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# **Foreign Language Anxiety in the Irish Third-Level Context and the Potential of Performative Pedagogy for Learners of French**

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**A thesis submitted to the Department of French Studies, Mary Immaculate  
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**Submitted to Mary Immaculate College,**

**University of Limerick**

**June 2022**



## **ABSTRACT**

### **Foreign Language Anxiety in the Irish Third-Level Context and the Potential of Performative Pedagogy for Learners of French**

Sarah Clancy

Who among us has never been lost in translation at one point or another when learning a language? Given its complex nature, the study of second language (L2) acquisition has become a largely interdisciplinary enterprise and has received considerable critical attention from many different research disciplines including psychology, linguistics, education, and sociology. Research trends across the disciplines have been predominantly centred on the cognitive, linguistic and social dimensions of the language acquisition process. There is, however, an additional affective dimension within the language learning process which, until very recently, has attracted considerably less critical scholarly attention.

While engaging with these interrelated dimensions, this study seeks to call attention to and interrogate more closely the impact of emotion on the language learner and, more specifically, on the ever-evolving and complex process of language acquisition. Within this broader focus on the affective dimension of language learning, the investigation specifically concentrates upon foreign language anxiety (FLA), a psychological construct which represents a significant emotional barrier to successful language acquisition. Both theoretical and experimental, this investigation employs a single pre-post intervention case study as a primary methodological tool in order to address two central research aims. Firstly, this study seeks to uncover to what extent final year students of French, in the Irish third-level context, experience FLA, and to explore the principal factors that trigger this reaction in the language learning process. Secondly, it aspires to investigate the potentiality of performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, in reducing or alleviating students' levels of FLA.

At present, Ireland is undergoing a dynamic evolution in its linguistic and educational landscape, which provides the basis for a rich and contemporary case study on language learning. Despite Ireland's evolving relationship with language and language learning, presently, there is a dearth of research and lack of awareness on L2 acquisition that is specific to the Irish context, and perceptions of language learners in the Irish context remain anecdotal. To facilitate and evolve the knowledge required to develop this refined understanding, FLA was chosen as the *point de départ* for this investigation, as it has never been explored in the Irish context and provides valuable and holistic insight into the various dimensions of the L2 acquisition process.

Pre-intervention findings highlighted the influence of empathy, familiarity, understanding, forming dialogic relationships, and self-confidence on FLA levels. The performance intervention, conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighted a number of significant ways in which FLA may be alleviated in and through performance, including the development of communicative proficiency, the establishment of empathetic support, the integration of a 'creative' medium to teach language, the removal of uncertainty surrounding the examination process, and the development of a collective sense of accomplishment. Findings also provided additional evidence with respect to transitioning performance from stage to screen and, moreover, the important role it played in alleviating students' FLA. While the embodiment of a character provided students with one 'veil' to overcome their communication apprehension, the screen served as another 'mask' that helped them to reach their highest potential.

**Keywords:** *foreign language anxiety, affect, second language acquisition, foreign language learning, debilitating anxiety, situation-specific anxiety, performative pedagogy, performance-based instruction.*

## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis, *Foreign Language Anxiety in the Irish Third-Level Context and the Potential of Performative Pedagogy for Learners of French*, is entirely my own work and has not been submitted, in whole or in part, for any other awards at this or at any other academic establishment. Where use has been made of the work of other people, it has been fully acknowledged and referenced. I understand that this thesis will be available to staff and students at Mary Immaculate College in paper or electronic format for viewing and for possible research.

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**Date:**     08/06/2022

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Throughout the writing of this thesis, I have received a great deal of support and assistance for which I am truly grateful.

First and foremost, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Mairéad Ní Bhriain, for her invaluable contribution, insightful suggestions, unwavering support, and patience over the past three years. Be it our weekly meeting on campus, a Zoom call, a quick email, or a friendly chat over a coffee, your guidance throughout each stage of the research process has inspired me as a researcher to think outside of the box, while also keeping me in focus.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to the Department of French Studies at Mary Immaculate College, whose encouragement and assistance cannot be overestimated throughout the duration of my undergraduate and postgraduate studies. I wish to offer special thanks to Dr. Loïc Guyon and Mr. Darach Sanfey, from whom I have learned so much as a student and have had the pleasure of working with as a colleague over the past five years.

I would also like to recognise the support of the Research and Graduate School at Mary Immaculate College for awarding me the opportunity to undertake my PhD study in combination with a Departmental Teaching Assistantship, from which I have gained invaluable experience and indispensable knowledge.

I very much appreciate and would like to also gratefully acknowledge the critical contribution that Dr. Guyon made to my research study, by giving me permission to observe and draw on his innovative French Production and Performance Module for my thesis. In this regard, a special thanks must also go to the students from the final year French Studies cohort who were so generous with their time in completing questionnaires, interviews, and follow-up sessions as part of my study. Thank you for your honesty in expressing your thoughts and opinions on the second language acquisition process, which has made my findings truly unique to the Irish context! I would also like to extend my gratitude to and acknowledge the assistance of Galway-based artist and friend Conor Dillon in bringing the “Ciarán Speaks French!” vignette to life.

I also wish to thank my best friend Aisling for all her support throughout my studies, and particularly for the happy distractions that helped me to recharge outside of my research – be it a quick catch up, a phone call, a cuppa, or a weekend away – thank you for always being there and for the endless laughs!

Finally, I cannot begin to express my thanks and gratitude to my mom and dad, who have made me the person I am today. The apple absolutely does not fall far from the tree! Your unconditional support, encouragement, and belief in me has given me so many opportunities in life and has allowed me to pursue my dreams. Thank you both for your sympathetic ear, sound advice, and comic relief. I am forever indebted to you both.

## **DEDICATION**

I would like to dedicate this thesis to the memory of my *granda*, Paddy Clancy Snr., who I know is always watching over me and supporting me in everything that I do.

## GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>ACTH</b>	Adrenocorticotrophic Hormone
<b>ALM</b>	The Audio-Lingual Method
<b>CALL</b>	Computer-Assisted Language Learning
<b>CEFR</b>	Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (scale)
<b>CLIL</b>	Content and Language Integrated Learning
<b>CLT</b>	Communicative Language Teaching
<b>CRH</b>	Corticotropin-Releasing Hormone
<b>CRQ</b>	Central Research Question
<b>DiE</b>	Drama-in-Education
<b>ELT</b>	Experiential Learning Theory
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>Field of SLA</b>	Field of Second Language Acquisition
<b>FLA</b>	Foreign Language Anxiety (also referred to as ‘language anxiety’).
<b>FLCAS</b>	Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale
<b>HPA Axis</b>	The Hypothalamic-Pituitary-Adrenal Axis
<b>ICT</b>	Information and Communications Technology/Technologies
<b>L1 / L1s (Acquisition)</b>	(L1) First language acquisition/Monolingual language acquisition. (L1s) Acquisition of first languages (e.g., in the case of bilingual/multilingual acquisition).
<b>L2 (Acquisition)</b>	Second/Foreign language acquisition. The learning of a non-native language after the first language/s have been acquired.
<b>LAD</b>	Language Acquisition Device
<b>LC1</b>	Source Linguaculture
<b>LC2</b>	Target Linguaculture
<b>M</b>	Mean (Average)
<b>MIC</b>	Mary Immaculate College
<b>MIREC</b>	Mary Immaculate Research Ethics Committee
<b>MoE</b>	Mantle of the Expert
<b>MT</b>	Mother Tongue
<b>N</b>	Number of Participants
<b>NCCA</b>	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
<b>SCT</b>	Sociocultural Theory
<b>SLA Research</b>	SLA Research (Studies carried out in the field of SLA).
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
<b>SRR Model</b>	Stimulus-Response-Reinforcement Model
<b>TiE</b>	Theatre-in-Education
<b>TiR</b>	Teacher in Role
<b>TML</b>	Technology-Mediated Learning
<b>UG Hypothesis</b>	Universal Grammar Hypothesis
<b>ZPD</b>	Zone of Proximal Development
<b><math>\alpha</math></b>	Cronbach’s Alpha (Scale Reliability Coefficient)

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

<b>Acquisition</b>	In the context of this study, <i>acquisition</i> is understood as a higher order subconscious process of language encoding and development. This term is discussed further in Chapter One.
<b>Affect</b>	The term <i>affect</i> , in the science of emotion, refers to ‘anything emotional’ (Barrett and Bliss-Moreau 2009). Affect can be experienced in the form of emotions or moods.
<b>Dependent Variable</b>	The term <i>dependent variable</i> is used in statistical testing to refer to the factors, traits, or conditions being tested in a study.
<b>Drama</b>	In this investigation, <i>drama</i> is understood as a performance practice that is strongly centered on process and emphasises self-discovery in the pedagogical process.
<b>Emotion</b>	Emotions are short-lived reactions to specific stimuli in an individual’s environment.
<b>First Language</b> - Native Language - Primary Language	Where this study makes reference to child language acquisition, the terms <i>first language</i> , <i>native language</i> , <i>primary language</i> , and <i>mother tongue</i> are used interchangeably to encompass the first language or languages a child learns (i.e., in the case of bilingual/multilingual acquisition). This definition is unpacked further in Chapter One.
<b>Foreign Language Anxiety</b> - Language Anxiety	<i>Foreign language anxiety</i> , also referred to as language anxiety, is an emotional mechanism that may manifest itself in the second language acquisition process. It is a situation-specific anxiety characterised by feelings of tension, apprehension, and frustration during language learning. This psychological construct is elaborated upon further in Chapter Three.
<b>Independent Variable</b>	The term <i>independent variable</i> is used in statistical testing to refer to the factors, traits, or conditions that are manipulated in a study.
<b>Innovation</b>	In an educational context, the term <i>innovation</i> is applied to situations when educators think progressively. Its primary objective is to effect a substantive change in the pedagogical process in order to enhance student learning.
<b>Learning</b>	In the context of this study, <i>learning</i> is understood as a conscious process of language encoding and development that occurs through explicit learning. This term is discussed further in Chapter One.



<b>Pedagogy</b>	<i>Pedagogy</i> is at the core of teaching and learning. It provides educators with different frameworks for designing and facilitating learning experiences. The contemporary usage of the term has been employed in a broad sense to describe both method and practice in teaching.
<b>Performative Pedagogy</b>	<i>Performative pedagogy</i> may be described as a pedagogical reorientation that approaches pedagogy from a performative point of view. In doing so, it fosters a learning culture centered on learner engagement, ownership, and active participation. This term is elaborated upon further in Chapter Five.
<b>Second Language</b> - <b>Foreign Language</b> - <b>Target Language</b>	The terms <i>second language</i> , <i>foreign language</i> , and <i>target language</i> are used as umbrella terms throughout this study to refer to any non-native language learned subsequent to the first language or languages, which is <i>not</i> widely used in the learner's immediate social context and to which they do not have natural exposure (e.g., the use of French among the Irish population). This definition is unpacked further in Chapter One.
<b>Situation-Specific Anxiety</b>	The term <i>situation-specific anxiety</i> is used by psychologists to refer to an anxious reaction that occurs in response to an explicit situation. This definition is further elaborated upon in Chapter Three.
<b>State Anxiety</b>	The term <i>state anxiety</i> is used by psychologists to refer to a transient anxious reaction. This definition is unpacked further in Chapter Three.
<b>Stimulus</b>	In psychology, the term <i>stimulus</i> is used to refer to any internal or external object, event, or situation that engenders a physiological or psychological response in an organism.
<b>Theatre</b>	In this investigation, <i>theatre</i> is employed as an all-embracing term that refers to 'a group effort that is both process- and product-oriented [...] in which every single participant is invited to negotiate and overcome personal, linguistic, social, cultural, and psychological differences and hurdles' (Matthias 2011).
<b>Trait Anxiety</b>	The term <i>trait anxiety</i> has been used by psychologists to describe individuals who are typically apprehensive in a multitude of situations. This definition is further elaborated upon in Chapter Three.

