analysis of narratives. The secondary aim of this project was to examine seniors' L2 commitment across nested time scales and within self-defined intensity, reflected in the chronological investigation of attractor states, and more particularly DMCs and HPMs. Not only did the study aim to assess what *generated* seniors' motivation in a situated manner, i.e., in each self-assessed pivotal turning points, but also what *sustained* it all throughout.

I carried out a narrative study and identified a small constellation of three learners that presented optimal L2 motivational and self-regulatory patterns, and thus constituted powerful channels of progress and motivational endurance across time and situations. A triangulated and multimodal approach was adopted in order to collect data by means of two semi-structured narrative interviews and multiple instruments over the period of 3 years, including photos, email exchanges, phone text messages, books, letters, academic records, questionnaire, drawings, to name but a few. The idea was to look at L2 motivation change over time from a narrative angle, taking individual self-accounts and enriching them with a myriad of personal and meaning-making items.

Preliminary findings from the first interview triggered high productive lines of inquiry around HPMs and DMCs, which thus became the focal point of the second session of interviews. Overall, data showed that powerful motivational drives emerged from the merging of ideal and anti-ought-to selves across life. I then presented conditions of prolonged L2 motivated action and sustainability in light of an all-encompassing language learning context that includes the interrelationship between individual self-constructs and their interaction with collective environments and group motivational dynamics.

For all three senior participants, non-linear change in L2 lifelong development use and practice did not necessarily entail strong differences between them in terms of L2 self-constructs and language learning experience. On the contrary, thanks to the combined use of the DMC, CDST and L2MSS theoretical frameworks, analyses showed that all three senior learners revealed common patterns of strong anti-ought-to self and mature L2 self-constructs emerging out of HPMs and intense periods of L2 use, that eventually led to sustained L2 motivation coupled with well-being in third age.

Finally, I complete this perspective by drawing a close parallel with Consoli's (2021a) recent development on life capital as 'a wealth which every person possesses; a wealth [that] can be understood through the richness of one's life experiences' (p. 122). Likewise, Figure 9.1 below summarizes the overall motivational capital of all three senior participants as an accumulation of motivating L2 experiences, which I represent with a tree growing from a succession of interacting dynamics and conditions (represented with the roots and orange boxes) over time. These common 'motivational nutrients' include similar initial personality traits due to specific – and antagonistic – family environments, the combination of selves into a mature L2 self, the continuous engagement with L2 learning communities, and the accumulation of motivational peaks (DMCs and HPMs) and their associated self-concordant goals forming a sound self-directed motivational reservoir (SDMR), as already discussed previously and summarized here.

Figure 9.1. An ecological perspective on lifelong motivational capital
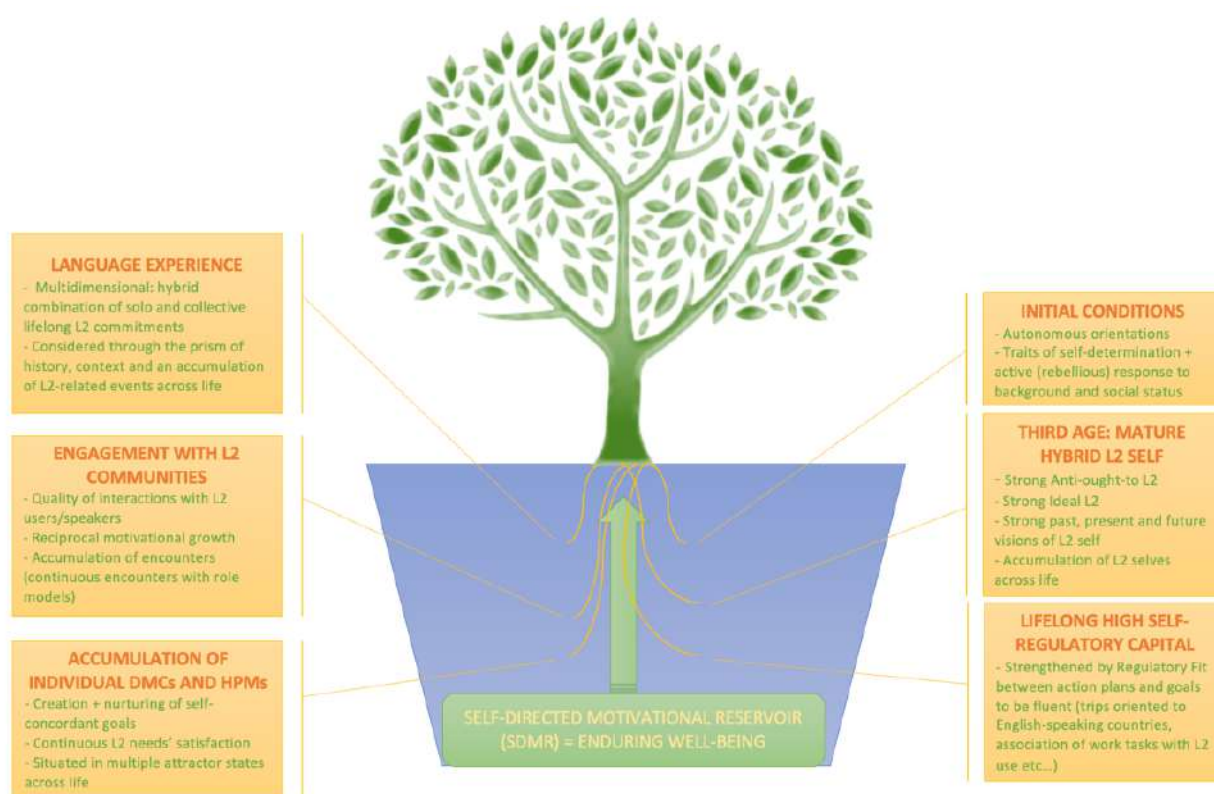
In L2 motivation research, focus on self-regulation has not received systematic study, and it is only recently that researchers have begun to call for more studies on patterns of self-regulation in light of exploring the developments of L2 perseverance over the long run (Feng & Papi, 2019). In Figure 9.1, I present self-regulation through the concept of regulatory fit (RF), earlier discussed. All three participants always tended to combine the useful with the pleasant, and chose activities that converged toward L2 use, no matter if they were working in completely different fields, or had varied family commitments throughout life. For instance, they would all always prioritise trips to English-speaking countries so as to seize any opportunity to achieve their long term L2 goals. RF has a positive impact on their choices and response to change across time, and influences the development of their L2 use strategies.

Overall, the interconnected elements from Figure 9.1 come feed into the motivational reservoir (or motivational pool) of each participant, which I have named SDMR. They are some of the main conditions to the formation of healthy and lifelong FLL motivational ecologies, which also help sustain well-being over the long run (Henry, 2022; Henry & Davydenko, 2020; Sheldon & Elliot, 1998, 1999). In other words, the motivational reservoir is what participants actively and consciously grow over the years, through the experiences they accumulate and the way those impact their intrinsic, deeply rooted L2 motives. In that sense, the ecological perspective employed in this research has offered a holistic view on lifelong FLL and motivation, whereby each participant has nurtured his/her enthusiasm for languages across the years, and made a rich motivational reservoir out of this accumulated capital throughout life.

9.2. Contributions to the field

This doctorate has addressed and filled in some of the existing gaps in the age-related and motivation SLA research agendas, while highlighting new pathways for future research. I have re-visited the concept of L2 motivation not only *among* three senior FL users, but also *through* their own eyes, empowering this under-studied group of learners both with a narrative and self-analytical voice. Furthermore, the study offers a multi-layered and inclusive look at lifelong language learning by providing new insights into an underexplored FL learning population that has long been overlooked in multiple aspects of SLA research. I have brought the concept of language learning both beyond the traditional classroom and formal instructional paradigms, and beyond the usual shorter timescales of a single L2 project, under which L2 motivation is often investigated. Instead, I have decided to assess individual FLL motivation over a lifetime, which thus far has seldom (if ever) triggered any inquiry. I have also addressed complex and dynamic aspects of FLL motivation at a micro-level, thus also reviewing Ushioda's (2009) person-in-context through the novel eye of mature and experienced L2 users.

What makes the present research different from previous studies on language learning and ageing is its detachment from the regularly discussed age-reacted biological or cognitive consequences on language development (Singleton & Záborská, 2020). Rather, the individual stories have shown the need to envisage third age FLL and motivation under new terms related to accumulative experience and motivation, such as the SDMR. Overall, results have shown that a thorough and ecological understanding of individual FLL motivation requires taking a longitudinal and retrospective approach, so as to determine more adequately the origins and developments of such a motivation within a dynamic and multilevel analytical framework.

One central calling in L2 motivation research is to avoid a reductionist approach so as to provide a comprehensive theoretical framework that does not just focus on one or two selected aspects (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2014). The same calling applies to methodological approaches, about which academics have been growingly encouraging multimodal undertakings (Al-Hoorie & Hiver, 2022; Barkhuizen *et al.,* 2014). Beyond inevitable methodological and theoretical cleavages, I showed that theories shared common conceptual grounds, and formed interesting connections. Likewise, I also decided to take a complex and dynamic angle in my methodological choices, which involved triangulation and multimodal instrumentation. Accordingly, I addressed the way participants' experiences and memories with L2 learning were formed through various narratives, both written and oral, through stories told and re-told at different points in time, and through a multitude of objects, side comments and exchanges. All three participants created coherence and meaning in the sometimes-vertiginous complexity of their life, shaping a multifaceted L2 narrative identity of their own that involved intertwined patterns of L2 motivational self-constructs evolving across time and space.

I also took on academics' call to re-assess the contours of the L2MSS theoretical paradigm (Thompson & Vásquez, 2015), and elaborated on it through the broader exploration of the anti-ought-to self together with the too often under-theorized language learning experience in light of CDST, which had thus far only received but a peripheral treatment in L2 motivation research agenda (Csizér & Kálmán, 2019). Likewise, the theory of DMCs was also put under scrutiny and enriched through further exploration, from an individual and elderly perspective and outside the traditional, time and age limited classroom contexts.

Finally, ethical contributions involved my attempt to enhance a stronger collaborative bond between my participants and I, and to foster their commitment by involving them during

several stages of the research process. As such, besides the interviews, during which participants were free to select any objects and narrative instruments to define themselves and to talk about their journeys, whether in written or oral forms, all three were also active contributors in the selection process, during the analytical discussion and in the final validation of their personal stories and resulting profile analyses. Equipped with full trust in my participants' levels of self-awareness, metacognition and propensity for storytelling, I have given them latitude over the way they wanted to present themselves and their own stories, always encouraging full transparency and a close collaboration every step of the way.

9.3. Practical applications

Ultimately, this PhD bears practical underpinnings in L2 senior education and seniors' overall mental and health cares, and I wish to consider its direct application in social debates by taking Dörnyei & Ushioda's call (2021, p. 191):

> *Beyond the academic and personal value of our research, we should not forget that in a discipline such as applied linguistics, the value of our research is also gauged in terms of its value or meaningfulness for society, that is, in terms of how the findings of our research can usefully contribute to addressing problems and issues in the real world where language and communication come into play*.

The three narratives can clearly feed into the debate on policies related to challenges and opportunities for lifelong learning, on the one hand, and to foreign language education in third age on the other hand, which involve both immediate and long-term solutions. Georges, Josette and Patricia all challenged the current system by looking for alternative ways to practice a language because of their prime dissatisfaction with traditional teaching,

the absence of adequate L2 learning material adapted to their interests, and the absence of teaching training adapted to their cognitive levels, skills and needs. Accordingly, they have created self-methods, drawing from previous formal teaching techniques

Through the individual stories of senior L2 users' experience with the existing FLL educational tools available, this study has highlighted the need for learning system designers to take into account the varying needs and capacities of older people. Research in this area can advance a more comprehensive social and cognitive geragogy, generally defined as the study of education of old people. Geragogy goes beyond the simplified aspects of gerontology, defined as the study of old age and the related biological changes ageing causes to body and mind. This promising research area should thus simultaneously address older adults' strengths and vulnerabilities, needs and expectations, while also contributing to efforts toward improving aging learning societies as a whole.