## **LIST OF FIGURES**

### **Chapter One**

<b>1.1</b>	Lines of Inquiry into the Language Faculty.	p. 22
<b>1.2</b>	Avenues of Research into Language Acquisition.	p. 23
<b>1.3</b>	Key Phases of Transition in the Field of SLA.	p. 32
<b>1.4</b>	The ‘Affective Turn’ in the Field of SLA.	p. 34

### **Chapter Two**

<b>2.1</b>	Operant Conditioning in a French Language Teaching Scenario.	p. 46
<b>2.2</b>	Krashen’s Monitor Model of L2 Acquisition and Production.	p. 55
<b>2.3</b>	The Evolution of CALL.	p. 75
<b>2.4</b>	The Unified Competition Model.	p. 83
<b>2.5</b>	Zipf’s Law Formula.	p. 87
<b>2.6</b>	Broca’s Area.	p. 90

### **Chapter Three**

<b>3.1</b>	Vignette: Ciarán Speaks French!	p. 107
<b>3.2</b>	Key Components of the Stress Response System in the Brain.	p. 108
<b>3.3</b>	The Function of the HPA Axis in the Stress Response.	p. 110
<b>3.4</b>	Adaptation Responses on a Continuum of Anxiety.	p. 114
<b>3.5</b>	Ages and Generations of Distance Learning.	p. 133

### **Chapter Four**

<b>4.1</b>	An Ecological Framework for Conceptualising the Irish Linguistic and Educational Landscape.	p. 142
<b>4.2</b>	The Decline of Ireland’s Native Irish Speakers 1800s-2000s.	p. 149
<b>4.3</b>	Current Foreign Language Uptake in the Irish Third-Level Context.	p. 157

### **Chapter Five**

<b>5.1</b>	Forgotten Figures and Familiar Faces in the Development of Drama/Theatre in Education.	p. 187
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### **Chapter Six**

<b>6.1</b>	Model of the Research Design and Building Process.	p. 210
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## **Chapter Seven**

<b>7.1</b>	Total Participant FLCAS Scores.	p. 240
<b>7.2</b>	Participants' Main Sources of FLA.	p. 244
<b>7.3</b>	Total Participant Scores for Questionnaire on Attitudes Towards ICT in French Language Learning.	p. 250
<b>7.4</b>	Students' Negative Responses on the Questionnaire on Attitudes Towards ICT in French Language Learning.	p. 250

## **Chapter Eight**

<b>8.1</b>	Last On-Site Production of <i>Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné, ou le Canon d'alarme</i> Pre-Covid.	p. 267
<b>8.2</b>	First Production of <i>Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné, ou le Canon d'alarme</i> , in 2017.	p. 267
<b>8.3</b>	Props used in the Production of <i>Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné, ou le Canon d'alarme</i> .	p. 268
<b>8.4</b>	Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle.	p. 272
<b>8.5</b>	Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle in Practice.	p. 273
<b>8.6</b>	Example of a Word Web.	p. 275
<b>8.7</b>	Les Romantiques Chassés du Temple.	p. 276
<b>8.8</b>	Title Page of <i>Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné, ou le Canon d'alarme</i> (1829) by Antoine Simonnin and Louis Vanderburch.	p. 277
<b>8.9</b>	Character Origins in <i>Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné, ou le Canon d'alarme</i> (1829).	p. 280
<b>8.10</b>	Examples of Stage Directions in the Different Tableaus.	p. 282
<b>8.11</b>	The National Core Arts Standards: A Conceptual Framework for Arts Learning.	p. 286
<b>8.12</b>	Total Participant Performance FLCAS Scores.	p. 294
<b>8.13</b>	Participants' Main Sources of FLA.	p. 297

## LIST OF TABLES

### ***Chapter Seven***

<b>7.1</b>	FLA Score Ranges.	p. 234
<b>7.2</b>	Student Attitudes Towards ICT in Language Instruction Score Ranges.	p. 235
<b>7.3</b>	Socio-Demographic Data.	p. 238
<b>7.4</b>	Mean FLA Score for each FLCAS Item.	p. 242
<b>7.5</b>	Coding Process Breakdown.	p. 245
<b>7.6</b>	Final Year French Students' Confidence in the Four Language Skills.	p. 247
<b>7.7</b>	Mean Score for each Item on the ICT in French Language Learning Questionnaire.	p. 251

### ***Chapter Eight***

<b>8.1</b>	FLA Score Ranges.	p. 290
<b>8.2</b>	Mean FLA Score for each FLCAS Item.	p. 295
<b>8.3</b>	Coding Process Breakdown.	p. 311

## LIST OF APPENDICES

<b>Appendix A</b>	MIREC Letter of Approval.	p. 365
<b>Appendix B</b>	Participant Information Letter.	p. 366
<b>Appendix C</b>	Participant Consent Form.	p. 367
<b>Appendix D</b>	Participant Debriefing Form.	p. 368
<b>Appendix E</b>	Socio-Demographic Questionnaire.	p. 370
<b>Appendix F</b>	Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS; Horwitz et al. 1986).	p. 376
<b>Appendix G</b>	Questionnaire on Attitudes Towards ICT in French Language Learning.	p. 382
<b>Appendix H</b>	Letter of Approval from Head of Department of French Studies.	p. 386
<b>Appendix I</b>	French Production and Performance (FR4777) Module Outline 2020/2021.	p. 387
<b>Appendix J</b>	Adapted Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS; Horwitz et al. 1986) Performance Intervention.	p. 392
<b>Appendix K</b>	Questionnaire on Students' Opinions and Perceptions of the French Production and Performance Module.	p. 399
<b>Appendix L</b>	Post-Performance Semi-Structured Interview Questions.	p. 403
<b>Appendix M</b>	Module Coordinator and Designer Semi-Structured Interview Questions.	p. 405
<b>Appendix N</b>	Research Journal Part I – Idea and Thought Development	p. 407
<b>Appendix O</b>	Research Journal Part II – Research Methodology and Notes	p. 487
<b>Appendix P</b>	Interview Transcripts	p. 575
<b>Appendix Q</b>	Scenes III, V, IX, X, XI, XII, and XIII: <i>Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné, ou le Canon d'alarme</i> (1829).	p. 596
<b>Appendix R</b>	English Translation: Scenes III, V, IX, X, XI, XII, and XIII of <i>Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné, ou le Canon d'alarme</i> (1829).	p. 617
<b>Appendix S</b>	University Language Programmes offered in Ireland.	p. 639
<b>Appendix T</b>	University Performance-Based Programmes offered in Ireland with the Option of Language Study.	p. 643
<b>Appendix U</b>	CEFR Note: Final Year Undergraduate French Modules at MIC.	p. 645
<b>Appendix V</b>	CEFR Common Reference Levels (Global Scale) and CEFR Illustrative Descriptor Scales.	p. 646

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<i>Abstract</i> .....	i
<i>Declaration</i> .....	ii
<i>Acknowledgements</i> .....	iii
<i>Dedication</i> .....	iv
<i>Glossary of Abbreviations</i> .....	v
<i>Glossary of Terms</i> .....	vi
<i>List of Figures</i> .....	viii
<i>List of Tables</i> .....	x
<i>List of Appendices</i> .....	xi
<b>Introduction</b> .....	1
<b>Chapter 1</b> How a Language is Learned: Locating the Research .....	19
<b>Chapter 2</b> Second Language Acquisition in Theory: Navigating the Terrain .....	36
<b>Chapter 3</b> Foreign Language Anxiety: Documenting the Intangible .....	96
<b>Chapter 4</b> The Irish Linguistic and Educational Landscape .....	138
<b>Chapter 5</b> Performance-Based Language Instruction .....	177
<b>Chapter 6</b> Research Methodology .....	207
<b>Chapter 7</b> Case Study: Stage I – <i>Presentation, Analysis, and Findings</i> .....	230
<b>Chapter 8</b> Case Study: Stage II – <i>Presentation, Analysis, and Findings</i> .....	264
<b>Conclusion and Recommendations</b> .....	314
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	321
<b>Appendices</b> .....	364



<b><u>Chapter 3 Foreign Language Anxiety: Documenting the Intangible</u></b> .....	<b>96</b>
3.0 Introduction.....	97
3.1 The Etymology of a Term: Understanding Anxiety .....	98
3.2 A Clinical Perspective: Psychological and Physiological Manifestations of Anxiety.....	105
3.3 Foreign Language Anxiety: Delineating a Psychological Phenomenon.....	115
3.4 Conclusion .....	136
<b><u>Chapter 4 The Irish Linguistic and Educational Landscape</u></b> .....	<b>138</b>
4.0 Introduction.....	139
4.1 An Ecological Framework for Conceptualising the Irish Linguistic and Educational Landscape .....	140
4.1.1 The Macro-System: The History of Language in the Irish Context .....	142
4.1.2 The Exo-System: Language Policy and Planning .....	151
4.1.3 The Meso-System: Language Curriculum and Pedagogical Practices .....	162
4.1.4 The Micro-System: Perceptions of Language .....	172
4.2 Conclusion .....	175
<b><u>Chapter 5 Performance-Based Language Instruction</u></b> .....	<b>177</b>
5.0 Introduction.....	178
5.1 Forgotten Figures and Familiar Faces: A Brief History of the British Tradition of Drama/Theatre in the Field of Education.....	180
5.2 Arts in the Irish Educational Context.....	188
5.3 A Theatre Praxis for Overcoming Foreign Language Anxiety.....	194
5.4 Conclusion .....	205
<b><u>Chapter 6 Research Methodology</u></b> .....	<b>207</b>
6.0 Introduction.....	208
6.1 Research Design and Framework .....	209
6.1.1 Research Questions and Hypotheses .....	217
6.1.2 Sampling Strategy and Research Participants .....	219
6.1.3 Ethical Considerations.....	222
6.1.4 Research Limitations .....	226
6.2 Conclusion .....	228
<b><u>Chapter 7 Case Study: Stage I – Presentation, Analysis, and Findings</u></b> .....	<b>230</b>
7.0 Introduction.....	231
7.2 Data Collection Procedures and Instruments.....	231
7.2 Data Analysis and Findings .....	236
7.2.1 Socio-Demographic Data Analysis .....	236
7.2.2 Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) Data Analysis .....	239



7.2.3	How confident do final year French students feel in the four language skills?.....	247
7.2.4	Do past learning experiences of the Irish language influence students’ perspectives of subsequent language learning experiences? .....	248
7.2.5	What impact does technology have on the French language learning experience? .....	248
7.3	Research Findings and Discussion.....	252
7.3.1	Perceptions of the Irish Language: ‘Irish is taught like a subject and not as a language!’ .....	252
7.3.2	Early Sources of Foreign Language Anxiety: ‘Your Irish accent is just ridiculous.’ .....	255
7.3.3	The Situation-Specific Nature of Foreign Language Anxiety: ‘I’m not an anxious person at all, but for the French oral exams, it was 100% just pure anxiety.’ .....	257
7.3.4	Using French Outside of the Classroom: ‘Wait...did I say that wrong?’ .....	260
7.3.5	Test Anxiety: ‘That essay was a killer!’ .....	262
7.4	Conclusion .....	263

**Chapter 8 Case Study: Stage II – Presentation, Analysis, and Findings ..... 264**

8.0	Introduction.....	265
8.1	French Production and Performance Module Overview.....	265
8.2	Data Collection Instruments and Procedures .....	288
8.3	Data Analysis and Findings .....	292
8.3.1	Quantitative Data Analysis.....	292
8.3.2	Qualitative Data Analysis.....	298
8.3.2.1	Initial Thoughts – ‘At the beginning of the module, I was a bit sceptical.’ .....	298
8.3.2.2	COVID-19 Virtual Dilemma – ‘I probably think if it was in person, I would have been looking at it from another perspective, because you’d be standing in front of people and that’s a different dynamic again.’ .....	299
8.3.2.3	Embodying a Character Online – ‘I have to try and show I am in love with my voice.’ .....	301
8.3.2.4	The Self – ‘I wasn’t me; I was a character.’ .....	304
8.3.2.5	Teamwork – ‘We were doing it together.’ .....	305
8.3.2.6	The Instructor – ‘His knowledge was just like unbelievable...what he knew about translating and France in general.’ .....	306
8.3.2.7	Assessment – ‘I think it was nicely balanced.’ .....	308
8.3.2.8	Final Thoughts – ‘Looking back, it was one of the best modules we did.’ .....	309
8.4	Conclusion .....	313

**CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS ..... 314**

**BIBLIOGRAPHY ..... 321**

**APPENDICES ..... 364**

# **INTRODUCTION**

## **Introduction**

**I just know I have some kind of disability: I can't learn a foreign language no matter how hard I try!**<sup>1</sup>

Who among us has never been lost in translation at one point or another when learning a foreign language? Language learning is a process that necessitates learners to engage holistically and transition into another 'mental world that involves different thinking, feeling, acting, and cultural understanding'.<sup>2</sup> Given its complex nature, the study of second language (L2) acquisition has become a largely interdisciplinary enterprise and has received considerable critical attention from many different research disciplines including psychology, linguistics, education, and sociology.

Research trends across the disciplines have been predominantly centred on the cognitive, linguistic, and social dimensions of the language acquisition process, as evidenced most notably through the work of B. F. Skinner, Noam Chomsky, Stephen Krashen, Ochs and Schieffelin, Lev Vygotsky, and John Schumann. Within this context, several key concepts and variables have emerged as being central to the L2 acquisition process and its complex dynamic, including culture, identity, language perceptions, values and beliefs, pedagogical practices, and environmental factors. There is, however, an additional affective dimension within the language learning process which, until very recently, has attracted considerably less critical scholarly attention. Indeed, Canadian linguist Merrill Swain affirms that emotions are 'the elephants in the room – poorly studied, poorly understood, seen as inferior to rational thought'.<sup>3</sup> In a similar vein, neuroscientist Morten L. Kringelbach emphasises that a simple overview of 'the history of research in emotions gives an excellent indication of how scientists have struggled to quantify emotion' due to its subjective nature.<sup>4</sup>

Nevertheless, recent developments in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) have led to a renewed interest in and increased the value accorded to emotion as an important

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<sup>1</sup> A direct student quotation from Elaine K. Horwitz, Michael B. Horwitz, and Joann A. Cope's seminal article "Foreign language classroom anxiety," *The Modern Language Journal* 70, no. 2 (1986): 125.

<sup>2</sup> Patrice Baldwin and Alicja Galazka, *Process Drama for Second Language Teaching and Learning: A Toolkit for Developing Language and Life Skills* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021), 1.

<sup>3</sup> Merrill Swain, "The Inseparability of Cognition and Emotion in Second Language Learning," *Language Teaching* 46, no. 2 (2013): 195.

<sup>4</sup> Morten L. Kringelbach, *The Pleasure Center: Trust Your Animal Instincts* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 47.

variable in the language acquisition process. For example, applied linguist Jean-Marc Dewaele, who has written extensively about the psychological and affective dimension of L2 acquisition, maintains that the ‘growing acceptance’ of emotion among the research community is attributable to the deeper awareness that may be gained about ‘aspects traditionally overlooked’ in the cognitive, linguistic, and social dimensions of the acquisition process.<sup>5</sup> In this regard, Swain notes that emotion is a linchpin of the L2 acquisition process because it has ‘a significant impact on what has happened in the past, what is happening now, and what will happen in the future’.<sup>6</sup> While engaging with these interrelated dimensions, this study seeks to call attention to and interrogate more closely the impact of emotion on the language learner and, more specifically, on the ever-evolving and complex process of language acquisition.

Within this broader focus on the affective dimension of language learning, the investigation concentrates specifically upon foreign language anxiety (FLA), a psychological construct which represents a significant emotional barrier to successful language acquisition. Both theoretical and experimental, this investigation employs a single pre-post intervention case study as a primary methodological tool in order to address two central research aims. Firstly, the study seeks to uncover to what extent final year students of French, in the Irish third-level context, experience FLA, and to explore the principal factors that trigger this reaction in the language learning process. Secondly, it aspires to investigate the potentiality of performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, in reducing or alleviating students’ levels of language anxiety.

### ***Defining the Research Parameters***

In 1986, leading educational psychologists, Elaine Horwitz, Michael Horwitz, and Joann Cope, published their groundbreaking article entitled *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety*. Often described as a watershed moment in the history of SLA research, it drew special attention to the significant role that emotion and, more specifically, negative emotion plays in the language acquisition process.<sup>7</sup> Their seminal work is acknowledged in the field as a pioneering

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<sup>5</sup> Jean-Marc Dewaele, *Emotions in Multiple Languages* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 37.

<sup>6</sup> Swain, “The Inseparability of Cognition and Emotion...” 195.

<sup>7</sup> Elaine K. Horwitz, “On the Misreading of Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope (1986) and the Need to Balance Anxiety Research and the Experiences of Anxious Language Learners,” in *New Insights into Language Anxiety: Theory, Research, and Educational Implications*, eds. Christina Gkonou, Mark Daubney, and Jean-Marc Dewaele (Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2017).

assertion of the presence and defining features of FLA – a complex psychological construct – defined, more specifically, as ‘a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning’.<sup>8</sup> This study is inspired by the trailblazing work of Horwitz et al., which focused upon the identification of FLA as a situation-specific anxiety, including its indicators and symptoms. However, the work presented here also seeks to build upon and push the boundaries of their research by investigating strategies to mitigate the adverse consequences of language anxiety. This makes it unique in that much of the recent scholarship in the field, since the publication of Horwitz et al.’s article, remains focused on identifying rather than eliminating FLA. The present study aims to go towards bridging this gap between theoretical description and understanding and practical data-based investigation, which can lead to possible evidence-based recommendations to alleviate language anxiety. In this context, the proposed exploratory investigation thus aims to examine the potentialities of innovative performative pedagogies in language learning.

As part of a widespread effort among educators and scholars to effectuate attitudinal and systematic change within education frameworks, the concept of innovation has notably become part and parcel of 21<sup>st</sup>-century pedagogical literature.<sup>9</sup> Broadly speaking, to innovate is to think progressively. It necessitates educators to envisage a new way of doing things and in the process invent an original idea that facilitates an activity in a new way. Any process of innovation has three integral components: (1) A novel idea or proposal, (2) Putting the new idea into effect, and (3) The end result of its implementation which should effectuate change.<sup>10</sup> From the integration of educational technology to the incorporation of interdisciplinary teaching practices in the language classroom, where does pedagogical innovation end? The short answer – the possibilities are endless. Many forums for discussion on pedagogical innovation in language education exist, with innumerable conferences, symposia, and seminars taking place each year. Within the scope of this thesis, it is therefore impossible to analyse every pedagogical innovation that has been developed in detail. Rather, this thesis intends to elaborate upon one progressive form of educational practice in language education – performative pedagogy. More specifically, it seeks to interrogate the extent to which this innovative practice in language education, which has received much attention in recent years, could potentially alleviate language anxiety while also fostering students’ language

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<sup>8</sup> Horwitz et al., “Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety,” 128.

<sup>9</sup> Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Educational Research and Innovation Measuring Innovation in Education 2019: What Has Changed in the Classroom?* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2019).

<sup>10</sup> Richard Evans and Peter Leppmann, *Resistance to Innovation in Higher Education: A Social Psychological Exploration Focused on Television and the Establishment* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1970).

development.

Over the past three decades, a significant ‘performative turn’ has emerged in educational thinking.<sup>11</sup> Although the educational and performance stages are non-identical, the inclusive momentum in the field of performance studies presents other academic disciplines with the opportunity to explore how interdisciplinary intersections may establish a framework for an embodied, interpretive, and dialectical learning experience.<sup>12</sup> In the Irish context, *Scenario*, an interdisciplinary research cluster and working group, has notably emerged as a driving force behind the integration of the performing arts with language education.<sup>13</sup> Initially conceived in 2007 as *A Journal for Performative Teaching, Learning, and Research* at University College Cork, Ireland, the scope of *Scenario* has broadened significantly. Today, it comprises ‘a book series, a forum for conferences and symposia, an archive, and a correspondents’ initiative where people from around the world report on the state of performative teaching, learning, and research in their respective countries’.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, it has set the stage for a sustained international forum of debate, discussion, and reflection on progressive pedagogical thinking within the context of language education.

Despite this growing interest, Schewe, Jogschies, and Stöver-Blahak (2018) maintain that a performative teaching, learning, and research culture has not yet been ‘sufficiently promoted at universities’.<sup>15</sup> They clarify that this may be achieved ‘wherever an academic discipline enters into a constructive dialogue with the performing arts’.<sup>16</sup> In this respect, it is accentuated that ‘an artistic reorientation in teaching and research is imperative’.<sup>17</sup> Set against the backdrop of a module entitled French Production and Performance (FR4777), developed for university students at Mary Immaculate College (MIC), Ireland, the present study aims to contribute to this growing area of research by exploring how ‘the science of experience’ (i.e., pedagogy) may be combined with the ‘art of experience’ (i.e., performance) in order to address

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<sup>11</sup> Elyse Lamm Pineau, “Teaching Is Performance: Reconceptualizing a Problematic Metaphor,” *American Educational Research Journal* 31, no. 1 (1994).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> The European Language Label (ELL) award is organised by the European Commission and recognises pioneering initiatives in the field of language teaching and learning. In 2010, *Scenario* was awarded the ELL for its contribution to establishing links between the performing arts and foreign language education and broadening the possibilities of performative teaching and learning.

<sup>14</sup> *Scenario*, “Our Origins,” *Scenario*, Last Modified May 18, 2022, <https://www.ucc.ie/en/scenario/aboutus/>

<sup>15</sup> Manfred Schewe, Bärbel Jogschies, and Anke Stöver-Blahak, “Recommendations for Promoting a Performative Teaching, Learning, and Research Culture in Higher Education,” *Scenario* 12, no. 2 (2018): 52.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

the affective dimension of language learning.<sup>18</sup>

This investigation was informed by several contextual factors which shaped the research design and process. Context has become a fundamental component of SLA research. Indeed, Dell Hymes, a key figure in the field of sociolinguistics, accentuates in his work, *Reinventing Anthropology* (1972), that ‘the key to understanding language in context is to start not with language but with context’.<sup>19</sup> Although evidence for language acquisition is embedded in cognitive and psychological processes, it is also considerably informed by the broader social context in which learning takes place. This indicates a need to understand the wider dimensions of the learning context under investigation, without which informed conclusions cannot be made. In defining the parameters of this investigation, the researcher’s personal trajectory was contemplated in terms of the important contextual knowledge and valuable insight it would provide when putting the data gathered into a context suitable for interpretation.

The decision was made to focus upon the French language based upon the researcher’s educational trajectory. Furthermore, from a statistical perspective, the French language remains the most popular choice among students in Irish secondary schools for the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate examinations. In 2016, the predominance of French as a language choice remained constant at Junior Cycle, accounting for 31,609 language sits as well as 25,757 sits at Senior Cycle, highlighting its popularity and relevance within the Irish educational context.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, Ireland and France have significant historical, cultural, and industrial connections. This alliance has become even stronger in recent years due to Britain’s exit from the European Union (EU) in January 2020. Today, France is Ireland’s closest EU neighbour and, within this context, France’s Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Jean-Yves Le Drian, highlights that ‘France and Ireland plan together to write a new chapter in their relationship.’<sup>21</sup> In this respect, a renewed interest and importance is being placed upon the French language in the Irish context.

The third-level education sector was employed in the framework of the investigation for three principal reasons. Firstly, the notions of self-awareness and self-understanding and,

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<sup>18</sup> Florian Vaßen, “The diversity of Theaterpädagogik in German schools,” in *Performative teaching, learning, research*, eds. S. Even and M. Schewe (Berlin: Schibri Verlag, 2016), 264.

<sup>19</sup> Dell Hymes, *Reinventing Anthropology* (New York: Random House, 1972), xix.

<sup>20</sup> Department of Education and Skills, *Languages Connect: Ireland’s Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026* (Dublin: Department of Education and Skills, 2017), 27.

<sup>21</sup> Jean-Yves Le Drian, “France, your closest EU neighbour,” *France Ireland Chamber of Commerce*, January 6, 2021, accessed February 23, 2022, <https://www.franceireland.ie/news/n/news/france-your-closest-eu-neighbour.html>

further, the ability to engage in reflection and self-evaluation, are key psychological components fundamental to contemplating and interpreting one's own actions and behaviour – including affective responses. Research suggests that children are less capable of engaging in introspective behaviour, that is to say, contemplating their own mental and emotional processes.<sup>22</sup> On these grounds, it was deemed inappropriate to explore FLA with younger learners at primary level for example. Moreover, it was considered ethically inappropriate to make younger learners, under the age of eighteen, at primary and second-level aware of negative emotions associated with language learning, particularly anxiety, which could potentially be detrimental to their attitudes towards languages and language learning in the future. Secondly, research has demonstrated that FLA heightens when a language learner reaches an intermediate level in their language study.<sup>23</sup> In accordance with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) scale, upon completion of undergraduate language studies in the Irish third-level context, the language learner should be at the B1/B2 independent user/intermediate level of the scale (See Appendix U).<sup>24</sup> Thus, this is a significant juncture at which invaluable insight may be gained about language anxiety, Irish students' language learning trajectories, and the perspectives and opinions they have formed about the language acquisition process throughout their education. The CEFR scale is one of the most established Council of Europe policy instruments. Originally published in 2001, the CEFR has three central aims:

1. To promote and facilitate co-operation among educational institutions in different countries.
2. To provide a sound basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications.
3. To assist learners, teachers, course designers, examining bodies and educational administrators to situate and co-ordinate their efforts.<sup>25</sup>

Since the initial publication of its illustrative descriptor scales in 2001, the Council of Europe has produced an extended version of the scale (See Appendix V) after a five-stage emendation of the framework to broaden the scope of language education. The revised and extended version of the CEFR, available in forty languages, moves 'beyond the area of modern language learning

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<sup>22</sup> See Jean Piaget, *Judgement and Reasoning in the Child (1928)* (London: Routledge, 2001).