Stories similar to the ones highlighted in this work provide detailed information on older learners' preferences and needs, while also providing visibility on the current failures in training and instructional support for the elderly learning community. Information displayed in those narratives also offer a better assessment of the existing usability problems of technology-assisted and digital interfaces (i.e., smartphone applications or any other computer-based device), especially with matters related to the quality of online L2 learning content (Charness & Czaja, 2005). Such an understanding of older population's motivational behaviours and response to late learning opportunities should play an active part in shaping policy response. This is particularly relevant in policy-makers wish to boost the 'silver economy', in light of the prevailing shift in demand for products and services targeted at seniors, and which is expected to grow by about 5% a year from EUR 3.7 trillion in 2015 to EUR 5.7 trillion in 2025 (European Commission, 2021, p. 8). This is even more

significant against the backdrop of a higher life expectancy and an ageing population that is likely to be impacted by the gradual new pension reforms across Europe, and its consequences on individual projections upon retirement.

This work has also highlighted the potential for long-lived individuals to actively engage with life, maintain autonomy, be socially and intellectually committed, enjoy a studious life while adapting to health, world and new technology challenges. The three narratives clearly expose a modern view of ageing, the one Georges, Josette and Patricia powerfully embody in their dynamic lifestyles, and which contributes to adding to the concept of 'successful aging'. Because of academic evidence that personal satisfaction and high degrees of subjective well-being are associated with a reduced risk of mortality (Diener & Chan, 2011, Smith & Ryan, 2016), one can surmise the strong protective effects of language learning among older learners in terms of vitality and positive and emotional regulations, including prevention against signs of mental diseases and dementia (Craik *et al.*, 2010; Gold, 2018; Roberts & Kreuz, 2019). Of course, these are only some of the many determinants for 'positive ageing', as described by Depp *et al*. (2010).

While I have looked backward at three lifelong histories of language learning, the debate also requires a forward-looking reflection on the impacts and alternatives in this demographic transition worldwide. Such forward thinking could inform the debate and support long-term sustainable policy choices to the benefit of every age, since as we saw, L2 experiential antecedents (the formative years of language learning, however early or later in life) form an accumulative learning and motivational capital that has a critical impact on later years.

9.4. Limitations and suggestions for future research

The very limitations of this study are as multiple pathways that may lay the groundwork for future research considerations, which is why I address them together. Below I also look at translational research directions that can inform public policy and educational institutions for seniors, and provide a more holistic view addressing gerontological issues.

9.4.1. Fieldwork follow-up

Because of the study's focus on retrospective self-accounts about lifelong history with languages, a substantial analysis on participants' current learning strategies was left aside. Because of doctoral time and lockdown geographical restrictions, no fieldwork was achieved in order to analyse participants' actual activities on site, whether in the semi-private café exchange groups or during the home discussion sessions. Investigating on highly motivated third age language learners' routine tasks in a more systematic way is a promising venue for future research within a critical geragogical framework (Formosa, 2012), and could be completed as a follow-up to the present study.

Because of the importance of the role of space in my discussion, a promising venue for research would involve elaborating on behavioural tracking systems. Benson (2021) proposes a study using a GPS-enabled online diary application, *Diario*, to track participants' daily language learning activities and record where they are, who they are with and what language(s) they are using at the moment they make the entry, while also being encouraged to upload photographs to illustrate their activities. This language learning mapping forms part of the growing belief that participants can be 'linguistic ethnographers' (Choi & Slaughter, 2021, p. 84), i.e., co-researchers, as I have supported all throughout this PhD. Such an endeavour could be reciprocated at the level of highly

motivated senior L2 learners so as to track their FL practice daily over a few months, and assess their motivation at a more granular level.

The field of applied linguistics is as diverse as it remains an opened, multi and cross-dimensional arena where multiple angles can be discussed altogether. With this in mind, an additional way to approach L2 learning among the elderly is to explore policies on lifelong education and educational programmes in universities and L2 courses targeted at elderly learning populations, and see how they match with individual experiences. In light of regional and European programmes to support older adults' access to language learning, there has been very little research to assess those policies and the effectiveness that underlies these programmes in practical terms.

9.4.2. Analytical follow-up: Using the Trajectory Equifinality Approach (TEA)

A visual representation of the motivational variations and commonalities between my case studies could be further proposed. One interesting small-lens analytical approach that has the potential to do so is the Trajectory Equifinality Approach (TEA). This innovative method, chiefly used by several Japanese scholars (Aoyama, 2016; Aoyama & Yamamoto, 2021; Arakawa *et al.*, 2012; Sato *et al.*, 2009, 2014; Valsiner & Sato, 2006; Yamamoto, 2018), yet uncommonly explored in Western studies, draws some parallel elements to Dörnyei's (2014) Retrodictive Qualitative Modelling (RQM). TEA retrospectively reviews events from present back to the very first day of a phenomenon under study (i.e., the café language group exchange), tracing back the complex and dynamic processes that have led and converged to one similar endpoint that all participants share, and from which participants' trajectories can then diverge again after passing.

TEA helps better connect different trajectories together by focusing on what CDST presents as attractors states, while acknowledging their variations too. As such, this method of analysis offers a variety of advantages, especially in terms of its flexibility in the number of participants (ideally 3 to 4), timescale and combinations of components. It further deploys a process tracing strategy that examines intermediate steps to drill down mechanisms that led to individual specific choices. TEA could definitely be applied to visually represent the variations and commonalities of my lifelong senior L2 learners.

9.4.3. Study reciprocation

Future research could reciprocate the present study by exploring the journeys of other motivated senior language learners from a different geographical and linguistic background. One way to diversify research would be to look at older learners of foreign languages other than English (LOTEs), including minor dialects. For instance, there exist similar café language discussion groups in other regions of France, including in Bretagne or in the Basque regions, where local associations also propose weekly informal discussion café groups to learn and exchange in Breton or in Basque, respectively. In such a local context, assessing those FL learners' motivational journeys may reveal very different patterns from the ones displayed in this study.

9.4.4. Conceptual complexity and breadth

Narratives have shed light on some limitations to their explanatory power. For one, CDST has often been used as a large and extensible research umbrella under which a number of studies, whether quantitative or qualitative, can easily fall. Its broad use can be criticized as a one-size-fits-all theoretical holdall. Moreover, one could also criticise the absence of depth or focus on one all-encompassing theory. Finally, other criticisms might involve the

absence of other significant theories. In this research in particular, the integrative and dynamic perspective of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which offers parallel insights both at the macro and micro intraindividual levels (Ryan & Deci, 2018), could complement my analyses of the concepts of motivation and self-regulation in third age.

The very challenge for future research, and the one I confronted in this PhD, is to find the adequate level of focus, i.e., reach a fair balance between broad and specific theoretical concepts; broad enough to encompass the complexity of human motivation and its impact on language learning, especially when it is considered on a lifetime scale, and specific enough to understand the unique aspects and influence of key moments and variables.

9.5. Final remarks on ageing and well-being

Well-being encompasses many more aspects that could not be further developed in depth in the framework of a PhD thesis. Well-being is indeed the larger sum of a myriad of smaller activity parts. This research has focused mainly on one specific activity (i.e., language learning), largely devoid of attention to research developments on other activities, such as sports, socialising, family or individual-oriented projects, to name but a few. All participants of this research have reported a clear balance of activities in their life, including physical and social activities unrelated to but positively impacting on language learning. Likewise, all three participants are nurturing strong friendships among different social groups and regularly participating in a wide range of gatherings and social events. Finally, they are all fully committed to their roles as parents and grandparents, which also constitute a rather important element in their lives and overall natural motivational reservoir.

Future research should therefore also focus on the greater impact of present and daily life habits and activities on language learning, and explore how physical, social and relational

factors can impact motivation in L2 learning, since it is widely acknowledged that good health and lifelong learning are mutually reinforcing (Formosa, 2012; Singleton & Záborská, 2020). As such, forging greater connection across research fields on different types of engaging activities in later life holds the promise of advancing research on well-being in third age more systematically and comprehensively, so as to reach 'a better understanding of the complex interactions between mind and body' (Smith & Ryan, 2016, p. 316) in old age, and more holistically reflect on older adults' life experiences.

In conclusion, although both qualitative and quantitative research on language learning in later life have increased in quality and quantity in the past decade, there remain important substantial, methodological, and theoretical issues to address. Research on the antecedents and outcomes of lifelong motivation holds exceptional promise as policy-makers and programme leaders seek evidence to inform decisions concerning key societal challenges, such as enhancing economic security in later life, supporting health, mental and cognitive care among older populations, and more generally, taking retirement as the New Golden Age while optimizing seniors' quality of life.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Original version of excerpts in French

Chapter 5

EXCERPT G_1_Int_2

[00:57:05] Voilà, je pense qu'il y avait deux racines dans ma famille, une histoire familiale du côté de ma mère donc c'était mon grand-père qui était l'inventeur. Et de l'autre côté, du côté de mon père, il y avait un grand père qui était d'origine parisienne, qui était le sportif. [00:57:43] C'était... La force et le cerveau de ce côté... Je crois qu'il y a deux racines dans l'histoire familiale comme ça.

EXCERPT G_3_Int_2

Georges : [00:25:16] ça a pas été beaucoup, mais moi j'aurais rêvé d'avoir beaucoup d'anglais à enseigner... après, après, si j'avais. Si j'avais grandi en...continuer mon activité de coach du tennis après la retraite, tout le monde pensait que je le ferai, mais j'ai été happé par mes petits-enfants, tout ça.
Researcher : [00:25:34] D'accord.
Georges : [00:25:34] Voilà. Et j'aurais aimé...

EXCERPT G_4_Int_2

[00:03:01] Ça m'a fait un choc un petit peu… c'est ces trucs de rencontres de plus âgés […] [00:03:33] car j'étais habitué à un milieu universitaire avec des jeunes. J'ai un copain qui avait commencé avec moi. Il a craqué parce qu'on était trop.... On n'était pas habitués à ces assemblées de personnes âgées.

EXCERPT G_5_BS_l. 38-42

Personnellement mon voyage dans le judo s'est arrêté (à la fin de ma période judo sportive de compétition et de coaching) quand j'ai été happé par ma passion pour le tennis. Ma passion pour le tennis s'est estompée à la retraite quand j'ai été happé par ma passion pour l'anglais.

EXCERPT G_6_BS_l. 1-14

j'ai éprouvé ensuite un plaisir supérieur à celui ressenti pendant ma période orientée vers la compétition. J'éprouvais alors le plaisir des bonnes sensations corporelles (kinesthésiques) en effectuant des belles frappes, des échanges à rythme élevé avec les joueurs plus jeunes et plus forts que moi que j'entraînais. **Mon plaisir venait aussi du fait de créer les meilleures trajectoires** de balles susceptibles de faire progresser le joueur qui était de l'autre côté du filet. Dans cette situation, on est **partenaire** et non plus adversaire ; il s'agit de « **dialoguer** » avec un partenaire alors qu'en compétition on essaye de laisser l'adversaire sans réponse. **Je peux peut-être assimiler ce plaisir à**

celui d'un écrivain qui « sculpte » de belles phrases (plaisir immédiat et aussi plaisir de les partager avec ses lecteurs).

Chapter 6

EXCERPT J_5_Int_2/Part2

[00:04:32] Je me suis retrouvée dans une solitude terrible... Dans un Londres glacial, froid. Et là, vous retrouvez tout ce que vous n'aimez pas dans Londres. C'est à dire... À l'époque y avait le "smog". Des gens qui n'ont rien à faire de vous. Et j'étais seule.

EXCERPT J_9_Int_2/Part1

Josette : [00:25:27] J'arrive au poste frontière... [Avec] le manteau de fourrure... Le douanier était noir. Moi, j'étais une femme. J'ai dit, mon Dieu, qu'est ce qui va se passer ? […] Mais alors, en tant que femme, il fallait vraiment jouer.
Researcher : [00:26:03] Vous en parlez beaucoup tout au long, même la première fois qu'on s'est rencontrés, le fait d'être une femme, le statut quo, tout ce qui est... Est-ce que […] l'utilisation des langues vous a permis quelque part d'avoir une sorte de **rééquilibrage**, en fait ? […] Est-ce que la langue vous permettait d'être un peu plus sur le même pied d'égalité qu'un homme ?
Josette : [00:26:28] Je n'y ai jamais pensé... [...] Mais là, vous m'y faites penser. **Oui, ma réponse est oui, définitivement oui.**

EXCERPT J_10_Int_2/Part1

Josette : [00:22:18] j'allais jusqu'au point de chute pour parler avec le marketing dans tous les pays En anglais, du coup. Voilà, pendant cinq ans, ça a duré ça. Et lorsqu'on est parti en Algérie...
Researcher : [00:22:44] ... oui ...
Josette : [00:22:44] ... C'est moi qui connaissais comment faire les papiers, comment tout organiser. Bon, une fois qu'on a tout organisé, les Algériens nous disent, "bon qui vient ?" Alors on a mis madame [Josette] D. ou pas de femme.