<sup>23</sup> Anthony J. Onwuegbuzie, Phillip Bailey, and Christine E. Daley, "Factors Associated with Foreign Language Anxiety," *Applied Psycholinguistics* 20, no. 2 (1999).

<sup>24</sup> According to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment (CEFR), the intermediate level is gauged between the B1 to B2 level (See Appendix V).

<sup>25</sup> Council of Europe, *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment Companion Volume with New Descriptors* (Language Policy Programme/Education Policy Division/Education Department/Council of Europe, 2018), 28.



to encompass aspects relevant to language education across the curriculum.<sup>26</sup> Several of the developments addressed in the extended version of the scale, such as considering the user/learner as a social agent, co-constructing meaning in interaction (including online interaction), and expanding upon the notions of mediation and plurilingual/pluricultural competences, are central to the present investigation. In this context, it is important to highlight the value of the CEFR to this study and, more broadly speaking, its growing contribution to language education in the Irish context. As such, the role and contribution of the CEFR will be discussed further and elaborated upon, where appropriate, in the thesis.

A recent systematic review on *Classroom Interventions and Foreign Language Anxiety*, carried out by Toyama and Yamazaki (2021), also found that FLA intervention measures are ‘more common in higher education institutions’ than in primary or secondary schools.<sup>27</sup> As regards the aims of this investigation, a review of language programmes available in the Irish third-level context was conducted. It was observed that language electives are available to study as part of performance-based programmes (See Appendix Q); however, they are not a core component of the courses on offer and are not studied within the context of a performance praxis. They are treated as separate entities. Thus, the French Production and Performance Module available at MIC is unique to the Irish context in that it provides an exciting opportunity to explore the efficacy of cross-disciplinary collaboration and, further, to investigate its impact on the L2 acquisition process.

Furthermore, Ireland’s current goals for language education provide the basis for a rich and contemporary case study on language learning. In this regard, it is important to note that developments in the Irish linguistic and educational landscape have taken place on a national level, as illustrated by the publication of *Languages Connect: Ireland’s Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026*, and on an international level, as evidenced by the impact of Brexit on the status of the English language in Ireland and the end of the derogation of the status of the Irish language in the European Union. Historically, Ireland’s native language *Gaeilge* and, more specifically, the learning of this language has added another layer of complexity to the Irish linguistic and cultural landscape.

Ireland is regarded as a bilingual state. As per Article VIII of the *Constitution of Ireland 1937 (Bunreacht na hÉireann)*, the Irish language continues to have constitutional status as the

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>27</sup> Michiko Toyama and Yoshitaka Yamazaki, “Classroom Interventions and Foreign Language Anxiety: A Systematic Review with Narrative Approach,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 12, no. 614184 (2021): 4.

first official language in the Republic of Ireland. Nevertheless, English remains the primary language for the vast majority of the population on the island of Ireland, which has led to debate about Ireland's bilingual situation. Despite Ireland's evolving relationship with language and language learning, there is at present a dearth of research and lack of awareness on L2 acquisition that is specific to the Irish context concerning the acquisition of a foreign language (i.e., in the context of the present study a language other than English or *Gaeilge*).<sup>28</sup> Perceptions of language learners in the Irish context remain anecdotal and media discourse, for example, suggests that Ireland's poor performance in language learning stems from an inherent lack of ability:

Could do better: Ireland's poor marks for foreign languages.  
**(RTÉ 2018)**

Language Lazy: Why are the Irish so bad at mastering a second language?  
**(College Tribune 2016)**

Irish worst in EU for foreign languages.  
**(Business World 2014)**

Young people in the Republic have one of the worst records in Europe when it comes to speaking continental languages, a new report has found.  
**(The Irish Times 2002)**

Everybody here studies two languages, Irish and English, so in learning a foreign language we're learning a third language. Theoretically, we should be better off, but we're not.  
**(The Irish Times 2001)**<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> However, it is important to note that many studies have been carried out on the Irish language in the Irish context. For example, see Claire M. Dunne, *Learning and Teaching Irish in English-Medium Primary Schools Executive Summary for Parts 1 and 2* (Dublin: NCCA, 2020); Claire M. Dunne, "Primary teachers' experiences in preparing to teach Irish: Views on promoting the language and language proficiency," *Studies in Self-Access Learning Journal* 10, no. 1 (2019): 21-43; Ann Devitt et al., "An maith leat an Ghaeilge? An analysis of variation in primary pupil attitudes to Irish in the growing up in Ireland study," *Bilingual Education and Bilingualism* 21, no. 1 (2018): 105-117; Anna Slatinská and Jana Pecníková, "The Role of Irish Language Teaching: Cultural Identity Formation or Language Revitalization?," *European Journal of Contemporary Education* 6, no. 2 (2017): 317-327; Bernadette O' Rourke, "Whose Language Is It? Struggles for Language Ownership in an Irish Language Classroom," *Journal of Language, Identity & Education* 10, no. 5 (2011): 327-345.

<sup>29</sup> Jennifer Bruen, "Could do better: Ireland's poor marks for foreign languages," *RTÉ*, August 28, 2018, accessed January 19, 2021, <https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2018/0827/987826-ireland-foreign-languages-schools-universities-business/>; Eleanor Brooks, "Language Lazy: Why Are the Irish So Bad at Mastering a Second Language?," *College Tribune*, November 18, 2016, accessed January 22, 2021, <https://collegetribune.ie/language-lazy-irish-bad-mastering-second-language/>; Business World, "Irish worst in EU for foreign languages," *Business World* (Economy), September 25, 2014, accessed January 24, 2021, <https://www.businessworld.ie/economy/Irish-worst-in-EU-for-foreign-languages-5424.html>; Emmet Oliver, "Irish students are weak at languages, report finds," *The Irish Times*, September 27, 2002, accessed February 2, 2021, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/irish-students-are-weak-at-languages-report-finds-1.1096734>; The Irish Times, "Why we need a modern approach to languages," *The Irish Times* (Education), November 27, 2001, accessed February 7, 2021, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/why-we-need-a-modern-approach-to-languages-1.339372>

It is stated in *Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026* that significant attitudinal and systemic change will be necessary in order for Ireland to transcend in the global arena with respect to language learning. From a scientific perspective, it will be necessary to move beyond anecdotal evidence in order to achieve these aims and develop a nuanced understanding of the psychological, affective, pedagogical, and social dynamics that surround language acquisition in the Irish context. To facilitate and evolve the knowledge required to develop this refined understanding, language anxiety was chosen as the *point de départ* for this investigation, as it has never been explored in the Irish context and provides valuable and holistic insight into the various dimensions of the L2 acquisition process.

It is important to acknowledge that the present investigation was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 12, 2020, Ireland, like many other countries in the world, went into a nationwide lockdown. In an effort to contain the virus, the Irish government shut down primary, secondary, and tertiary education institutions, childcare facilities, cultural institutions, pubs, restaurants, nightclubs, non-essential shops, and imposed travel restrictions.<sup>30</sup> While these emergency measures were imperative in order to contain the spread of the virus, it led to worldwide disruption, perhaps nowhere more so than in the education sector. Globally, approximately 1.37 billion learners, across the different education sectors, were required to transition to distance education which was facilitated through the use of different forms of information and communications technologies (ICT).<sup>31</sup>

While the chief focus of this study is to explore the impact of language anxiety on the L2 acquisition process in the Irish third-level context and evaluate the potential of performative pedagogy in alleviating this negative affective response, the paradigm shift in delivering education, as a result of the pandemic, left a marked impression on the investigation. During this period of uncertainty, technology became a lifeline for the study in that it facilitated the research process and permitted the performance-based intervention to take place. Yet it also impacted upon the dynamic of the study, changing its direction from a 'physical study' that would have taken place on the MIC campus to a 'remote study' that occurred online, owing to

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<sup>30</sup> RTÉ, "Timeline: Six months of Covid-19: Key developments since the novel coronavirus emerged six months ago, setting out on a global rampage which has left more than half a million people dead," *RTÉ*, July 1, 2020, accessed October 15, 2022, <https://www.rte.ie/news/newslens/2020/0701/1150824-coronavirus/>

<sup>31</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), "1.37 billion students now home as COVID-19 school closures expand, ministers scale up multimedia approaches to ensure learning continuity," *UNESCO*, March 23, 2020, accessed April 30, 2022, <https://en.unesco.org/news/137-billion-students-now-home-covid-19-school-closures-expand-ministers-scale-multimedia>

survey software, video conferencing software, and observations of the online teaching environment.

Furthermore, this paradigm shift raised new questions in the context of the present investigation, which were not integral to the original research design process. Technology became an important independent variable in the investigation and, thus, its role had to be contemplated in terms of its potential to impact upon students' levels of language anxiety (i.e., the dependent variable). The extent of its applicability in and suitability for the realisation of the performance-based intervention also had to be considered in further detail. However, this unanticipated obstacle also presented an opportunity to evaluate and gain important new insights into intersections between performance-based education, innovative pedagogical practices, technology, and language learning. The educational consequences of COVID-19, which initially appeared to be a barrier to the successful realisation of this investigation, in fact gave it a newfound and timely focus. It enabled the present study to consider how educational and learning requirements, in light of COVID-19, are transforming the manner in which technology is being used in the realm of drama/theatre education and also foreign language education. Accordingly, within this thesis, the contribution of technology is highlighted and, where appropriate, the manner in which it impacted upon the investigation is noted.

### ***Personal Motivation and Positionality of the Researcher***

Although the present investigation is not an ethnographic study, it is important to acknowledge that my insider position as a researcher is unique in that I have experienced the first-hand effects of the psychological phenomenon and, further, have taken part in the performance-based intervention, under investigation. During my undergraduate studies, I received my first exposure to the two key concepts that form the basis of this investigation: language anxiety and performative pedagogy. I feel that this period was exceptionally formative in my academic career and played a crucial role in my desire to enter the world of language teaching and embark on my PhD research. As acclaimed American philosopher and educational reformer, John Dewey, asserts: 'We do not learn from an experience ... we learn from reflecting on an experience.'<sup>32</sup> The reflection I engaged in as a student and educator has inspired me to carry out this investigation; however, as an ethical researcher, I have upheld the

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<sup>32</sup> John Dewey, *Art as Experience (1934)* (London: Berkley Publishing Group, 2005), 79.

emotional, subjective, and reflective distance necessary in order to conduct this investigation and interpret the research findings in an unbiased manner. The conclusions reached and recommendations presented as part of this study have been established inductively through the integrated literature review that forms the core of this thesis, the theoretical frameworks explored, and the unique data gathered throughout the course of the research process.

In 2017, I completed a Bachelor of Arts Degree (Hons) in French Studies and Psychology at MIC, Limerick. It was during this time that I first began to engage in reflective inquiry about and became critical of my performance in the French language, something I had rarely done at secondary school. When I entered the final year of my studies, I was required to undertake my undergraduate dissertation in psychology. I tried to find a way that I could integrate language into my research. This is where I first stumbled upon Horwitz et al.'s (1986) seminal article. This discovery was a eureka moment for two principal reasons. Firstly, I realised that L2 acquisition was a distinctly psychological and affective process, and not simply a matter of learning new vocabulary or grammar points and, secondly, I unraveled that the self-critical thoughts I had about my language performance arose from language anxiety.

The timing of my undergraduate research coincided with the implementation of a newly developed final year French Studies module at MIC, entitled French Production and Performance (FR4777). The module, designed by the Head of the Department of French Studies, Dr. Loïc Guyon, was centered on French theatre and for the final assessment our class was required to perform a selection of scenes from a 19<sup>th</sup>-century vaudeville, called *Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné, ou le Canon d'alarme* (1829).<sup>33</sup> Through live performance, the module sought to develop our communication and pronunciation skills in the French language, while also permitting us to build our knowledge of vocabulary and improve our translation skills. Prior to this experience, I had never taken part in a performance, apart from the customary primary school Christmas concert – needless to say, I was not a born performer! Yet, I was never skeptical about the module, nor did I question the different exercises and training we engaged in to foster our linguistic and performance abilities. On the contrary, I was intrigued by and engrossed in the process. Little did I know, I was in fact engaging with performative pedagogy. During this module, I noted a positive shift in my affective reaction to the language acquisition process. My self-doubt waned as I immersed myself in the performance and rehearsals with my classmates, who now were my co-actors; yet, at that time,

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<sup>33</sup> Antoine Jean Baptiste and Vanderburch Simonnin, *Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné, ou le Canon d'alarme* (Paris: Quoy, 1829).

I never contemplated why that was the case.