EXCERPT J_11_Int_2/Part2

Researcher : [00:09:06] Donc vous restez quand même [à Animanice]?
Josette : [00:09:07] Ah oui, oui.
Researcher : [00:09:08] Pour les gens qui sont sympas...
Josette : [00:09:09] Pour les gens qui sont sympas... Et puis je me dis, bon, bin, il va bien se passer quelque chose.
Researcher : [00:09:14] Vous apprenez quand même? […] C'est plus pour la socialisation...
Josette : [00:09:19] Oui, voilà pour socialiser. Et en me disant peut-être il va me rester quelque chose.

EXCERPT J_12_Int_2/Part1

[00:37:24] Là, j'ai plus envie, maintenant. Il y en a une qui n'a pas répondu à ma demande. C'est... C'est violent, c'est très violent. J'ai dit maintenant, j'en ai marre. Et puis c'était peut-

être le moment de tourner la page.

EXCERPT J_13_Int_2/Part1

[00:02:49] Alors j'avais Philip, qui est mort d'un cancer. Tout va bien. J'ai Ian and Myra pendant deux ans, puis ils ont bien décliné (rires). J'ai eu une Jenifer très longtemps et pire, mais toutes les deux sont parties avant le Brexit en Angleterre, de peur de ne plus pouvoir racheter quelque chose en Grande-Bretagne. Voilà, depuis je n'ai... Ah oui. J'ai eu les "Mormon Girls"...

EXCERPT J_14_Int_2/Part1

Josette : [00:12:51] [Le Café Group], c'est **vivant**, **amical**... heu... **Instructif**.
Researcher : [00:12:58] Instructif...
Josette : [00:12:59] C'est **un partage**.
Researcher : [00:13:02] Oui.
Josette : [00:13:03] C'est l'auberge espagnole, hein!
Researcher : [00:13:05] Ah oui, c'est vrai ?
Josette : [00:13:05] On arrive avec ce qu'on a et on discute de n'importe quoi. […] C'est toujours **bienveillant** et **animé**, **endiablé**. **On rit, on apprend, on échange. Alors oui, il y a... On échange beaucoup de livres hein...**
Researcher : [00:13:30] D'accord.
Josette : [00:13:30] **Chacun apporte quelque chose.** […] C'est des gens qui lisent beaucoup. [emphasis added]

Chapter 7

EXCERPT P_1_Int_1

Researcher : [00:43:13] ...Les racines, on n'en a pas beaucoup parlé, mais de la famille finalement, du contexte familial de votre jeunesse. En quoi ça a pu être un déclencheur ?
Patricia : [00:43:24] Ah oui. Parce que... c'était un drame, quand même. Surtout, c'est surtout pour ma mère, en fait. Moi j'avais deux ans, je ne m'en souviens pas... mais heu... c'est dramatique comme situation. Veuve à 32 ans, avec trois enfants.
Researcher : [00:43:39] Oui.
Patricia : [00:43:41] Mais ça f... au moins, nous, on ne s'est jamais plaint. Mes... mes deux frères et moi, on n'avait rien pour jouer. Mais on... on a eu une jeunesse heureuse.
Researcher : [00:43:49] Oui.
Patricia : [00:43:50] C'est nos grands-parents qui nous ont élevé.
Researcher: [00:43:52] D'accord.
Patricia: [00:43:53] Mais tout le monde était dans le village. Et... mais ça forge le caractère...
Researcher: [00:43:58] Les épreuves ?
Patricia: [00:43:59] Ah oui.
Researcher: [00:43:59] ...Qui forgent le caractère.
Patricia: [00:44:01] Ouais, très important. Parce que c'est ça le départ en fait...
Researcher : [00:44:08] Très bien. Et de cela est arrivé votre résilience ?
Patricia : [00:44:12] Oui, oui.

EXCERPT P_3_Int_2

Patricia : [00:08:01] Ce que je me suis dit... j'ai pas fait beaucoup d'allemand, peut-être une année à Nice, en fait.
Researcher : [00:08:05] Oui.
Patricia : [00:08:06] Parce que je me suis aperçue que ça me servirait pas beaucoup, tout ça. Pourtant, je me suis fait des amis aussi ! [rires]. Là-bas, c'était bien.
Researcher : [00:08:15] C'était bien ?
Patricia : [00:08:16] Oui, mais ce n'était pas très pratique, c'était loin. C'était à Magnan.
Researcher : [00:08:19] D'accord. Et pourquoi vous souhaitiez reprendre l'Allemand du coup ? Parce que les langues vous manquaient ?
Patricia : [00:08:23] Bah oui, je... j'aime bien les langues en fait.

EXCERPT P_4_Int_2

[00:47:27] Je parlais pas pendant 1 h... […] Parce qu'il y a toujours des élèves... bah des élèves qui sont plus... "talkative" que d'autres. […] Alors la prof, si elle ne coupe pas la parole, si elle n'a pas d'autorité, c'est toujours les mêmes qui parlent.

EXCERPT P_5_Int_2

Patricia : [00:18:24] C'est des cours privés.. c'est... c'est fantastique, on joint l'utile à l'agréable. Voilà, c'est ça.
Researcher : [00:18:30] Très bien.
Patricia : [00:18:31] Oui, on est avec des amis et... et on apprend puisqu'on n'est plus que quatre ou cinq...

EXCERPT P_6_Int_2

Patricia : [00:19:05] Je suis la seule qui a fait ça...
Researcher : [00:19:07] En plus ? Ah oui, de tout le staff... ?
Patricia : [00:19:08] oh oui, de tout le travail... Ah oui, je suis la seule de toute la clique.

IN THE DMC TABLE_Footnote #104

Je ne l'ai pas dit à grand monde en fait, hein' (Int_2/11:43) **'[mon mari]** s'en fout quoi ! [rires]. Non, mais c'est vrai, je ne voulais pas l'embêter avec ça. Voilà, c'est tout. Non, non, ma famille, non ils ne le savent même pas. Non, non'

IN THE DMC TABLE_Footnote #105

'[Researcher] Oui, une fierté pareille, vous n'en n'aviez pas parlé à beaucoup de gens ? **[Patricia]** Non, non, non. J'en ai parlé qu'à mes patrons, parce que... ça concernait mon travail. Pour me féliciter ! [rires]. **[Researcher]** Donc il y a aussi une sorte de reconnaissance aussi professionnelle... **[Patricia]** Oui, voilà.

EXCERPT P_11_Int_1

Patricia : [00:12:36] Parce que j'ai rencontré pas mal de chirurgiens là-bas. Mais oui. Je

me suis aperçue... Ben oui, c'est quand même assez cher. Donc... bon eux ils ont les moyens... Ils inscrivent tous... enfin pas tous mais beaucoup leurs enfants là-bas...
Researcher : [00:12:52] Oui.
Patricia : [00:12:52] ...En fait. Et j'en ai croisé un, puis deux…
Researcher : [00:12:55] Donc des collègues à vous, alors.
Patricia : [00:12:57] Oui, oui, avec qui je travaille.
Researcher : [00:12:59] D'accord.
Patricia : [00:12:59] Des chirurgiens... mmh-mmh. Et on en a parlé. Il y en a un qui a passé le TOEIC, comme moi aussi, donc on parlait souvent à chaque fois que j'allais travailler avec lui au bloc opératoire. […] [00:13:12] Ah oui. D'autres... Il y en a d'autres qui ont abandonné. Beaucoup ont abandonné.
Researcher : [00:13:15] Ah oui?
Patricia : [00:13:16] Ah oui, oui oui. Y en a pas beaucoup qui ont persisté hein...

EXCERPT P_14_Int_2

Patricia : [00:36:18] Déjà que je pense que j'ai perdu quand même si je repassais le TOEIC maintenant. Oui, oui, le repasser, pourquoi pas [rires].
Researcher : [00:36:26] Vous le repasseriez? Le TOEIC ?
Patricia : [00:36:28] Bah pourquoi, pas, oui, oui, mais bon…
Researcher : [00:36:29] Vous auriez la motivation pour refaire... un...
Patricia : [00:36:33] Oh oui.
Researcher : [00:36:34] C'est vrai ?
Patricia : [00:36:34] Oh oui, oui, oui. Je suis motivée. Je suis passionnée et motivée.
Researcher : [00:36:38] Comment vous l'expliquez, cette motivation? […]
Patricia : [00:36:42] Si je me décidais à le faire... J'irai jusqu'au bout, quoi. Oui, oui, je pugnace.

Appendix B – Journal entries during Pilot Phase

In the fall of 2020, and in the very particular context of COVID-19 world pandemic, I decided to run a series of pilot interviews so as to test my prompt, motigraphs and interview guidelines. Note that my research theoretical framework then revolved around Higgins's (2014) three knots of motivation (truth, control and value effectiveness), and I thus had designed a graph accordingly. The idea for me was also to get some practical training on interview techniques. I selected, by word of mouth and through my own personal connections, 5 highly motivated and proactive FLL profiles, aged between 33 and 70. I aimed to extend the criteria for the selection of this pilot pool in order to receive as much feedback as possible on the format of the prompt and the design of my instruments. I use pseudonyms to name my pilot participants and gave them a number by order of interview (P#1 is Participant 1, P#2 is Participant 2, and so on…).

In light of the uncertainty due to the Covid-19 outbreak (status: November 2020), I was not able to conduct in-person interviews. I contacted interested participants with more information on the study by email, and proposed a phone call appointment, during which the experiment was explained and consent was obtained. Participants unanimously chose to talk about all the languages they had been studying and using intensely (in all cases, more than one foreign language), therefore creating several parallel narratives. Once having signed the consent form, each participant was then individually guided through the experiment.

Each interview was recorded on either Skype or Zoom before prior sound and video testing with each participant. Following technical issues with the reading of the video with P#3, I added an extra recording device (smartphone voice recording application). Overall, it was a successful hands-on interview piloting phase, with no big Wi-Fi crashes or technical glitches. I received informal feedback from participants on the phone and after the interview, which helped improve the initial prompt and extra work materials (such as the graph I sent them and requested that they would fill it in). Having the video recordings of each interview at hand helped me have a clearer idea of places for improvement, especially in my own interview methods and behaviour. Oral narratives enabled me to probe my participants better than if I had made them write narratives. I prompted on an ad hoc basis according to participants'

individual stories. The interviews were therefore more conversational than structured, although I had guidelines to order the information. I eventually also piloted the transcription and the re-writing of the narrative of one of my participants (P#5). Below are my log entries during this piloting phase, which ran between November 2020 and December 2020. A more extended period of follow-up email exchanges and phone calls (from October 2020 to January 2021) added extra content to my data.

27.11.20 – P#1 – Tom SMIRNOVA (40 years old) / French / Zoom – Interview in English / Foreign Languages: German and English. **Interview length: 1H30.**

The interview remained very focused, essentially thanks to the fact that I knew the participant well already so I could direct my questions more precisely without going off topic. I realized that being one of my youngest participants, he probably would have less to say than my 70-year-old participants, so I will need to time up every section of my questionnaire a bit more tightly. I thought I should prepare another small prompt to introduce my PhD topic so my participants can understand broadly what I am looking for in our conversation. I realized I should also translate questions and the consent form in either French or Portuguese (i.e., the native languages of my pilot participants), in case English is not a comfortable language for the participant. In terms of practicality, Zoom seemed a better option than Skype for the quality of its recording. Yet both Zoom and Skype have the option to record and save the files.

I also realized I needed to focus a bit more on Higgins's theoretical framework, and try to insert somehow his ideas into my questionnaire in a broader and simpler way so that participants could understand better what is it that I'm looking for precisely in their motivational history. As such, P#1 suggested I could ask participants to draw a timeline BEFORE the actual interview to have better focus and time for the questions during the interview. He also suggested having people display objects or take notes on their own seemed too vague and ran the risk for unfocused digressions, according to him.