I began my postgraduate research journey by undertaking a Masters by Research in French Studies, in 2017, at MIC. It was during this time that I first became involved in language teaching. My role in and perspective of the language learning process quickly transitioned from student to teacher. As I furthered my teaching experience, I could not help but take note of students' reactions to the language learning process. Indicators of FLA became increasingly apparent. For example, some students engaged in avoidance behaviour, not wanting to participate even when it was an intimate tutorial group. Others, when called upon, forgot things that we had done minutes previous, hesitating or fumbling for words. In the lead up to oral exams, I would hear students chat amongst themselves and murmur things such as: "Oh god, I'll have to speak French for a whole ten minutes!"; "I hope they don't ask me about that"; "I am dreading it!" I then began to think to myself, how or in what ways could language anxiety be reduced or alleviated in order to make the language acquisition process less *pénible* for the students.

As I began to research possible language anxiety intervention measures, I became aware of the growing use of performance-based teaching methodologies in language education. Immediately, the French Production and Performance Module I had taken part in came to mind. I engaged with the work of several key scholars who advocate the use of and highlight the benefits of performance in language education. The work of Manfred Schewe, Dorothy Lichtblau, and Kathleen Gallagher was exceptionally enlightening in this regard. When preparing the proposal for my doctoral research, I wanted my study to extend beyond the bounds of a conventional study on language anxiety, that is to say, one which solely focuses on the causes or consequences of anxiety. Instead, I wanted to investigate and provide a possible solution that could potentially be integrated into language programmes in the future. Ultimately, I decided to employ an innovative performance-based module that used theatre to teach the French language as the lens through which I would achieve this goal. As theatre is both a constructivist and an experiential art form, it permits language students to engage 'with the simulation of real, authentic, and meaningful language interaction environments', imperative for the acquisition of an L2 and, further, is attuned to the affective, emotional, and cognitive dimensions of language learning.<sup>34</sup>

Notwithstanding my first-hand experience of and insider status within the educational

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<sup>34</sup> Evelyn Gualdron and Edna Castillo, "Theater for Language Teaching and Learning: The E Theater, a Holistic Methodology," *Issues in Teachers' Professional Development* 20, no. 2 (2018): 212.

context under investigation, it is important to note that when undertaking the study, I remained above all, a pragmatist. I was aware that there probably would not be a one-size-fits-all solution to FLA which would address every student; however, from a pedagogical perspective, this investigation would be extremely valuable as it would serve as a ‘litmus test’ or a ‘steppingstone’ to advance knowledge of L2 acquisition in the Irish third-level context. It would permit me to identify the elements of the pedagogical intervention that worked well (i.e., those that reduced or alleviated anxiety) and those that did not have the same effect or, perhaps, even those that triggered or intensified students’ negative affective response and, thus, provide evidence-based recommendations for future research.

### ***Research Questions and Research Design Process***

As noted previously, this thesis has two central research aims. Firstly, it seeks to investigate the impact of the psychological phenomenon of language anxiety in the Irish third-level context and, secondly, it endeavours to explore the potential of a performance-based praxis in alleviating this anxiety. Based upon these aims, this investigation developed two central research questions (CRQ) which divided the study into two principal stages:

**(CRQ) Stage I** – To what extent do final year students of French in the Irish third-level context experience foreign language anxiety, and what are the principal factors that trigger this reaction?

**(CRQ) Stage II** – To what extent, when implemented, does performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, lower or alleviate students’ foreign language anxiety levels?

In order to respond to these CRQs and shed further light on students’ language learning experiences in the Irish third-level context, several secondary research questions were formulated and embedded in the study during the research design process. Five key sub-questions were established to account for differences in students’ language learning histories and also to interpret students’ perceptions of the language learning process in the context of shifts and developments within the wider Irish educational context:

1. How confident do final year students of French feel in the following four language skills (i.e., as per the CEFR: reading, writing, listening, and speaking)?<sup>35</sup>
2. What are student perceptions of the educator in the language learning process?
3. What impact does technology have on the French language learning experience (with specific reference to the paradigm shift to online education during the COVID-19 pandemic)?
4. Do past language learning experiences of the Irish language influence students' perspectives on subsequent language learning experiences?<sup>36</sup>
5. What do language students consider to be the most effective way/s to learn French?

A comprehensive overview of the research methodology is provided in Chapter Six; however, with a view to establish a general outline of the research, this section describes the methodological position adopted for the present investigation which influenced key decisions within the research process. In order to respond to the pedagogically motivated research questions that frame this study, the investigator engaged in applied research. From an educational perspective, applied research seeks to move beyond theory to inform practice and 'ameliorate problems in education through collecting and analyzing data that directly inform organizational and institutional decision making'.<sup>37</sup> In this context, a multiple research design consisting of exploratory and descriptive research design principles was employed in this study, firstly, based upon the lack of insight that currently exists on language anxiety in the Irish context, and also due to the absence of a concrete model or framework that explicates how language anxiety may be alleviated. The present investigation took the form of a single pre-post case study. The pre-post case study research method offered an effective way to integrate

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<sup>35</sup> As noted earlier, the Council of Europe has produced an extended version of the CEFR scale (See Appendix V). The revised and extended version of the CEFR includes several other skills and competencies in language education such as considering the user/learner as a social agent, co-constructing meaning in interaction (including online interaction), and expanding upon the notions of mediation and plurilingual/pluricultural competences. For the first stage of the case study, the four fundamental skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) are concentrated upon in particular as these have been the key focus of the learners' language learning experience prior to the performance-based intervention. However, in the second stage of the case study, reference is also made to the new illustrative descriptors.

<sup>36</sup> As highlighted by Britta Jung (2020), in her work *The impact and experience of foreign languages in the context of Erasmus+ in all education sectors in Ireland*, 'the compulsory nature of Irish language education, marks many students' first formal experience with language learning and has – at times – had the detrimental effect of increasing not only a disinterest in the subject at hand, but also other languages, laying the foundation for the perceived difficulty of learning languages in general' (p. 19). Given the context of the present investigation, it is therefore important to analyse the role of *Gaeilge* in subsequent foreign language learning experiences. Views on and attitudes towards the Irish language will be explored further in chapter 4.

<sup>37</sup> Bruce B. Frey, *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Educational Research, Measurement, and Evaluation* (California: Sage Publications, 2018), 9.



a mixed methods research approach. As previously mentioned, the study was carried out in two distinct stages, which permitted a progressive and phased based approach to data collection and analysis. This presented a productive way to build on the findings of the previous stage while also highlighting issues that required further detailed investigation.

The study's research design had a significant impact on various interrelated methodological decisions including methods employed, data collection procedures, and data analysis, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Six. Significantly, these methodological decisions were also shaped by the research philosophy and research paradigm adopted in the present study. In the context of the present investigation, the research paradigm and philosophy were underpinned by grounded theory principles. Developed, in 1967, by sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, grounded theory has become a widely used and well-known methodology in educational research. This study specifically adopted an inductive approach drawing on interpretivist grounded theory philosophy.

Grounded theory methodology incorporates 'both a method of inquiry and a resultant product of that inquiry'.<sup>38</sup> Unlike traditional hypothesis testing that is derived from existing theory, within the grounded theory framework, a researcher 'begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data'.<sup>39</sup> This methodological approach is fast becoming a key component of research in the field of SLA because it serves both a theoretical and practical purpose. In their informative article, *Grounded Theory Methodology in Second Language Learning Research*, Rashid et al. (2016) support the implementation and highlight the advantages of using grounded theory methodology in the field of SLA in order to 'produce up to date substantive theories of second language learning'.<sup>40</sup> They argue that the application of grounded theory not only enriches literature in the field but also assists in developing 'theories that are understandable to teachers and learners', thus, permitting them to associate theory and practice.<sup>41</sup> Further, they assert that theories developed using grounded theory principles may also serve a progressive function 'in shaping the national policy relevant to second language learning and teaching'.<sup>42</sup> Grounded theory methodology, therefore, functions on both a

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<sup>38</sup> Ylona Chun Tie, Melanie Birks, and Karen Francis, "Grounded Theory Research: A Design Framework for Novice Researchers," *Sage Open Medicine* 7 (2019): 3.

<sup>39</sup> Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory* (California: Sage Publications, 1998), 12.

<sup>40</sup> Radzuwan Ab Rashid et al., "Grounded Theory Methodology in Second Language Learning Research," *Man In India* 96, no. 11 (2016): 4681.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 4682.

theoretical and practical level and permits this investigation to make informed judgements and recommendations based upon a holistic evidence-based assessment of the key variables that shape the framework of this investigation.

### *Organisation of Thesis*

In order to accurately historicise, problematise, and conceptualise the parameters under investigation, the corpus that informs this interdisciplinary investigation has been embedded and integrated throughout eight chapters, which form the core of the thesis. The introduction provides a general background to the study and, thus, establishes the rationale which inspired the present investigation. It also presents the aims of the study and, thereby, identifies the main research questions and embedded research questions which guided and framed the study. Within this section, readers are also introduced to key features of the methodological approach adopted during this exploratory investigation.

Chapter One historicises the language learning process and, thus, draws attention to key terminology and concepts embedded in SLA discourse, highlights significant developments that have characterised its evolution, and details the manner in which the ‘affective turn’ has been perceived and researched in the field. Chapter Two problematises the divarication and traces the evolution of L2 acquisition theory, while shedding light upon its contribution to language education. Chapter Three then moves on to analyse the literature on language anxiety and provide insight into cognitive, psychological, and emotional complexities of the L2 acquisition process. Chapter Four examines the context in which the present study is situated, by exploring significant developments in the Irish linguistic and educational landscape. Chapter Five then investigates theoretical considerations and practical applications of performative pedagogy in the context of language education. In doing so, it pays particular attention to the lived experience of theatre in the shaping of a self that has the capacity to represent, feel, create, and contemplate.

Chapter Six then moves on to delineate the research methodology adopted in the present investigation. Chapter Seven presents the first stage of the case study, including the research instruments, procedures, analyses, and findings. Chapter Eight then presents the second stage of the case study. Firstly, it provides a detailed overview of the French Production and Performance Module that formed the basis of the investigation and, subsequently, describes the instruments and procedures employed, analyses conducted, and the research findings that

emerged from the exploration. The conclusion reflects upon the research presented in the thesis and brings the investigation to a close. It provides a number of recommendations and also addresses possible avenues for future research.

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **HOW A LANGUAGE IS LEARNED: LOCATING THE RESEARCH**

## Chapter One

### How a Language is Learned: Locating the Research

#### 1.0 Introduction

Although the affective dimension of the language acquisition process and the complex psychological phenomenon of FLA constitute the core of this study, they cannot be explored in depth without firstly understanding how an L2 is acquired and produced. This indispensable knowledge is firmly located in the field of SLA – a scientific discipline that investigates both ‘individuals and groups who are learning a language subsequent to learning their first and [...] the process of learning that language’.<sup>43</sup> Although the field is a sub-discipline of applied linguistics, it has also received considerable critical attention from several other disciplines, including psychology, sociology, and education. The increasingly interdisciplinary nature of the field has seen the development of several theories and frameworks, grounded in psychological, linguistic, and interactionist schools of thought, which will be elucidated in Chapter Two. Although not exhaustive, this chapter historicises the language learning process and, thus, draws attention to key terminology and concepts embedded in SLA discourse, highlights significant developments that have characterised its evolution, and details the manner in which the ‘affective turn’ has been perceived and researched in the field.

#### 1.1 A Brief Contextual Overview of the Field of Second Language Acquisition

Renowned American theoretical linguist Noam Chomsky, widely recognised as the father of modern linguistics, asserts that when we study the human language faculty, ‘we are approaching what some might call the human essence, the distinctive qualities of mind that are so far as we know, unique to man’.<sup>44</sup> The language faculty, also specified as the language module, is a term that derived from the work of Chomsky on child language acquisition and refers to an innate ‘cognitive system [located in the brain] that supports the acquisition and use of certain languages’.<sup>45</sup> The language faculty is unique to humankind in that no other species

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<sup>43</sup> Muriel Saville-Troike, *Introducing Second Language Acquisition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 2.

<sup>44</sup> Noam Chomsky, *Language and Mind*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 88.

<sup>45</sup> Paul Pietroski and Stephen Crain, “The Language Faculty,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Cognitive Science*, eds. Eric Margolis, Richard Samuels, and Stephen Stich (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 361.

has the ability to produce a symbolic system of language that associates both form and meaning.<sup>46</sup>

In her informative work, *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*, Lourdes Ortega (2009) outlines three main approaches that have been adopted in the language sciences in order to delineate the functioning and inner workings of the language faculty: (1) The Descriptive Approach, (2) The Evolutionary Approach, and (3) The Developmental Approach.<sup>47</sup> The descriptive line of inquiry into the language faculty, principally associated with the scientific field of linguistics, undertakes research in order to provide adequate descriptions of human language universals and linguistic manifestations.<sup>48</sup> The evolutionary line of inquiry, adopted by the interdisciplinary field of cognitive science, endeavours to explain the human language faculty by tracing the phylogenesis of language evolution, that is to say, a species' capacity to 'engage with language abilities'.<sup>49</sup> Finally, the developmental line of inquiry examines the ontogenesis of language, that is how humans make meaning through language (See Figure 1.1).<sup>50</sup> Significantly, through exploring the ontology of language, we may also discover the processes through which humans acquire and learn to use language.<sup>51</sup> Thus, it is within this 'realm' that the process of language acquisition may be further elucidated.

The term language acquisition, used interchangeably with the term language development, is employed in the literature to define the process through which humans acquire and learn to use language. Described as 'a human endeavour par excellence', language acquisition requires learners to develop fundamental components of language including phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics.<sup>52</sup> Researchers have investigated the process of language acquisition based on three principal avenues of research: (1) Child

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<sup>46</sup> Lourdes Ortega, *Understanding Second Language Acquisition* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

<sup>47</sup> The language sciences is a transdisciplinary field of research dedicated to the study of language.

<sup>48</sup> The term linguistic universal is generally understood to mean a property or characteristic that all languages share (e.g., all languages comprise nouns and verbs). Peter Siemund, *Linguistic Universals and Language Variation* (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011).

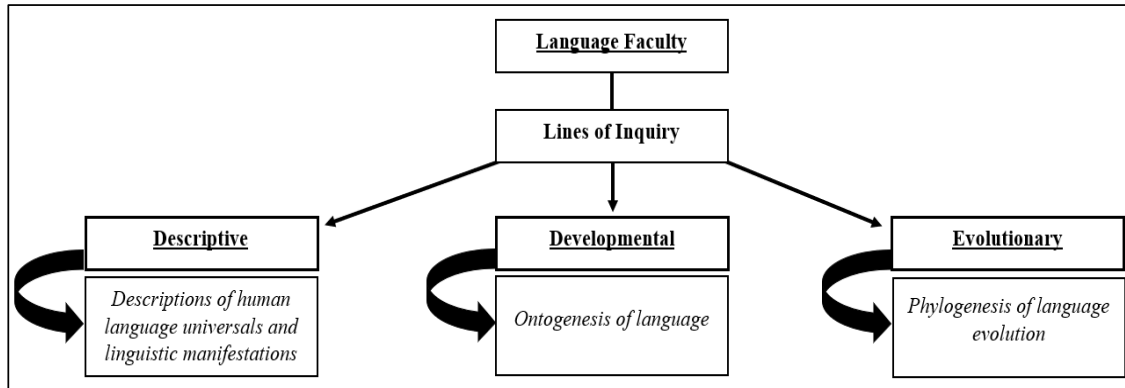
<sup>49</sup> Such capacities include universal grammar. This ability develops over the course of thousands of years. Luke Strongman, "Language Evolution, Acquisition, Adaptation and Change," in *Sociolinguistics - Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. Jiang Xiaoming (Croatia: Intech, 2017), 22.

<sup>50</sup> The ontogeny of language explores 'when and how language acquisition begins'. Laura Ann Pettito, "On the Ontogenetic Requirements for Early Language Acquisition," in *Developmental Neurocognition: Speech and Face Processing in the First Year of Life*, eds. Bénédicte de Boysson-Bardies et al. (Netherlands: Springer, 1993), 365.

<sup>51</sup> Ortega, *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*.

<sup>52</sup> Ping Li and Yasuhiro Shirai, *The Acquisition of Lexical and Grammatical Aspect* (Berlin: De Gruyter Mouton, 2011), 263.

Language Acquisition (i.e., L1 acquisition), (2) Second language acquisition (i.e., L2 acquisition), and (3) Bilingual/Multilingual Acquisition.<sup>53</sup>



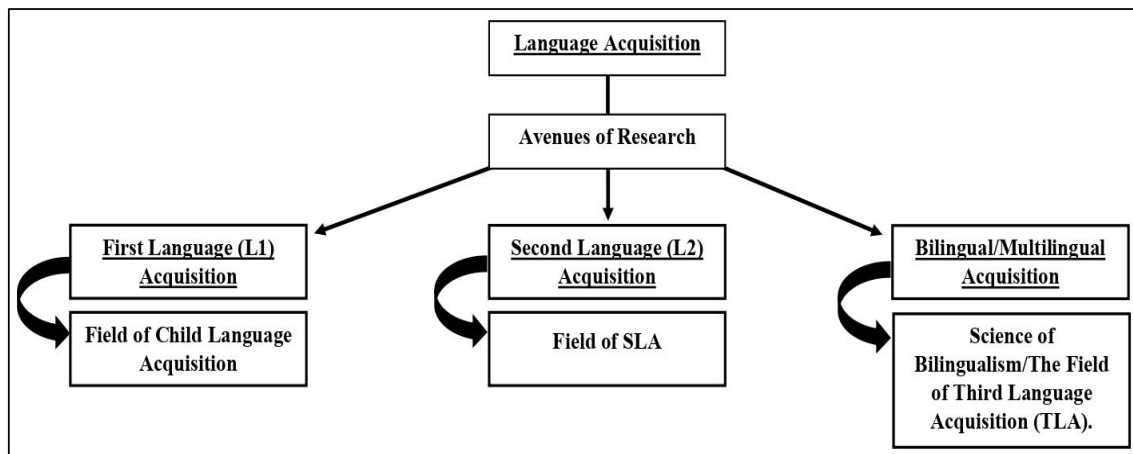
**Figure 1.1 Lines of Inquiry into the Language Faculty.** This figure illustrates the three principal lines of inquiry into the language faculty. Within the framework of the present study, emphasis has been placed on the developmental line of inquiry.

L1 acquisition, or monolingual language acquisition, refers to the process through which children learn their first language/s from birth. It is important to note here that there may be more than one language being acquired during this process. It has been principally investigated by the field of child language acquisition, or the field of third language acquisition, in the case of bilingual/multilingual acquisition (See Figure 1.2). A child acquires their L1 (monolingual acquisition) or L1s (bilingual/multilingual acquisition) during the formative years of life (i.e., between 0 and 8 years old) and develops language subconsciously as they mature among and engage with people who speak the language/s.<sup>54</sup> In the literature pertaining to language development in children, an established collection of terms and abbreviations has come to be used to characterise the subconscious process through which children acquire

<sup>53</sup> Lova Ganji, Kondiparthi Srivalli, and Kagitapu Dasaradhi, “First Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning,” *International Journal of English Language Literature in Humanities* 5, no. 4 (2017). It is important to note that in the field of linguistics bilingual/multilingual acquisition is compared and contrasted in terms of typical and atypical acquisition. For further information, see for example the work of Eva Aguilar-Mediavilla et al., “Introduction to Language Development in Children: Description to Detect and Prevent Language Difficulties,” *Children-Basel* 9, no. 3 (2022): 1-7; Irina Potapova and Sonja L. Pruitt-Lord, “Towards understanding the bilingual profile in typical and atypical language development: A tutorial,” *International Journal of Speech-Language Pathology* 22, no. 1 (2020): 106-116; Maria Adelaida Restrepo, “The Case for Bilingual Intervention for Typical and Atypical Language Learners,” *Perspectives on Communication Disorders and Sciences in Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Populations* 12, no. 2 (2005): 13-17.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

language.<sup>55</sup> This includes first language, native language, primary language, mother tongue (MT), and L1 acquisition (where L1 signifies ‘language one’).<sup>56</sup> This terminology is employed synonymously among researchers to refer to the first language or languages that a child acquires. Consistent with this practice, where the present investigation makes reference to child language acquisition, it uses these terms interchangeably.



**Figure 1.2 Avenues of Research into Language Acquisition.** This figure illustrates the three principal avenues of research into language acquisition and the respective fields of research that study them.

As outlined earlier, the process of L2 acquisition refers to the ‘learning of a non-native language after the first language [...] has been learned’.<sup>57</sup> In the interest of clarity, it should be noted that in the context of bilingual and multilingual acquisition, the process of L2 acquisition involves the learning of a non-native language after the first *languages* have been acquired. While there is general agreement about the use of terminology in the field of child language acquisition, there is some debate within the SLA community about what terminology should be applied to specify the additional language/s learned after the L1 (or L1s) have been consolidated (i.e., second language vs. foreign language). Further, another related issue is whether subsequent language is *acquired* or *learned*. In order to shed light upon the manner in

<sup>55</sup> This established set of terms may be employed as nouns (e.g., ‘first language’, ‘primary language’) or used as adjectives (e.g., ‘first language acquisition’, ‘primary language development’).

<sup>56</sup> Saville-Troike, *Introducing Second Language Acquisition*.

<sup>57</sup> Ruiqin Miao, “Second Language Acquisition: An Introduction,” in *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, ed. James D. Wright (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2015), 360.



which this key terminology is understood and employed in the present study, a necessary first step is to examine some contextual definitions proposed in the literature.

There is often a basic dichotomous distinction drawn between an L2 and a foreign language in the SLA literature. While an L2 is considered to be ‘a non-native language to which the learner has natural exposure’<sup>58</sup> (e.g., learning of the English language by immigrant communities in the USA), a foreign language has come to refer to a language that is not widely adopted in the learner’s primary social environment. In contrast to an L2, a foreign language is employed for cross-cultural communication (e.g., travelling, business communication), or learned in an educational setting as an academic requirement; however, it has ‘no immediate or necessary practical application’.<sup>59</sup>

According to this dichotomous view, a foreign language, as opposed to an L2, is neither used as a widespread medium of communication in a country, nor is it a primary language employed by a large part of the population in that country. However, Ortega (2009) asserts that this contextual distinction indicates ‘more of an analytical abstraction made within a disciplinary tradition and less of a black-and-white reality’ and is frequently ‘obliterated in SLA studies’<sup>60</sup>:

It is important to realize that in SLA the term ‘second’ (or ‘L2’) is often used to mean ‘either a second or foreign language’ and often ‘both’. This is because, for certain research questions and research programmes, it may be useful to temporarily suspend the contextual distinction, for the sake of the analysis at hand.<sup>61</sup>

As highlighted by Ortega, terminological distinction between an L2 and foreign language is often disregarded by researchers in the interest of the research analysis. This has become a widespread practice among many L2 acquisition researchers. For example, distinguished linguists Rod Ellis, Diane Larsen-Freeman, Susan Gass, and psycholinguist Michael Long employ the aforementioned terminology as catch all terms based upon the objectives of their investigation. Consistent with the practice of the vast majority of L2 acquisition researchers, this thesis adopts a common terminology and does not discriminate between the terms presented above. The terms second language, foreign language, target

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<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 361.

<sup>59</sup> Saville-Troike, *Introducing Second Language Acquisition*, 4.

<sup>60</sup> Ortega, *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*, 5.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 6.

language, and the abbreviation L2 (where L2 signifies ‘language two’)<sup>62</sup> are used interchangeably and as umbrella terms throughout this study to refer to any non-native language learned subsequent to the L1 (or L1s) that is not widely used in the learner’s immediate social context (i.e., English and Irish in this investigation), and to which they do not have natural exposure (e.g., The use of French among the Irish population in a monolingual household). Furthermore, when these terms are employed as adjectives, for instance in the case of ‘foreign language anxiety’, ‘L2 learner’, or ‘target language group’, they retain the aforementioned specification.

Turning now to the terms *acquisition* and *learning*, a comparable distinction may be observed. In the field of SLA, acquisition has come to refer to a contextual understanding of an L2, while learning pertains to having knowledge of an L2. Put simply, acquisition signifies the process of ‘picking up’ an L2 and normally takes place in a natural setting, while learning is generally understood to mean ‘knowing about’ an L2 and occurs in a formal context.<sup>63</sup> Some researchers support a dichotomous view of language development, arguing that only children can acquire and adults can learn (e.g., Han and Selinker 2005; DeKeyser 2000; Krashen 1982), while others affirm that language develops through an acquisition-learning continuum (e.g., Brown 2000), insisting upon the importance of the acquisition process for the adult learner.