At that point, I therefore decided to create a blank excel spreadsheet table with 4 criteria to fill in (see below **Pilot Instrument 1**), explained on a side document (see Indications and Guidelines for Pilot Instrument 1). Filling in a table seemed easier for participants than directly drawing a line on a timeline to assess their level of motivation. I tried to pilot the use of this

new instrument (see below **Pilot Instrument 1 in practice for P#1**) for both of P#1's languages (English and German). While P#1 had no difficulties filling in the excel spreadsheet due to his professional background as a computer engineer and excel expert, he explained that the indications on the document related to my research could be confusing for non-academics. This was also agreed by P#3 and P#5.

Pilot Instrument 1

Indications and guidelines for Pilot instrument 1

GUIDELINES ON UNDERSTANDING THE ORGANIZATION OF MOTIVES
Note that the order is important to consider.

OVERALL MOTIVATION (HIGGINS) - participants' own view of their motivation throughout the years – to be defined by them.
Indications to the participant: *this is how you would rate your general motivation at different periods. Please ensure you define your own view on motivation. Please indicate key events whenever there was a peak or a trough.*

CONTROL EFFECTIVENESS (HIGGINS) / Learning Ownership (TO PARTICIPANTS) about the journey not the destination nor the final results the student achieved. I am interested in how much efforts the student puts into the 'means'. How "capable" participants were in initiating action to study the foreign language at different stages of their life. How much control they took in studying it autonomously? That includes their level of reactivity and the degree of learning intensity.
**Indications to the participant:** *how resourceful you were and how you managed to actively learn, practice and use the language especially outside academia. This is you rating your overall capacity at studying on your own, at deciding how you improve more effectively, how you took control of the language study.*

TRUTH EFFECTIVENESS (HIGGINS) / Awareness of Learning Level and Goals to Reach (TO PARTICIPANTS): How realistic and "aware" were participants about their needs and the goals to achieve in their targeted foreign languages? How much cognitive consistency.
Indications to the participant: *How "realistic" were you with your language learning goals and needs? How "aware" were/are you of your status as a linguist/language learner? This line is rather tricky, I believe, so please feel free to ask or explore the idea the way you see it and comment more in complement to the graph if need me.*

VALUE EFFECTIVENESS (HIGGINS) / Value of Language Learning (TO PARTICIPANTS): - How much value and interest participants had in the language itself, independently from any other incentives, that strengthened their engagement with the language. It can potentially include projections of students' future selves speaking the language.
Indications to the participant: *this, in a way, is your 'desired ended result' vision of you speaking the language perfectly. How "attractive" you found the foreign language you studied, how much interest you had in studying or using it and how much projection you put into imagining/envisioning your future 'bilingual self'?*

Lifelong language learning motivation (with English)

Lifelong language learning motivation (with German)
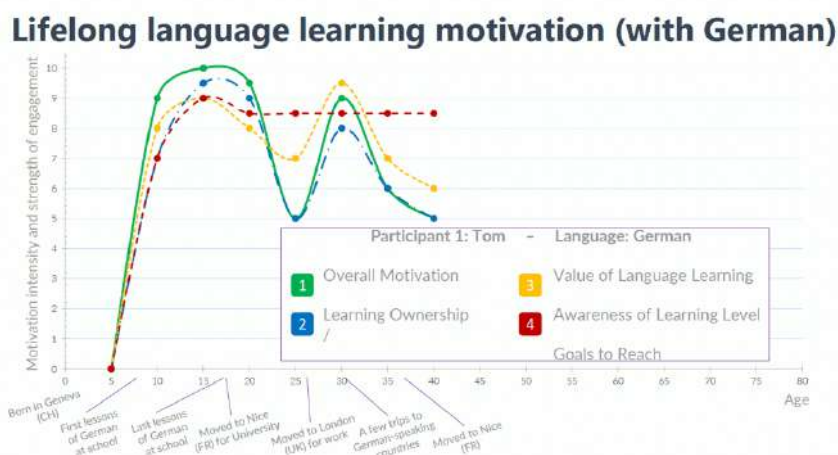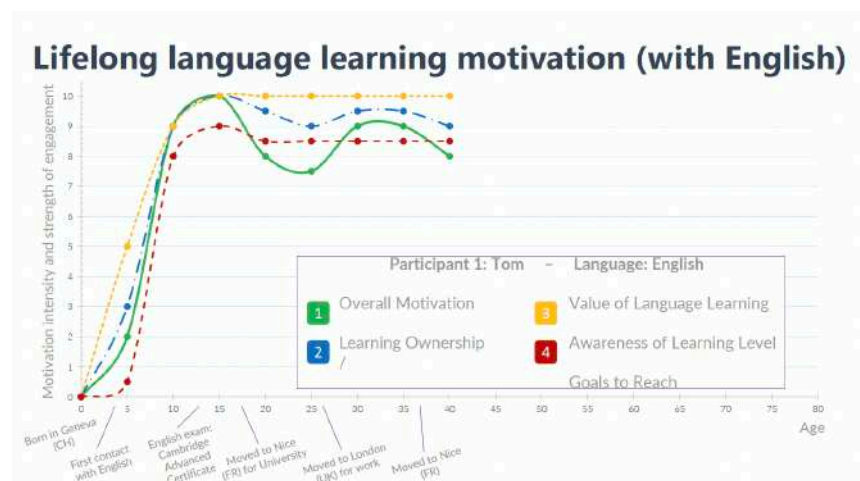
28.11.20 – P#2 – Roberto PEREIRA DE SOUSA (53 years old) / Brazilian / Skype – Interview in French / Foreign languages: French, English and Spanish. **Interview length: 45 min.**

There was a general good understanding from the participant of what was expected from him. There was a clear focus all throughout. The interview was led in French, which reminded me I should prepare the same questionnaire in French although the conversation's flow was very natural and didn't require from me to rely too much on my guidelines. A prior good knowledge of this participant's travel and academic backgrounds helped move the story a bit faster. To the last open question, he mentioned the important role of his mother tongue, which had always been a central and stable motivation for him. There were ups and downs with his "relationship" with French, and he always learned languages (such as English and Spanish) for pragmatic, if not administrative reasons (to get a scholarship at university, get the Spanish nationality, or stay in one country for work). Roberto also mentioned one of the age clichés that claims that the youngest we learn, the easier it is. However, he started learning languages

seriously at 31 years old, thus quite late according to him, and he believes the more concrete one's goals are, the easier it is to remain motivated, no matter one's age.

A few minutes after the interview, Roberto came back to me on WhatsApp sending me a picture of one of his most recent certificates in English (ESOL), from January 2020. He mentioned he wanted to "recycle" English in a smart way, after a personal break up and in order to "change his mind" from family issues. He also took a picture of the timeline he drew according to Pilot Instrument 1 indications (See below **Items from P#2**).

Items from p#2
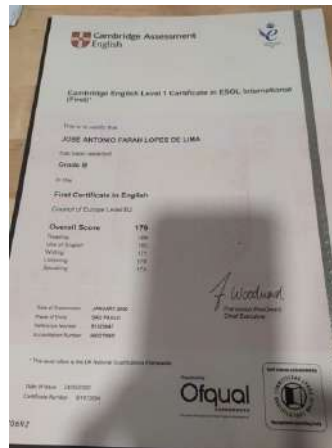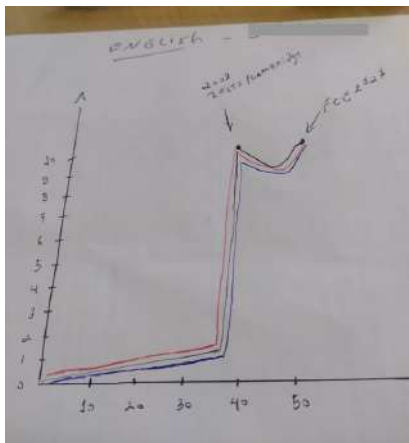
01.12.20 – P#3 – Marie RENAND (70 years old)/ French / Skype – Interview in French / Foreign Languages: English, Spanish, Portuguese. **Interview length: 1H00.**

A quick first test on Skype was needed for P#3 to be at ease with the tool. She said she understood everything that was expected of her but was very bad with the use of new technology (note that she is motivated to use more IT devices. For instance, she does have and use WhatsApp on a daily basis, and has even recently learned how to tweet political content in three languages from time to time).

The interview almost did not require any question guides or directions. The flow was very natural. Frequent connections between past and present situations challenged the chronological order of her story, yet every event connecting with one another made sense as a whole. She is a passionate woman in love with people, politics, communication and languages. Languages have pervaded her entire life, from 1 week old with English (her

grandparents raised her up for 7 years, and they would speak to her in English only), to today's frequent uses of Portuguese, Spanish and English. Today, she lives in London, essentially for the city's politically dynamic and multilingual atmospheres. Marie also admitted she is an anxious woman and languages quench her anxiety. One of the first elements she mentioned was "the sound of English would peace me down when I was a kid". She also highlighted strong connections between language learning, the political context and her (love) relationships. She also emphasized how her education impacted her love and "habit" for practising languages on a daily basis.

The story of P#1 was so much loaded with details that it was often difficult to relate it to more conventional question types. Interestingly, there was no real decline in her motivation and real projection for future language learning remains high (she is now interested in learning Russian).

She kindly filled in the chart (it was too complicated for her to draw the lines) and, having some difficulties at sending me the table by email, she sent it to me by mail. I received the documents 2-3 days later.

What went less well: she communicated her enthusiasm to me, and it became difficult for me to remain "detached", especially at the end, when I encouraged her to start learning Russian. I realized I was indeed saturated with concepts or ideas, and would listen through the lens of my own perspective on learning and teaching. There was a lack of objectivity from me although it was one of the participants who I knew the least.

02.12.20 / Reflections

As I'm reading Higgins's (2014) book in parallel to the pilot interviews, I realize that I need to better define each category of his complex theoretical framework: truth, control and value effectiveness in order to ensure more coherence with the graph I am asking my pilot participants to draw/the table to fill in. Also, Line 1, which refers to "Overall Motivation" should be better defined by *them*. What is motivation, according to them? As a result, I believe I should add a question regarding how they define motivation or amend the instructions on the timeline to make it clearer to them.

06.12.20 – P#4 – Patrick MEYERS (33 years old) / American / Skype – Interview in English / Foreign Languages: French and Spanish. **Interview length: 1H40.**

P#4 is my youngest participant and probably the less *compatible* profile for this research. His age might probably be a disadvantage in this pilot interview, since he is in the 'middle' of career choices, hence although he keeps practising foreign languages (French and Spanish) on a weekly basis (0 to 2H a week), his motivation is probably lower than it used to be during his middle, high school and university years. He recognizes experiencing some present detachment with foreign languages practice at this stage of his life, partly due to a lack of time and focus on career shifts and choices.

P#4 prepared and informed me of all the key events beforehand in a detailed word document, so I could have a clearer idea of where the conversation would lead us. before our actual interview helped him focus more on the conversation, and add details, while not going too astray. He clearly highlighted two mind-blowing events (a 3-weeks-long trip to France and a 10-month-long trip to Spain). He reflected on his maturity in learning languages, and how his perspective on his learning identity changed as he became a language teacher himself in Spain and in the US. Note that having language teachers on board of my study could be a very interesting complement since there's a clear awareness of motivational evolution and language learning control. Patrick shows a clear enthusiasm for foreign languages, due to his desire to strengthen communication and cross-cultural connections. He does admit, however, that his work focus being on microbiology and the monitoring of clinical trials, he foresees no 'vital use' of any foreign languages. They are a plus, but not a condition to his current work (about 5% of his duties are in Spanish).

What I hadn't done for the three previous participants, and which I did with P #4, was to ask him to provide me with *his* definition of motivation – 'motivation has to be connected to the duration/number of hours you spend in the activity you are motivated to achieve'.

After some direct explanation I gave him about Higgins's motivational definitions, since the document was indeed unclear to him as well, his reflections brought him to slightly amend his results. Although he initially believed his motivation was still high today, once having defined

motivation, he reverted to a 2 (out of 10) (see Pilot Instrument 1 in practice for P#4). For future interviews, he advised that explaining Higgins' three knots around motivation (truth, control and value effectiveness) in depth could be helpful to design the graph/ fill in the table or even direct the conversation.

P#4 couldn't think of any photos/objects (maybe first French textbooks or dictionary), since he believed his timeline was detailed enough to provide a clear glimpse about his identity with languages.