Furthermore, from an emergentist perspective, it is underscored that language is best understood as a complex and dynamic system.<sup>64</sup> This system, as Elizabeth Bates and Brian MacWhinney (1988) highlight, is a ‘new machine built out of old parts’, which is composed of physiological elements, perception, pragmatics, social interaction, processing memory, working memory, input properties, and learning mechanisms.<sup>65</sup> In this context, it is argued that the process of language acquisition cannot be explained in terms of isolated causes and, rather,

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<sup>62</sup> An L2 refers to any language or languages acquired after the L1 (or L1s). It may therefore denote a third, fifth, or even a twentieth language (e.g., in the case of a hyperpolyglot). A hyperpolyglot can be distinguished from a multilingual speaker on the grounds of the exceptional number of languages that they can accumulate. While five languages appears to be ‘the normative number of languages spoken in multilingual communities, a repertoire of six or more languages represents an exceptional level of human performance’ in the case of a hyperpolyglot. Michael Erard, “Insights from hyperpolyglots,” in *Language Aptitude: Advancing Theory, Testing, Research, and Practice*, eds. Zhisheng Wen, Peter Skehan, Adriana Biedroń, Shaofeng Li, and Richard Sparks (New York: Routledge, 2019), 154.

<sup>63</sup> Stephen Krashen, *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition* (Oxford: Pergamon, 1982), 10.

<sup>64</sup> Much linguistic research has been conducted in the philosophical and scientific tradition known as emergentism. Linguistic emergentism maintains that ‘the phenomena of language are best explained by reference to more basic non-linguistic (i.e., “non-grammatical”) factors and their interaction.’ William O’ Grady, ‘Emergentism,’ in *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the Language Sciences*, ed. Patrick Hogan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010), 274-275.

<sup>65</sup> Elizabeth Bates and Brian MacWhinney, “What is Functionalism?” *Papers and Reports on Child Language Development* 27 (1988): 147.

as MacWhinney et al. (2022) clarify ‘arises from a myriad of social, cognitive, and biological forces competing across diverse timescales and within many processes’.<sup>66</sup> Emergentist studies on the different components of language acquisition, such as phonology, lexicon, and grammar, have employed various research methodologies including ‘corpus analysis, experimentation, neuroimaging, and computational modeling’ in order to examine language structures and the manner in which they evolve and progress ‘across the timescales of processing, development, and language change.’<sup>67</sup> In this context, it is suggested that cognition is significantly informed and influenced by the ‘interaction between organism and environment’ and rejects the innateness of linguistic representations such as those supported by Chomsky (e.g., UG and LAD) in his innatist theory.<sup>68</sup> The work of linguist William O’ Grady sheds further light upon the manner in which the emergentist tradition elucidates the process of language development. He clarifies that linguistic development from an emergentist perspective may be explained through ‘the operation of simple learning mechanisms (essentially, inductive generalization) that extract statistical regularities from experience’, which have been described by different researchers (e.g., Tomasello 2003; Ellis 2002; Goldberg 1999) as local associations, memorised chunks, constructions, and computational routines.<sup>69</sup>

At present, there are still many contradictory accounts within the literature on the processes accounting for the acquisition and learning of an L2. Fillmore (1989), for example, suggests that some components of language usage are conscious during the initial stages of L2 development, but eventually become subconscious.<sup>70</sup> In contrast, Brown (2000), supports the position that both acquisition and learning are required to develop strong L2 communicative competence.<sup>71</sup> What further complicates matters is that the terms are sometimes used interchangeably in the SLA literature. In the context of the present investigation, and unless otherwise stated, the terms L2 acquisition and L2 learning are employed and interpreted in consonance with the nuanced analysis proposed by Eddy (2011), which states that:

Acquisition might be considered [...] on a higher level in the lexicological hierarchy, as the meaning incorporates both unconscious and conscious processes, while learning is considered to refer to the latter only [...] Learning a foreign language means studying, in

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<sup>66</sup> Brian MacWhinney et al., “Editorial: Emergentist Approaches to Language,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 12, no. 833160 (2022): 4.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>68</sup> Kevin R. Gregg, “The State of Emergentism in Second Language Acquisition,” *Second language Research* 19, no. 2 (2003): 95.

<sup>69</sup> O’ Grady, “Emergentism,” 275.

<sup>70</sup> Lily Fillmore, “Teachability and second language acquisition,” in *The Teachability of Language*, ed. R. L. Schiefelbusch and M. L. Rice (New York: Paul H. Brooks Publishing, 1989).

<sup>71</sup> Douglas Brown, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (New York: Longman, 2000).

a conscious and active way, how it works, what the rules and principles are, as well trying to act in the way these predetermine its correct and effective use to be. Acquiring a foreign language not only refers to the above-mentioned activities, but also includes subconscious receiving of information, knowledge and experience.<sup>72</sup>

Consistent with Eddy's definition, the process of L2 acquisition is comparable to that of L1 acquisition because it is a subconscious process actively involved in the progressive development of language competence and is, as a result, commonly equated with natural or informal learning. The language 'acquirer' understands that he or she is using language for meaningful interaction, however, grammatical form is not a fundamental issue that underlies this process.<sup>73</sup> Gradual development of L2 competence through acquisition is attributed to having a 'feel' for correctness. The language 'acquirer' senses when a sentence sounds grammatically correct or if an error has been made; however, they are not conscious of the grammar rule that has been broken.<sup>74</sup> In contrast, L2 learning is applied to situations where a learner develops L2 competence through explicit or conscious learning. This involves 'accumulating knowledge of linguistic features such as vocabulary, sentence structure and grammar, typically in an institutional setting'.<sup>75</sup> The L2 learner will, therefore, have a formal knowledge and metacognitive awareness of the language they are learning including its components and rules.

## 1.2 Convention and Transition in the Field of Second Language Acquisition

Although a relatively nascent discipline, the field of SLA has seen increasingly rapid advances over the past seventy years.<sup>76</sup> In the literature, this progression has been documented chronologically, as exemplified by Mitchell, Myles, and Marsden (2013) in their comprehensive publication *Second Language Learning Theories*.<sup>77</sup> It has also been documented thematically, as reflected in Neupane's (2019) in-depth article *Second Language*

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<sup>72</sup> Eva Eddy, *On the interconnections among selected aspects of English grammar in Slovak learners' acquisition* (Prešove: Univerzitná knižnica Prešovskej univerzity v Prešove, 2011).

<sup>73</sup> Stephen Krashen, *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1981).

<sup>74</sup> Florence Myles, "French Second Language Acquisition Research: Setting the Scene," *French Language Studies* 3, no. 14 (2004).

<sup>75</sup> George Yule, *The Study of Language*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 163.

<sup>76</sup> The field of SLA has been influenced and shaped in its formation by several other well-established disciplines including applied linguistics, cognitive psychology, educational research, neurology, and sociology.

<sup>77</sup> Rosamond Mitchell, Florence Myles, and Emma Marsden, *Second Language Learning Theories* (London: Routledge, 2013).

*Acquisition as a Discipline: A Historical Perspective*<sup>78</sup> and, similarly, in Jia's (2004) insightful paper, *Theories of Second Language Acquisition*.<sup>79</sup> Collectively, these approaches comprehensively chronicle the evolution of significant research developments and also identify the different phases of transition that have occurred in the field. This section presents a brief *tour d'horizon* of past, present, and future directions in SLA research. Drawing systematically upon the work of and terminology employed by Neupane (2019) and Jia (2004), it highlights important historical and theoretical developments that have occurred throughout the evolution of the field.<sup>80</sup>

### - *The Early Period (1950s and Early 1960s)*

The 1950s and early 1960s saw a number of empirical studies on L2 acquisition. During the early period (See Figure 1.3), theoretical frameworks of L2 acquisition were largely based on theories of L1 acquisition.<sup>81</sup> During this phase, L2 acquisition research was principally informed by psychological approaches to the study of language acquisition, which investigated the psychology of learning based on psychological universals<sup>82</sup> and differential psychology.<sup>83</sup> The work of American psychologist B. F. Skinner has notably become synonymous with the behaviourist framework of language acquisition – a psychological approach to learning widely accepted during the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.<sup>84</sup> Language acquisition, from a behaviourist perspective, prioritises the role of habit formation in learning any behaviour. This assertion will be explored in greater depth in Chapter Two. Neupane (2019) regards this period as a 'background phase', which laid the foundation for 'the formation of notion and theories that [underpinned] SLA as an insular discipline'.<sup>85</sup> Contrastive analysis was another significant subject of debate that informed L2 acquisition research during this phase. Originally

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<sup>78</sup> Nabaraj Neupane, "Second Language Acquisition as a Discipline: A Historical Perspective," *Journal of NELTA Gandaki*, no. 2, (2019).

<sup>79</sup> Gisela Jia, "Theories of second language acquisition," in *Applied linguistics: An advanced course* (Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press, 2004).

<sup>80</sup> It is important to note that the literature which forms the core of the following discussion comes from largely Western and European-focused perspectives. This is a key reason why acquisition is considered and interrogated in terms of monolingual language acquisition.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 145-146.

<sup>82</sup> Psychological universals are mental attributes that all humans have in common (e.g., emotions). Ara Norenzayan and Steven J. Heine, "Psychological universals: what are they and how can we know?," *Psychological Bulletin* 131, no. 5 (2005).

<sup>83</sup> Norbahira Mohamad Nor and Radzuwan Ab Rashid, "A review of theoretical perspectives on language learning and acquisition," *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences* 39, no. 1 (2018). Differential psychology examines and considers the processes that underpin differences in group and individual behaviour. Lynn C. Ourth, *Differential Psychology: A Study of Individual Differences* (Iwoa: Kendall Hunt Publishing Company, 2019).

<sup>84</sup> Theoretical and conceptual developments that evolved within the psychological school of thought will be explored further in Chapter Two.

<sup>85</sup> Neupane, "Second Language Acquisition as a Discipline," 56.

hypothesized by American linguist Robert Lado,<sup>86</sup> contrastive analysis is a domain of comparative linguistics interested in ‘the systematic comparison of two or more languages, with the aim of describing their similarities and differences’.<sup>87</sup> Its significance to L2 acquisition research, at that time, lay in the belief that L2 learner errors were exclusively a result of MT interference.

- ***The Revolution Period (Mid to Late 1960s)***

The underlying assumptions of contrastive analysis were, however, contested in the 1960s during the revolution period, which was marked by a period of change that called into question the credibility of the behaviourist approach.<sup>88</sup> Error analysis, introduced by British linguist Pit Corder<sup>89</sup> as an alternative to contrastive analysis, demonstrated that ‘certain errors recur among language learners of various L1 backgrounds and seem to be more related to the intrinsic difficulty of the subsystem involved in cross-lingual influence.’<sup>90</sup> Error analysis research demonstrated that mistakes committed during L2 acquisition were not necessarily a consequence of native language interference and, conversely, were attributable to developmental errors comparable to those committed during L1 acquisition. As evidenced by error analysis research, mistakes committed in L2 acquisition stemmed from several other sources including analogical creation, overgeneralization, and hyper-correction.<sup>91</sup>

Analogical creation or analogic change is ‘a process whereby one form of the language becomes more like another with which it is associated’ on the grounds of perceived similarity (e.g., morphology, phonology, syntax etc.).<sup>92</sup> Overgeneralisation or overregularisation, as the term suggests, refers to a specific stage in L2 acquisition where L2 learners apply a grammatical rule excessively, which results in non-words or non-grammatical constructions (e.g., a French language learner may say ‘des animals’ instead of ‘des animaux’, overgeneralising the morphological rule for forming plural nouns). Hyper-correction is a term applied when an L2 learner is trying to overcompensate (or is trying too hard to be correct) and as a result commits

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<sup>86</sup> Robert Lado originally proposed the contrastive analysis hypothesis in his book *Linguistics Across Cultures* (Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1957).

<sup>87</sup> Stig Johansson, *Contrastive Analysis and Learner Language: A Corpus-Based Approach* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Co., 2003), 1.

<sup>88</sup> Jia, “Theories of second language acquisition,” 146-147.

<sup>89</sup> Pit Corder originally advanced error analysis in his pioneering article “The significance of learners’ Errors” *Applied Linguistics* 5, (1967).

<sup>90</sup> Paul Lennon, “Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis, Interlanguage,” in *Bielefeld Introduction to Applied Linguistics*, eds. S. Gramley and V. Gramley (2008), 53.

<sup>91</sup> Neupane, “Second Language Acquisition as a Discipline...”

<sup>92</sup> Radwan Salim Mahadin, “Analogic change,” *Language Sciences* 9, no. 2 (1987): 173.

grammatical, punctuation, or pronunciation errors in the target language (e.g., a French language learner may not pronounce the ‘s’ in ‘fleur-de-lis’ because, in general, the ‘s’ at the end of a French word is not pronounced such as in the case of ‘hommes’, ‘femmes’, ‘chats’, ‘chiens’, ‘maisons’ etc.).