18.12.20 – Supervisor's feedback on pilot interviews / Dr. Elsa Tragant

The meeting with Dr Tragant was extremely helpful to improve the interview structure and the prompt. We agreed to make the guidelines a bit less formal, and simplify the guidelines by pivoting questions around 4 elements: (1) language learning activities, (2) feelings about the foreign languages, (3) the use of foreign languages in real life and (4) the general importance of foreign languages to the participant. She advised making more eye contact and detaching myself from my notes. Avoid too much intervention not to break the narrative, and keep my intervention to only follow-up probes that are necessary to trigger the conversation and clarify certain aspects of the story.

One participant claimed that the prompt was a bit too dry, that the use of bullet points could make it easier, together with the first sentence including what is it that I am really looking for (as in *motivation* being the key word, should be placed at the very beginning). Information was processed and amendments were made accordingly with Dr Elsa Tragant.

We also agreed that a follow-up interview session will be needed because one hour was not sufficient enough to grasp an entire life story. Moreover, I could keep more general questions to ask (like *what influenced you the most* or *what were the busiest periods?*) either at the end of the first interview so as to summarize the narrative, or during a potential follow-up session.

22.12.20 – Pilot #5 – Natalia ZIMNIAKOV (70 years old) / Russian / Skype – Interview in French / Foreign Languages: Spanish and French. **Interview length: 1H30 min.**

Due to the current French lockdown, and to Natalia's lack of IT skills, we mainly exchanged on the phone initially. I printed the document (consent, prompt, table and timeline), and when

geographical restrictions loosened up, I brought her the documents where she lived so she could start looking at them and think about elements of her life. Like P#3 (also aged 70), she believes that drawing lines is too complicated. However, she took this project very seriously, and wrote down some notes to prepare for the interview questions. She borrowed a computer from a neighbour, who helped her set up the Skype meeting.

The interview followed the revised prompt. A second recording device was added to the first (smartphone recorder), and the prompt together with interview guidelines were translated into French. I intervened less and only kept probing when necessary. While Natalia initially thought she'd only focus on English as an L2, she naturally included her other languages (French and Spanish) into her story, which gave a more global picture of her life with languages. In addition to having seriously prepared her story, Natalia came up with materials to complement her story, and presented different yearbooks from the United Nations where she worked her entire life. She consistently followed a chronological order in her story, defining clear turning points of her language learning motivation and demotivation. At the very end, she came up with the more personal aspect of having been inspired by her father (the camera was switched off and this was only recorded on my smartphone's recorder), who was an interpret at the UN in Geneva. I piloted the transcription of her interview and re-wrote her narrative, dividing it into six main historical units: (1) initial conditions / childhood; (2) move to Switzerland (historical keystone); (3) university years; (4) family disruption (historical keystone) (5) professional career; (6) retirement.

GENERAL COMMENTS ON THE PILOT PHASE

o Overall good understanding from pilot participants of what they were expected to talk about, hinting at the clarity of the prompt and interview questions.

o Face-to-face interviews with participants on a one-to-one basis have the advantage of providing in-depth personal views, which group interviews would not offer, especially as certain levels of confidentiality and trust are established.

o Poor response to graph/table to fill in, probably due to difficult and unclear instructions – I decided to remove Higgins's indications, and only ask participants to draw one line, that of their level of motivation across their life;

o Poor response to extra material (photos, postcards). However, I will keep the offer as I

realized some extra material (English certificate for P#2, Yearbook reports for P#5) have triggered more reflections and input from the participants after the session, a few hours/days after the interview. The narrative remains "alive" longer and is being nurtured by those extra instruments;

o Chronological order well respected BUT question guidelines poorly used at the beginning;

o Some bias from Researcher (enthusiasm about language projections for example);

o An additional follow-up interview session is needed to discuss items/specific periods.

Advantages of asynchronous interviews:
o Progressively built up a relationship with my participants through email and WhatsApp exchanges, very useful for follow-up;

o Help the narratives *live* and *evolve* with time and reflections, giving sense to the 'retrospective' quality and strength of my research inquiry.

Could come back and forth if needed for more clarifications. Some participants (like P#1, P#2 and P#5) would come back to me with further explanation or material days, even weeks later.

Reflections about graph/table:
Poor response overall. A better definition/explanation of Higgins' definitions in simple terms could have helped avoid misinterpretation/confusion in the first version of the instructions. I simplified the graph to avoid boredom and disinterest from participants ans I removed Higgins's framework from my theoretical focus in 2021.

REFLECTIONS ABOUT EXTRA MATERIAL (photos, objects, memorabilia): Poor response
overall due to lack of follow-up and time to prepare before the interview.

Practical amendments:
- Prompt was improved, structure of interview simplified;

- Graph/Table simplified into a timeline with only one line (equivalent to the level of motivation across the ages);

- Interview 'quality' itself was improved with practice. I made less interventions and delivered shorter and more neutral probing questions during the interviews.

Appendix C – Prompt for interview 1

INDICATIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

I would like you to tell me **the story of your life with languages** and your journey towards learning one or more foreign languages, **starting with your first and earliest encounters with the language(s) up to the present.**

As you go through the key periods of your life (childhood, teenagerhood, adulthood) or any relevant turning points in a chronological order, I am interested in:
- How you became proficient in the foreign language;
- How your motivation for learning evolved.

As you go through each phase, you can also mention:
- Your learning activities;
- Your feelings about the use of the foreign language(s);
- Your use of the foreign language(s) in real life;
- The importance of foreign language(s) in your life;
- Important people, trips, or events.

In preparation for our interview, it may be helpful to take notes or even draw a timeline beforehand indicating key events related to language learning.

If you wish and if you deem it relevant to concretely illustrate your personal learning story, I invite you to present objects during the interview, such as
- Photos;
- Postcards;
- Books;
- Other memorabilia.

Please note that if you have learned more than one foreign languages, you can decide whether you would like to focus your story on one before the other, or whether you want to talk about them in a chronological order.

Appendix C – Prompt for interview 1

Appendix D – Consent form

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

UNIVERSITAT DE BARCELONA

Participant's Name

Interview Date

RESEARCH TITLE: *An exploration of L2 motivation and lifelong learning "ecologies" through the narratives of senior language users*

DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT: This study takes a bird's eye view on motivation in language learning as an individual life-long process and narrative continuum, starting at birth and developing over the course of life, personal experiences, choices and events. The aim of this PhD is to explore the motivational trajectories that emerge out of the language learning histories and introspective narratives of a group of proficient senior L2 users.

WHAT YOU WILL DO IN THIS RESEARCH: If you decide to volunteer, you will be asked to participate in one interview that will take between 1 to 2 hours (divided in several sessions if need be). You will be asked several questions regarding your life history with languages. With your permission, I will tape/video record the interviews. You will not be asked to state your name on the recording and at no time will your actual identity be revealed.

Please consider this information carefully before deciding whether to participate in this research.

- I confirm that my participation in this research project is voluntary. I may decide to withdraw at any time by informing the experimenter that I no longer wish to participate (no questions will be asked). I may also skip or decline to answer any question during the interview, but continue to participate in the rest of the study.

- I understand that I will not receive any payments for participating in this research interview.

- I confirm that the research interview can be divided into several sessions of approximately 60 minutes each.

- I understand that the researcher will not identify me by my name and that a pseudonym will be used in any reports using information obtained from this interview. My confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. I have read and understood the explanation provided to me.

- I have been given a copy of this consent form together with an initial prompt explaining what the researcher is expecting from me.

- I have the right to review the notes, transcripts, or any other data collected during the research interview if I wish to, and I may ask the researcher to provide them at any stage of the study. I have the right to access the analysis resulting from my story and understand this is **one** interpretation that will inevitably leave blind spots. I have the right to amend all the information I provide the researcher with until the study is sent for approval to the Board of Examiners from the University of Barcelona.

By signing this form, I agree to the terms indicated above. The nature and purpose of this research have been sufficiently explained and I agree to participate in this study. I understand that I am free to withdraw at any time without incurring any penalty.

Participant's Signature   **Researcher's Signature**

_____   _____

Date Signed   **Date Signed**

Should you have any questions or concerns about this research, please contact Bérénice DARNAULT, bdarnarda7@alumnes.ub.edu/
+33627514310

Appendix E – Interview guidelines

Opening [*to read out loud to participant*]

First of all, **thanks** a lot for accepting to join my study on lifelong language learning and motivation.

Before we start, I'd like to explain again very quickly **what my research is about and why you are here today.**

As I mentioned earlier, I am investigating **lifelong, sustainable learning and looking at the experience of highly proficient people over 60 years old through case studies.** You have been selected as a participant because your profile falls under the criteria for this research. Today, I would like you to tell me the story of your life with languages, starting with your first and earliest encounters with foreign languages up to the present and potentially future projections, if you have any at all.

The idea is for us to go through **chronological order** (hence the timeline I asked you think about prior to our meeting). This will be **structured through different time windows,** but feel free to regroup periods as you wish (for instance you do not have to distinguish between childhood and adolescence).

Before we move on to the questions, and following the consent form I sent you, do I have your permission to record this interview?

I also would like to remind you that anonymity will be preserved, that participation is voluntary, withdrawal is possible at any time. Now that we are all set up, are you ready to start?

Phase 1 – Past experience, motivation and choices

The initial conditions / childhood

1. I'd like you to think back to the time when you first started learning [FOREIGN LANGUAGE(s) hereafter FL(s)]. Please tell me how you started learning [FL(s)] [when/where/why did you start learning [FL(s)].]
2. What learning activities did you do?
3. How did you feel about your FL learning/classes/teacher then?
4. Did you use FL in real life? If so, in what way [watching films/listening to music/contact with speakers of FL/personal needs]?
5. How important was FL at that time for you? Why?

Change in and across different phases of the process / teenagerhood and adulthood

6. How was FL learning during the high school/college years?
7. How important was FL at that time for you?

8. Did you use FL in real life? If so, in what way [watching films/listening to music/contact with speakers of FL/personal needs]?
9. How did your family/friends/classmates/teachers influence your academic career in general and your FL learning in particular?
10. Why did you decide to keep learning FL, even if it was no longer compulsory for your studies/work?
11. What do you think have been the main motivating influences? [You can include any formal and informal learning contexts, any periods abroad, and any cathartic events or people that you might identify as having motivated or demotivated you]

Phase 2 – Present experience, motivation and choices

12. What is your current learning/practice like today? Can you describe activities you do in FL, and whether you do them alone or with other people?
13. Why do you still learn and practice FL today?
14. How important is FL practice and use in your life today?
15. Looking back, would you say that you have a good awareness of what you have achieved in terms of language learning in your life? If so, which impact does languages have today in your life?

Phase 3 – Future projection, motivation and choices

16. What are your current objectives in FL? How and with whom do you plan to achieve them?
17. Is there another (or more) language(s) you would like to learn? Why?
18. What could potentially stop you from learning/practicing FL in the future?
19. Would you say that you find it easier or more difficult for you to learn FL at this stage of your life?
20. Is there anything else I should have asked you about? Or do you want to add anything? Do you have any questions for me?
21. Do you have any extra material in relation to what we've discussed you would like to show me?

Appendix F – Questionnaire for interview 2

QUESTIONNAIRE – NAME OF CANDIDATE

Note that this questionnaire should not take you more than 15-20 minutes to complete, and your answers will be invaluable in helping me understand why and how people engage in language learning after 65 years old. I will use the information to help us learn more about how we can better support senior students to succeed in their language learning studies.

I. YOUR "HIGH PEAKS OF MOTIVATION" IN LANGUAGE LEARNING

1/ Please mark, on the scale below, *how influential the following phases of your life were in your overall motivation:*

		1	2	3	4	5	
- YOUTH	NOT INFLUENTIAL AT ALL	○	○	○	○	○	VERY INFLUENTIAL
- EARLY ADULTHOOD	NOT INFLUENTIAL AT ALL	○	○	○	○	○	VERY INFLUENTIAL
- MID-ADULTHOOD	NOT INFLUENTIAL AT ALL	○	○	○	○	○	VERY INFLUENTIAL
- LATE/PRE-RETIREMENT	NOT INFLUENTIAL AT ALL	○	○	○	○	○	VERY INFLUENTIAL
- RETIREMENT	NOT INFLUENTIAL AT ALL	○	○	○	○	○	VERY INFLUENTIAL

2/ BELOW ARE THE FOUR HIGH PEAKS OF MOTIVATION (HPMs) WITH ENGLISH LEARNING WE HAVE DETECTED FROM OUR FIRST INTERVIEW. BY 'PEAKS', WE MEAN VERY INTENSE PERIODS OF PRACTICE AND LEARNING DURING WHICH YOU FELT VERY ABSORBED BY ENGLISH USE.

HPM1: Enrollment at Animanice in Nice.
HPM2: English article publication won contest – Conference in Chicago.
HPM3: Home private lessons with Henriette and other friends.
HPM4: Preparation and sitting of the TOEIC exam at the Wall Street Institute.

- Are there any **'peaks'** missing?

2

		1	2	3	4	5	
- HPM1?	NOT VERY INTENSE	○	○	○	○	○	VERY INTENSE
- HPM2?	NOT VERY INTENSE	○	○	○	○	○	VERY INTENSE
- HPM3?	NOT VERY INTENSE	○	○	○	○	○	VERY INTENSE
- HPM4?	NOT VERY INTENSE	○	○	○	○	○	VERY INTENSE

4/ *Out of the four high peaks of motivation,* **please put one to several cross(es)** *on the motivational peak(s) that have been:*

	HPM1	HPM2	HPM3	HPM4
1. THE MOST INTENSE IN TERMS OF WORKLOAD				
2. THE MOST DIFFICULT/CHALLENGING				
3. THE MOST INFLUENTIAL/BENEFICIAL IN THE LONG RUN				
4. THE MOST SATISFYING/PERSONALLY REWARDING				

5/ *During your highest peaks of motivation (HPMs),* **please rank on a scale from 0 to 5** *(0 being non influential and 5 being extremely influential), how influential in your motivation were:*

3

	HPM1	HPM2	HPM3	HPM4
1. YOUR FAMILY				
2. YOUR FRIENDS				
3. YOUR COLLEAGUES / WORK IF HPM BEFORE RETIREMENT				
4. YOUR TEACHERS				
5. YOUR LEARNING ENVIRONMENT				
6. YOUR FINANCIAL BUDGET				
7. OTHER				

6/ During your highest peaks of motivation, **please rank on a scale from 0 to 5** (0 being non influential and 5 being extremely influential), what boosted you the most:

	HPM1	HPM2	HPM3	HPM4
1. REALIZING YOU MADE PROGRESS / A FEELING OF ACHIEVEMENT AND SUCCESS				
2. BEING ABLE TO UNDERSTAND AND BE UNDERSTOOD IN ENGLISH BETTER				
3. FEELING OF BEING ABLE TO USE YOUR SKILLS IN CONCRETE SITUATIONS				
4. FEELING OF BEING SOCIALLY MORE CONNECTED				

4

5. OTHER				

7/ To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements regarding those intense motivational projects with English learning? (**Please circle your answers**):

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	DON'T KNOW
1. I THINK SOMETHING SPECIAL HAPPENED TO ME DURING THIS EXPERIENCE – IT WAS AN AMAZING TIME	1	2	3	4	5	0
2. DURING THIS TIME, I WAS ABLE TO WORK MORE PRODUCTIVELY THAN I USUALLY CAN	1	2	3	4	5	0
3. I SURPRISED MYSELF WITH HOW MUCH I WAS ABLE TO DO	1	2	3	4	5	0
4. AT THE TIME, THIS PROJECT BECAME A CENTRAL PART OF MY LIFE	1	2	3	4	5	0
5. THE PEOPLE AROUND ME COULD SEE THAT I WAS EXPERIENCING SOMETHING SPECIAL	1	2	3	4	5	0
6. I DIDN'T FEEL LIKE HARD WORK AT THE TIME – I WAS JUST CAUGHT UP IN THE FLOW!	1	2	3	4	5	0

5

7. I REMEMBER THINKING ABOUT MY GOAL ALL THE TIME	1	2	3	4	5	0

II YOUR MOTIVATIONAL PROFILE

8/ To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about yourself? (**Please circle your answers**):

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	DON'T KNOW
1. I AM ASSIDUOUS, RIGOROUS AND SELF-DISCIPLINED	1	2	3	4	5	0
2. I ENJOY CHALLENGING MYSELF	1	2	3	4	5	0
3. I AM HARDWORKING	1	2	3	4	5	0
4. I USED TO BE 'A GOOD STUDENT'	1	2	3	4	5	0
5. I AM PERFECTIONIST	1	2	3	4	5	0
6. I AM PASSIONATE	1	2	3	4	5	0
7. I AM OBSESSED	1	2	3	4	5	0
8. I AM AN AUTONOMOUS LEARNER	1	2	3	4	5	0
9. I NEED TEACHERS'/NATIVE SPEAKERS' APPROVAL AND FEEDBACK TO CHECK MY PROGRESS	1	2	3	4	5	0

6

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	DON'T KNOW
10. I AM A KOWLEDGE-SEEKER / CURIOUS	1	2	3	4	5	0
11. I AM STRONG-WILLED / I NEVER GIVE UP	1	2	3	4	5	0

Other personality traits:

9/ *To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements* about your reasons for learning English at present? *(Please circle your answers):*

I learn English…

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	DON'T KNOW
1. OUT OF FRUSTRATION	1	2	3	4	5	0
2. TO BOOST MY CONFIDENCE / SELF-ESTEEM / TO PROVE MYSELF I CAN DO IT	1	2	3	4	5	0
3. FOR MERE PLEASURE	1	2	3	4	5	0
4. TO SOCIALISE / CONNECT AND MEET WITH NATIVE FRIENDS	1	2	3	4	5	0
5. TO SOCIALISE / CONNECT AND MEET WITH OTHER LANGUAGE LEARNERS	1	2	3	4	5	0

7

6. TO STIMULATE MY BRAIN	1	2	3	4	5	0
7. FOR MY TRAVEL PLANS	1	2	3	4	5	0
8. BECAUSE I FIND IT USEFUL NOW	1	2	3	4	5	0
9. FOR FAMILY REASONS	1	2	3	4	5	0

Other reasons:

10/ *To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements* about your reasons for interrupting English? *(Please circle your answers):*

The interruption of my practice is usually due to:

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	DON'T KNOW
1. A LOSS OF MOTIVATION	1	2	3	4	5	0
2. A LACK OF TIME / A BUSY LIFE SCHEDULE	1	2	3	4	5	0
3. COMMITMENTS IN OTHER LEIDURE ACTIVITIES	1	2	3	4	5	0
4. FAMILY COMMITMENTS	1	2	3	4	5	0

8

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	DON'T KNOW
5. MY FINANCIAL BUDGET	1	2	3	4	5	0
6. A LACK OF TEACHING AND LEARNING SUPPORT	1	2	3	4	5	0
7. COVID-19 AND HEALTH RESTRICTIONS	1	2	3	4	5	0

Other reasons:

11/ To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your general beliefs in language learning? *(Please circle your answers)*:

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	DON'T KNOW
1. LEARNING OR PRACTICING A LANGUAGE IMPROVES OR MAINTAINS MY BRAIN'S PERFORMANCE	1	2	3	4	5	0
2. LANGUAGES ARE USEFUL TO MY EVERYDAY LIFE NOW	1	2	3	4	5	0
3. LANGUAGES WERE USEFUL TO ME BEFORE RETIREMENT	1	2	3	4	5	0
4. YOUNG LEARNERS LEARN LANGUAGES MORE EASILY THAN OLD LEARNERS	1	2	3	4	5	0

9

	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEITHER AGREE OR DISAGREE	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE	DON'T KNOW
5. IT IS EASIER TO BE MOTIVATED WITH LEARNING LANGUAGES WHEN YOU ARE YOUNG THAN WHEN YOU ARE OLDER	1	2	3	4	5	0
6. I ENJOY LANGUAGE LEARNING MUCH MORE *NOW* THAN WHEN I WAS YOUNGER	1	2	3	4	5	0
7. IT IS EASIER TO LEARN AT SCHOOL OR IN A GROUP OF STUDY THAN ON MY OWN	1	2	3	4	5	0
8. I AM SATISFIED WITH MY EXPERIENCE WITH LANGUAGE SCHOOLS	1	2	3	4	5	0
9. THE LEARNING MATERIAL AND TEACHING SUPPORT PROVIDED IN LANGUAGE SCHOOLS ARE ADAPTED TO OLDER LEARNERS LIKE ME	1	2	3	4	5	0
10. I LIKE TO SPEAK IN ENGLISH WITH NON-NATIVE LEARNERS	1	2	3	4	5	0
11. THE CAFÉ GROUP I GO TO HIGHLY INFLUENCES MY PRACTICE OF ENGLISH	1	2	3	4	5	0

10

Thank you very much for taking the time to complete this survey, I really appreciate all your time! Your answers will be very important to help us understand more about long-term motivation with language learning, and especially about how we can better support students to succeed in their studies.

Thank you again!

Appendix G – Transcription conventions

Georges	Bold type indicates the name of the speaker
[00:43:13]	Square brackets with numbers in grey indicates the interview timing.
[*laughs*]	Square brackets with italics indicate notes on the non-verbal features
I then [in third age] experienced	Square brackets without italics indicate an additional word/group of words added by myself during transcription to clarify the sentence/topic
[…]	Three dots in square brackets indicate points where I have omitted utterances from the text
...	The ellipsis hesitates a pause or hesitation from the speaker.
......	Indicates a longer pause.
""	Double speech marks indicate that the speaker is quoting something or someone else.

Appendix H – Codification of items

ITEM LETTER(S) + _ (underscore) + INITIAL OF PARTICIPANT'S NICKNAME + ITEM NUMBER IN ORDER OF MENTION

Example: *The first photo* (PH) *mentioned by Patricia* (P) *will be codified* **PH_P1**

ACADEMIC REPORTS	**AR**
DRAWING	**D**
FICTION BOOK	**FB**
LEARNING TOOL	**LT**
MOTIVATION PEAK DRAWING	**MPD**
PERSONAL NOTES INTERVIEW 1	**PNI1**
PHOTO	**PH**
TEXT MESSAGE EXCHANGES	**TME**
BOOK	**B**
EMAIL EXHANGES	**EE**
LANGUAGE TEXTBOOK	**LTB**
LOVE LETTER	**LL**
NOTEBOOK	**NB**
PERSONAL NOTES INTERVIEW 2	**PNI2**
TIMELINE	**TL**
GEORGES	**G**
JOSETTE	**J**
PATRICIA	**P**

Appendix I – Participants' items

The items below are narrative elements I have referred to across Chapters 5, 6 and 7, as they are important illustrations to the meaning participants gave to their respective stories, and illuminate my analysis of each. They are displayed in order of appearance in the analysis.

EE_G	Screenshot of one of Georges's emails to his L2 learning friend
D_G	Georges's motivational tree drawing
LT_G	Georges's list of online self-teaching resources
PH_J1	Josette with British lover in Pompei, summer 1966
NB_J	A page from Josette's book review notebook
PH_J2	Picture of Josette performing a hanging with the group of Italian friends and artists, Naples, 1966
PH_J3	Picture of Josette having lunch with the group of Italian friends and artists, Naples, 1966
PNI2_J	Josette's list of trips to the UK between 2004 and 2021 as a paying guest
D_J	Josette's motivational tree drawing
FB_J	One of Josette's favourite fiction books in English Pride and Pejudice
LL1_J	Love letter to Tony, 12th August 1966, p.1
LL2_J	Excerpt of Love Letter to Tony, 12th August 1966
LL3_J	Excerpt of Love Letter to Tony, 12th August 1966, p.3
LTB_J	Josette's textbooks of English
PH_P1	Cover of photo album to Scotland with English classmates from AnimaNice (2012)
PH_P2	Photos of Patricia's English classmates from AnimaNice at the airport on their way to Scotland (2012)
PH_P3	Patricia with English classmates from AnimaNice on their trip to Edinburgh, Scotland (2012)
AR_P1	"Student Progress Profile", WSI, Feedback from Paul Bacon, 07/05/2014
AR_P2	"Student Progress Profile", WSI, Feedback from Paul Bacon, 21/05/2014
FB_P1	Book cover of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (Patricia's)
FB_P2	Book cover of The Giraffe and the Pelly and Me (Patricia's)
FB_P3	Book cover of The Pearl (Patricia's)
D_P	Patricia's motivational tree drawing

EE_G

From: ~~"████████████████████86@gmail.com~~
Subject: ████████Homework for the next week
Date: Mon, September 27, 2021 14:53
To: Bérénice Darnault <berenice.darnault@cantab.net>

Grammar : modal verbs, present perfect vs past simple, for, since ago...
https://www.anglaisfacile.com/exercices/exercice-anglais-2/exercice-anglais-19102.php
https://www.anglaisfacile.com/exercices/exercice-anglais-2/exercice-anglais-111152.php
https://www.anglaisfacile.com/exercices/exercice-anglais-2/exercice-anglais-29834.php
https://www.anglaisfacile.com/exercices/exercice-anglais-1/exercice-anglais-96.php
https://www.anglaisfacile.com/exercices/exercice-anglais-1/exercice-anglais-873.php

https://www.anglaisfacile.com/exercices/exercice-anglais-1/exercice-anglais-100.php
https://www.anglaisfacile.com/exercices/exercice-anglais-2/exercice-anglais-73643.php
https://www.anglaisfacile.com/exercices/exercice-anglais-2/exercice-anglais-21849.php
https://www.anglaisfacile.com/exercices/exercice-anglais-2/exercice-anglais-60246.php
https://www.anglaisfacile.com/exercices/exercice-anglais-2/exercice-anglais-4520.php
https://www.anglaisfacile.com/exercices/exercice-anglais-2/exercice-anglais-72973.php

2- Deep English : work again on the latest one (improve your listening and reading skills : a) listen several times (at differents speeds), before reading the transcript; b) read fluently the 3 first paragraphs ....around 5 times (shadowing) and 5 times alone ...until your reading is perfectly fluent
https://deepenglish.com/lessons/immortal-cells/

3- Text about 3 D printing organ : write 5 lines about the 3 questions below the text
https://engoo.com/app/daily-news/article/3-d-printed-device-helps-children-with-rare-breathing-disorder/ntV2KLAOEeaLitsT45DcNQ
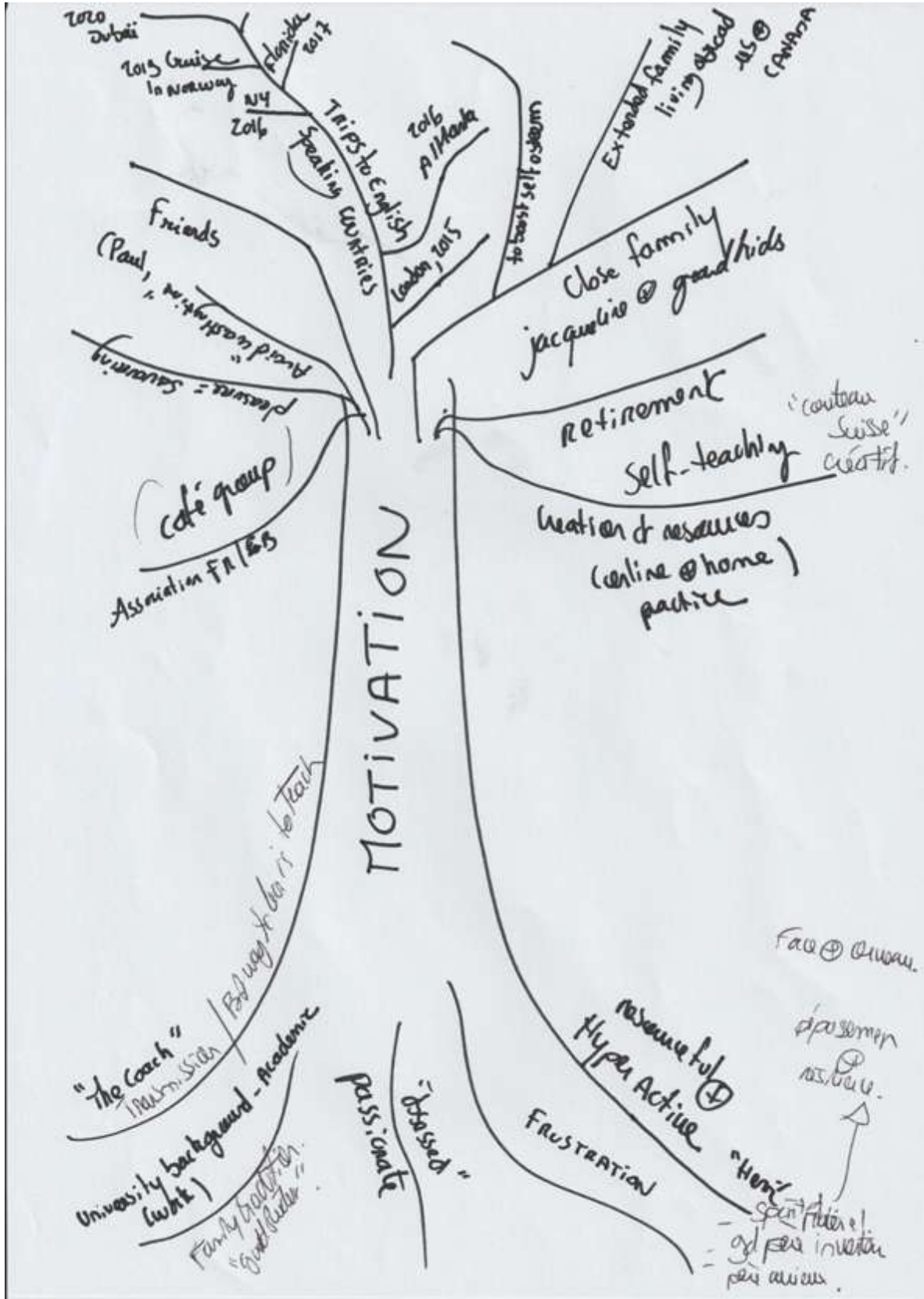
4- Translate useful sentences when travelling ...keep on translating the same pages on which we worked on Saturday morning before our trip to San Remo.

5- Work on your favorite App ...MosaLingua ...work as long as you have fun doing it !!!

6- Send me your feedback by text (in English)

We'll meet up at up at the end of the week

D_G

LT_G

312

Since 2015, I can compare myself to a hen : I peck at whatever I find to feed my passion for English. I use a lot of free material on the Internet.

Below some examples :

- **EngVid. com**: for a few months I used this site for morning grammar routines; I chose the videos a bit at random.
- https://www.youtube.com/c/mmmEnglish_Emma : by an Australian teacher.
- https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCz4tgANd4yy8Oe0iXCdSWfA : by **Lucy Bella** an English teacher.
- anglaisfacile.com
- https://www.englishclub.com/ref/esl/Phrasal_Verbs/P/pack_up_1__1987.php
- **Speak English with Vanessa** (https://speakenglishwithvanessa.com/free-lessons/) : an american teacher.

- **CNN 10** : a summary of the news in 10 minutes by Carl Azuz. Good to improve my listening skill / American accent. I listen to it around 4 times a

3

week. (https://edition.cnn.com/2021/08/25/cnn10/ten-content-thurs/index.html).
- **Deepenglish** (https://deepenglish.com/blog/). I regularly use the free lessons of this site to enhance my listening and reading skills. Positive points : the articles are based on research, 3 speed choices, vocabulary quiz, complementary videos...
- https://www.voanews.com/
- BBCnews (https://www.bbc.com/news)
- Vocable magazine (https://www.vocable.fr/index.php?option=com_quiz_vocable&view=vocable&id_lang_quiz=2&Itemid=223)
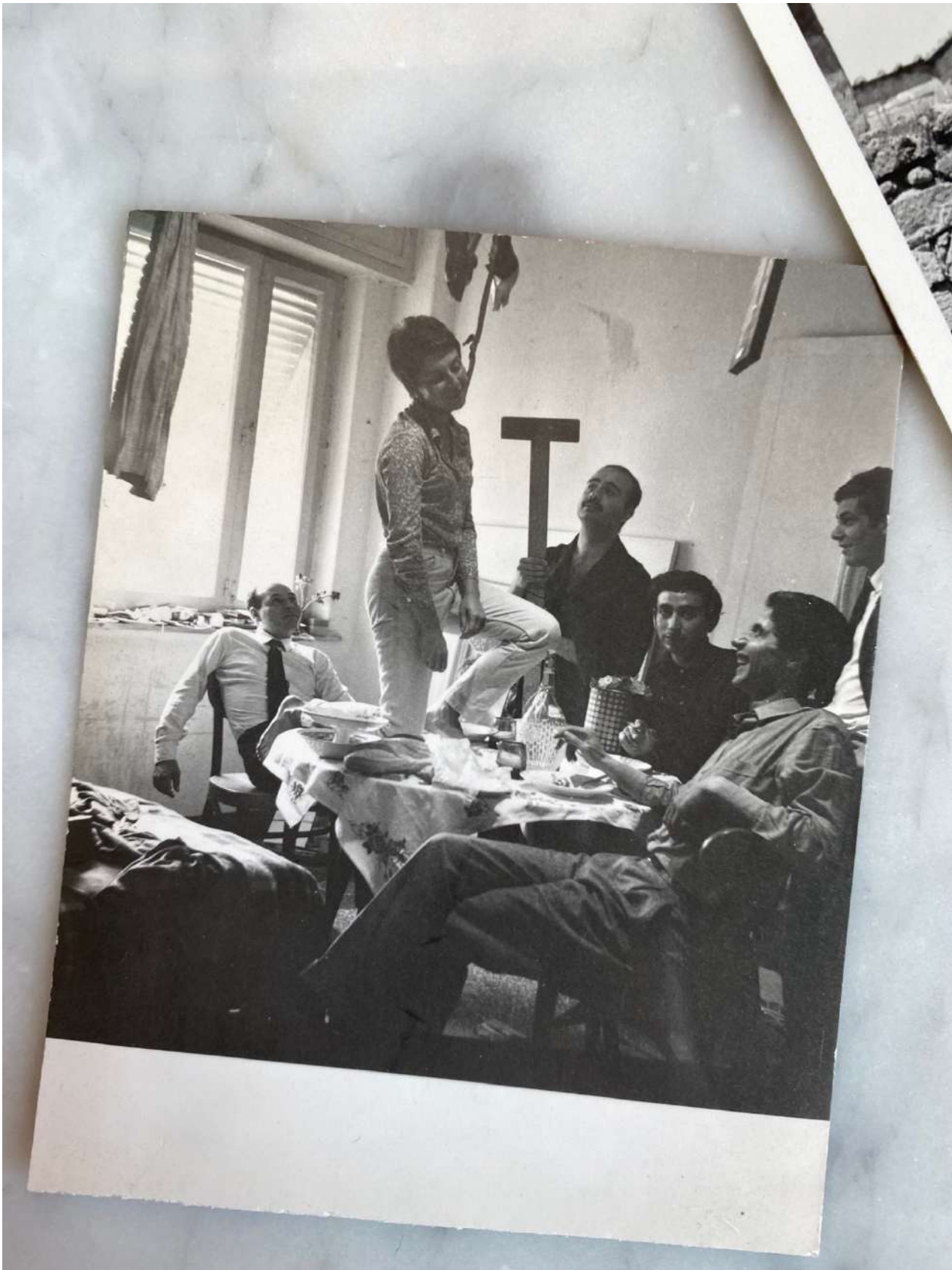
(................)

PH_J1

NB_J

- A sheltered woman (short story) Yiyun Li
- Killing Lizards (short st.) William Boyd
405. The Buried Giant / Kazuo Ishiguro (v. boring) 55 pages. Abandon
- Killing Lizards / William Boyd short stories
Antigone / Anouilh (en Anglais) T. bean Texte xxx   abandon
No country for old men / Cormac Mc Carthy broken cowboy american 65p.
Memoirs of a Geisha / Arthur Golden (From 1920 in Kyoto → 1960) ok a bit long
412 Silent Treatment / Michael Palmer murder Bof ---
Daisy Miller / Henry James second lecture
Spies / Michael Frayn Bof ... a bit obscure
Angela's Ashes / Frank McCourt xxx Biographie Born in Brooklyn at birth → Ireland → NY
Mothering Sunday / Graham Swift xx (miserable Irish Catholic childhood... drunk father
415. Lost January / A L Barker short story
Coming up for air / george Orwell . a bit disappointing
My Father...
The Tattooist of Auschwitz / Heather Morris xxx   to stop Jews of immigration
The Gustav Sonata / Rose Tremain xx Switzerland 1947-2000 2 boys Berni construction
420 Travels with my Aunt / Graham Greene complicated + boring o
My life with Picasso / Francoise Gilot xx+
1000? One Day / David Nicholls a long long long romance
A voice in the garden / Dirk Bogarde (story on the Côte d'Azur) Nearly a chick lit. o
The Next Big Thing / Anita Brookner a depressing - glowing - an victim of old age
425. Ship of fools / Katherine A Porter Abandon
Alone on a wide wide Sea / Michael Morpurgo Teenagers book -
The Rooster Bar / John Grisham pleasant thriller (law school scam)
One for my Baby / Tony Parsons Teacher of English for foreign people HongKong / baby twenty ...
The Associate / John Grisham boring drug beginning, used interesting story
430. Shattered / Dean Koontz a thriller Bof
Out of the Dark / Greg Hurwitz (orphan x) thriller Bof complicated
Man + Boy / Tony Parsons bo conventional
The English / Jeremy Paxman 3rd lecture xxx+ remarkable
Tomorrow to be brave / Susan Travers 2nd lecture
435. Bridget Jones's Diary / Helen Fielding x lecture
She for my Baby / Tom Smith Sinatra life + cocktails
Daughter of Empire - life as Mountbatten / Pamela Hicks 2nd lect.
Daisy Miller / Henry James xx lecture
The catcher in the Rye / Salinger 2nd lect.
440. One for my baby / Tony Parsons 2nd lect   xx+   Fascinant
Big little lies / Liane Moriarty kindof open study of the mothers couples girl t
The Midwife's confession / Diane Chamberlain far fetched chiklit o
Under a silent moon / Elizabeth Haynes Polar not bad
The story of Lucy Gault / william Trevor second lecture
445 The Spy who came in from the cold / John le Carré spy story 3 lecture still not understand
Scoop / Evelyn Waugh 3 lecture
The Heart of the matter / Graham Greene 3rd lect.
The Painted Veil / Somerset Maugham 4th lecture
Praxis / Fay Weldon 3 lecture   too many details
450. Wild Mary / Patrick Marnham Biography of Mary Wesley writer 1912 - 2002
- The woman in white 3 lecture Boring
- Purple Hibiscus Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie 3. lecture   midwife
- True Pleasures (a memoir of women in Paris) Lucinda Holdforth badly writ, bovy Australian abandon after 82 pages
1021. The Known World / Edward Jones Negro slaves - v. Tiring begin Egypt
- The house of sleep / Jonathan Coe xx
- Hotel on the Corner of Bitter x Sweet / J. Coe xxx 1942 Japanese (200 000) sent pw in camps till 1945
- The Rain Before it Falls / J. Coe xx silly end 2n lecture
- What a carve up / J. Coe xx sillyend 200p. So boring abandon
- Depraved Heart / Patricia Cornwell
- ... Evelyn Waugh x lecture

PH_J2

PH_J3

PNI2_J

My stays ~~were~~ (as paying guest) | séjour à Londre

2004	1 week at my ex English boyfriend = v.v. poor English
2005	3 weeks at English Summer University / Nice (with A level students)
2006	2 weeks at Phil's friends (B&B in Twickenham - Sue & Bruce)
2007	3 weeks at Merilyn / London (one to one course)
"	1 week at Jennifer's family in Manchester
2008	3 weeks at Pat's - Jennifer's friend in Côte d'Armour (1 to 1)
	1 week at an English B&B Maliciaix Bretagcycling with Engl. ladies
2009	2 weeks at Sylvia's (Jen's friend) near Cambridge
2010	" " " "
2011	one week at Easter at Merilyn's in London
2012	one month at Maxine's in Brighton
2013	{ 2 weeks ————————
	{ 1 week at Maxine's friend
2014	1 week at Jen's friends (Queens) London
	1 — at Queen's friend near London
2015	2 weeks at Pia's mother. (London)

2019 1 week at Jen's in Taunton
      1 week at Pia's in Newcastle

Travel to Scotland
   — to Ireland } with F.GB
   — Lake district with Pia

Italian : 2019 one year of conversation with Maria Luigia (brain cancer = suicide)
         2018 ————————————→ with Franco (then he moved)
         2021 2 trips (5 days) to Italy with a friend.

D_J

A hand-drawn tree mind-map labelled "MOTIVATION" at the trunk, with branches reading:
- Private lessons
- Tour Guide for English Natives
- Expat Experience (Italy, UK)
- Alliance FR. UK
- CEDAC Univ
- Friends @ Network
- retirement
- Professional life : opportunity seeker
- Literature @ love for books
- Against status quo
- Frustration
- Strong-willed
- "Bold", "cheeky"
- Love thought provoking @ position "a will have a view"

FB_J

LL1_J

① Friday, 12th August 66

Luv,

A bit dizzy. I'm just out of an "Agatha Christie's book and "Look back in anger". I've read too much I must quiet myself. Once more I've got this voracity, this feverish will to swallow, english words again and again. My great dream would be to eat a full vocabulary and then to extract words out of myself when I need them. I don't know whether I must be grateful to you or not, but for you I'd have been disgusted by England, English people and English language. And now, instead, I'm wolfing books, I'm looking eagerly for a deeper knowledge of England and English people, I'm shivering when I see some corners of London on the television, and my eyes are filled with tears when I think about a turkey with some delicious mint sauce, for one Christmas evening, - just to see a piece of bacon or a box of tea makes me thoughtful for a long moment. And I think

LL2_J

poor stone-blokes ⑤ for ever still. You can imagine me, reading and writing in my bedroom. Now, I'm looking through the window, I see the Mt Boron Hill, and the Auberge with the small house near it. It's very precise from here. And I can determine it precisely. Both of us bent above a book. How many are we.? the world is a great wastage of bodies and hearts. Every body is looking for some truth. and missing his opportunity. the responsible one is society. which oblige people to live in ridiculous flat, everybody is separated, closed, far from friendship, community. Are we mad? Yes. we, the poor one, the proles, certainly are, but I think that this world built by the powerful ones and for them is cunningly built for them. But why do we accept it? We've nothing to do with them, we are against them.

LL3_J

first time I realise (3) how much I love
English and how important was your influence.
Tony you've been a very good teacher -
(Maybe it isn't obvious, seeing how I write)
but anyway you've given me the stimulating,
the courage to undertake this adventure =
to learn English well -
You must be a bit surprised by this avalanche
well! I, myself, didn't know when I took
this sheet of paper that I was going to
write this, but when I began to write
"Lov" I thought, how happy I was to know
English a bit. then I thought, at your
explanation about "Lov" and then I found
my heart swollen up with gratitude for
you and the words ran -
Today I was with a friend of mine - she
asked me about my English and I answered
that it was a bit better because of you -
I went back home, I read a bit of
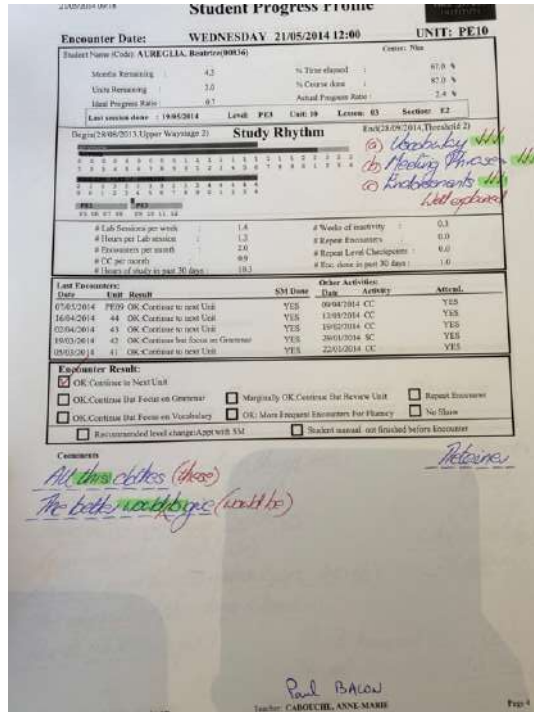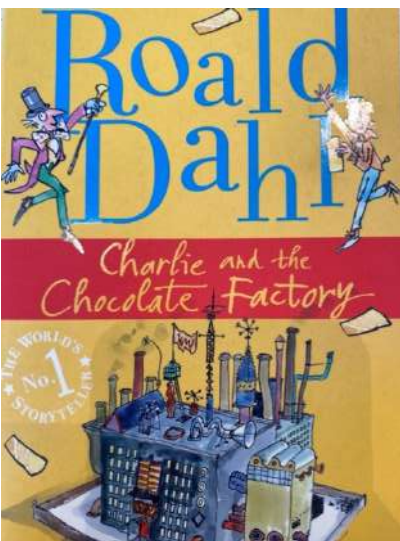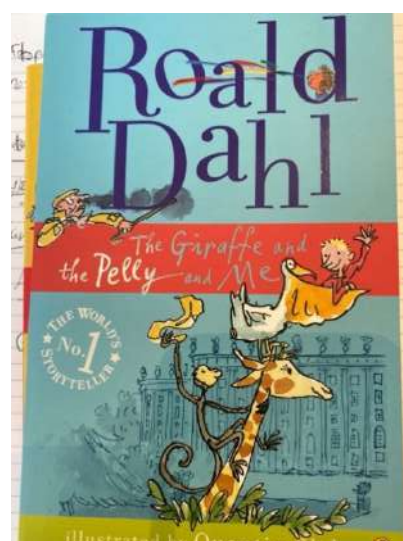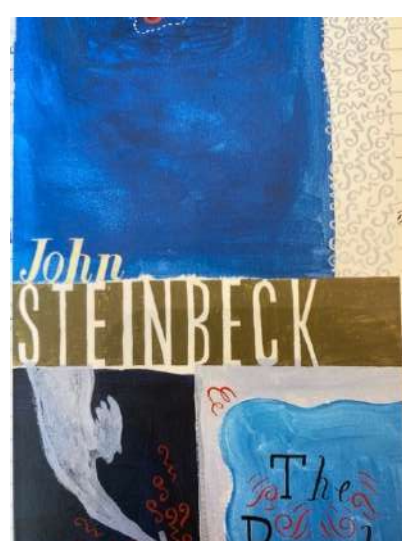Christies's book and I thought about some

LTB_J
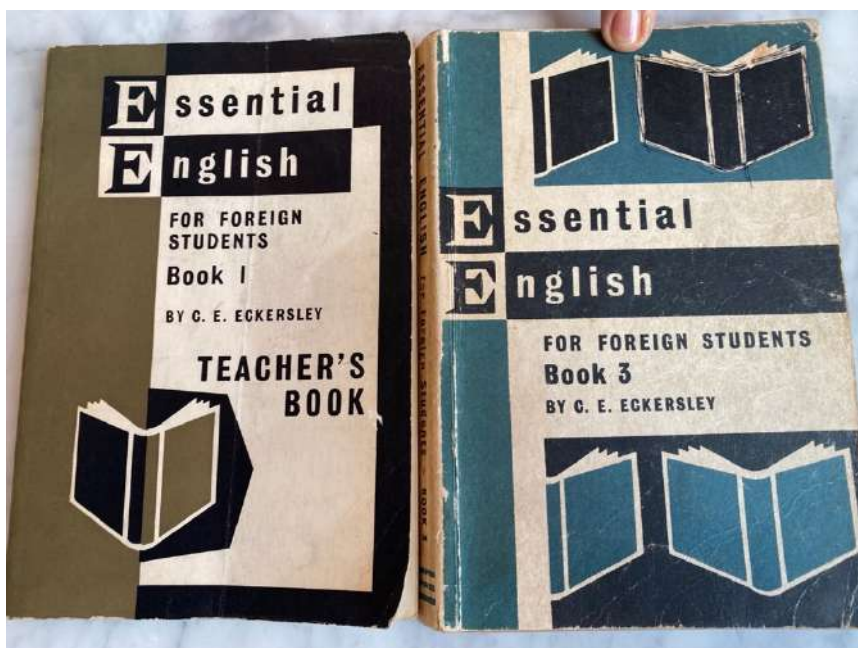
PH_P1

PH_P2

PH_P3

AR_P1

AR_P2

FB_P1

FB_P2

FB_P3

D_P