- ***The Description Period (1970s)***

As illustrated in Figure 1.3, in the 1970s, the field of SLA entered the description period.<sup>93</sup> Researchers came to the realisation that the process of L2 acquisition could not simply be a reproduction or replica of the L1 acquisition process. During this phase, the field embarked on research that investigated integral components of the L2 acquisition process, namely, the linguistic, cognitive, and academic processes involved in L2 acquisition. Neupane (2019) integrates the ‘revolution period’ and ‘description period’ into one stage, which he calls the *formative phase*.<sup>94</sup> This phase, in the history of L2 acquisition research (1960s-1970s), comprises the ‘revolutionary steps’ and ‘landmark’ moments that revolutionised the field.<sup>95</sup> Against this backdrop, linguistic approaches to L2 acquisition, which contemplate acquisition in relation to language structure and accuracy, gained popularity. During this period, American linguists Noam Chomsky and Stephen Krashen very distinctly emerged as key figures in the field of SLA. Theoretical constructs that evolved from their research, such as the language acquisition device (LAD) and affective filter, still continue to shape SLA discourse today.<sup>96</sup> Both Chomsky’s and Krashen’s contribution to field will be addressed further in Chapter Two.

- ***The Explanation Period and the Diverse Period (1980s to Present)***

Thereafter comes the explanation period in the 1980s and the diverse period in the 1990s, during which an interdisciplinary shift in the field may be observed.<sup>97</sup> During the explanation period, theory development and description of the L2 acquisition process were superseded by concern for theory testing and explication. Since the 1990s, several theoretical frameworks have been proposed to provide important insight into the process of L2 acquisition.<sup>98</sup> Once again, Neupane (2019) combines these two periods into one stage called

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<sup>93</sup> Jia, “Theories of second language acquisition,” 147-148.

<sup>94</sup> Neupane, “Second Language Acquisition as a Discipline...,” 57.

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*, 56-57.

<sup>96</sup> Theoretical and conceptual advancements that developed in the linguistic school of thought, such as the LAD and affective filter, will be discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

<sup>97</sup> Jia, “Theories of second language acquisition,” 149-150.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

the *developmental phase*,<sup>99</sup> which begins in the 1980s and continues to present. Since then, the nature of L2 acquisition research has progressively become bi-directional and multifaceted in its applications. In this regard, interactionist approaches, which explore the development of language in social and cultural contexts, have played a prominent role in developing our understanding of how an L2 is acquired and consolidated. Further, it has extended knowledge of how L2 acquisition theory may be employed in the pedagogical process, or pedagogical meeting,<sup>100</sup> whereby educators' and students' 'intentions, activities and reflections meet' within the educational context.<sup>101</sup> Social interactionist or sociocultural frameworks of language acquisition have been influenced by several noteworthy theorists, from the pioneering work of Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky on cognitive function and social interaction in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, to contemporary explorations of language socialisation by Elinor Ochs and Bambi Schieffelin and language acculturation by John Schumann.<sup>102</sup> These perspectives, as well as more contemporary usage-based and statistical models of L2 acquisition, will be further elaborated upon in Chapter Two.

### 1.3 The 'Affective Turn' in the Field of Second Language Acquisition

As evidenced by the preceding discussion, acquiring an L2 is a highly complex process that requires a learner to develop and encode fundamental components of language, commit them to long-term memory, and be able to retrieve them at a later time.<sup>103</sup> In order to bridge the gap between process (i.e., language acquisition) and product (i.e., language production), contemporary trends in field of SLA have led to a proliferation of studies which investigate factors that mediate L2 learning outcomes. Numerous and wide-ranging variables have come under the microscope, from teaching strategies and pedagogical practices, internal mechanisms such as memory and cognition, to social and environmental factors. While each of these variables impact upon the process of L2 acquisition in their own right, in recent years, the

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<sup>99</sup> Neupane, "Second Language Acquisition as a Discipline...", 62.

<sup>100</sup> The notion of the pedagogical meeting/encounter, or *pädagogische begegnung*, as it is referred to in German, places emphasis upon 'the intersecting and interconnected entities of teachers' endeavours, spaces, and students'. Jacky Barreiro and Lori Driussi, "The Materiality of the Pedagogical Encounter: Implications of an Actor-Network Theory Educational Analysis," *Simon Fraser University Educational Review* 11, no. 1 (2018): 39.

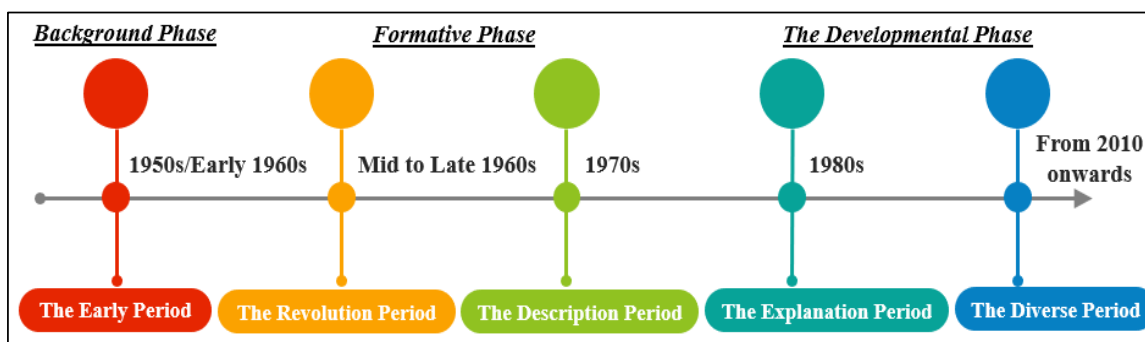
<sup>101</sup> Michael Uljens, *School Didactics and Learning: A School Didactic Model Framing an Analysis of Pedagogical Implications of Learning Theory* (Sussex: Psychology Press, 2004), 52.

<sup>102</sup> Theoretical and conceptual developments that materialised in the interactionist school of thought, such as language socialisation and language acculturation, will be examined further in Chapter Two.

<sup>103</sup> Anne Mickan, James M. McQueen, and Kristin Lemhöfer, "Bridging the Gap Between Second Language Acquisition Research and Memory Science: The Case of Foreign Language Attrition," *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience* 13, no. 397 (2019).



impact of affect and emotion on the acquisition process has markedly been implicated in many of the central issues explored by L2 acquisition researchers.



**Figure 1.3 Key Phases of Transition in the Field of SLA.** Based upon the terminology employed by Neupane (2019) and Jia (2004), this figure illustrates, chronologically and thematically, the principal phases of transition that the field of SLA has seen over the past seventy years.

Emotion has a crucial role to play in successful language development on both a conscious and subconscious level. L2 acquisition has been recognised as a process that ‘creates a spectrum of emotions of both positive and negative connotation’.<sup>104</sup> Emotions are studied within the interdisciplinary field of affective science, which seeks to elucidate our knowledge of emotion, mood, and feelings. More specifically, the field characterises the manner in which emotion, mood, and feelings are ‘embodied within the brain’ (i.e., affective neuroscience).<sup>105</sup> Barrett and Bliss-Moreau (2009) clarify that the concept of *affect* has come to be used in the science of emotion as a broad term to specify ‘anything emotional’.<sup>106</sup> In this context, individuals may experience affect in the form of emotions or moods. Although emotions and moods are connected, they remain distinct phenomena in the psychological literature. Emotions are generally described as short-lived reactions to either internal stimuli (e.g., memories) or external stimuli in the environment, while moods are characterised as longer lasting states of affect that ‘are typically not linked with specific events and tend to bias cognitions rather than actions’.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Kaiqi Shao, Laura J. Nicholson, Gulsah Kutuk, and Fei Lei, “Emotions and Instructed Language Learning: Proposing a Second Language Emotions and Positive Psychology Model,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 11, no. 2142 (2020): 1.

<sup>105</sup> Elaine Fox, “Perspectives from Affective Science on Understanding the Nature of Emotion,” *Brain and Neuroscience Advances* 2, no. 1 (2018).

<sup>106</sup> Lisa Feldman Barrett and Eliza Bliss-Moreau, “Affect as a Psychological Primitive,” *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 41, (2009).

<sup>107</sup> Fox, “Perspectives from Affective Science on Understanding the Nature of Emotion,” 2.

As noted in the introduction to this thesis, the emotional response to language acquisition forms the very core of the present investigation, wherein FLA indicators and deterrents are analysed. While much attention has been placed on the psychological construct of FLA, it is also important to note that the field of SLA is beginning to show interest in a spectrum of other positive and negative emotions, including fear, shame, jealousy, enjoyment, trust, and pride. The increasing importance of the affective and emotional dimension of language learning is indicative of one of the ‘many different directions aiming to reflect and explain different facets of the SLA process’.<sup>108</sup>

The study of emotional phenomena, in the field of SLA, has also been documented chronologically and thematically. In one of his most recent publications, Jean-Marc Dewaele (2020), in collaboration with Chengchen, provides an insightful overview of how emotion has been investigated in the field. They situate the area of research within three principal phases of transition: (1) The Emotion Avoidance Phase, (2) The Anxiety Prevailing Phase, and (3) The Positive and Negative Emotions Phase.<sup>109</sup>

As illustrated in Figure 1.4, phase one, entitled the emotion avoidance phase, spanned from the early period (early 1960s) to the explanation period (mid-1980s) of L2 acquisition research. As its name suggests, the impact of affect and emotion on the L2 acquisition process was largely disregarded by researchers during this phase. L2 researchers showed preference for ‘scientific cognitive factors’ in the language acquisition process, while affect and emotion were contemplated as ‘irrational’ components of the learning process.<sup>110</sup> Consequently, affect and emotion do not occupy a prominent place in theoretical frameworks of this period. As will be observed in Chapter Two, the affective dimension of L2 acquisition is not featured in Skinner’s behaviourist theory, nor does it figure prominently in Chomsky’s nativist theory.

However, as we transition to the anxiety-prevailing phase, which extends from the explanation period (mid-1980s to late 2000s) to the diverse period (early 2010s onwards), L2 researchers became increasingly aware that emotion and cognition were related and, furthermore, that emotion had a central role to play in language acquisition.<sup>111</sup> Unsurprisingly,

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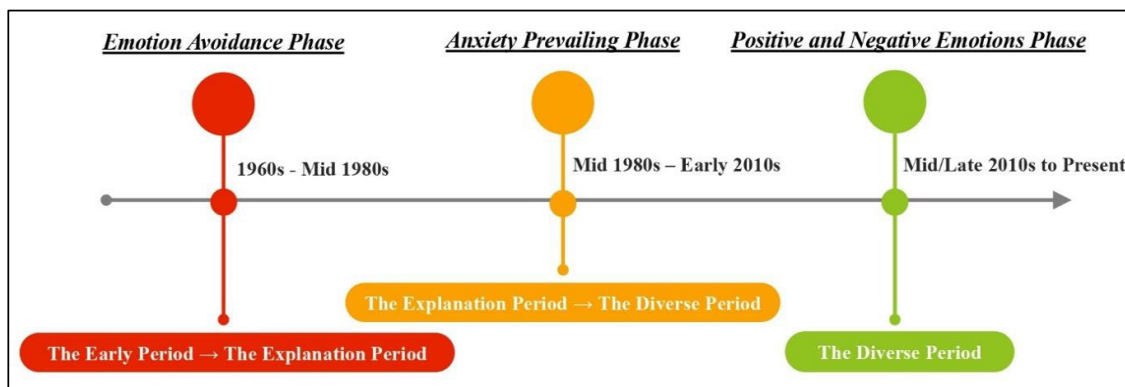
<sup>108</sup> Roumyana Slabakova, “L Stands for Language,” *The Modern Language Journal* 103, no. 1 (2019): 152.

<sup>109</sup> Jean-Marc Dewaele and Li Chengchen, “Emotions in Second Language Acquisition: A Critical Review and Research Agenda,” *Foreign Language World* 196, no. 1 (2020).

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>111</sup> This phase can be further elucidated by considering three principal approaches to anxiety-focused research: (1) The confounded approach, (2) The specialised approach, and (3) The dynamic approach. These phases will be addressed in greater detail in Chapter Three.

during the anxiety-prevailing phase, the emotion of language anxiety received considerable critical attention. Notably, Krashen’s affective filter hypothesis (1985) and Horwitz et al.’s seminal article, *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety* (1986), shined a light on the affective dimension in L2 acquisition, which up until that point was largely disregarded by the SLA community.



**Figure 1.4 The ‘Affective Turn’ in the Field of SLA.** Based on the terminology employed by Dewaele and Chengchen (2020), this figure illustrates the ‘affective turn’ that has occurred in the field of SLA.

Finally, the diverse period (mid-2010s to present) has seen the emergence of the positive and negative emotions phase.<sup>112</sup> While research during the anxiety-prevailing phase focused largely on language anxiety, a debilitating emotion in language learning, the positive and negative emotions phase, greatly influenced by positive psychology, is also drawing attention to the role of positive emotions in the learning process.<sup>113</sup> Although it is beyond the scope of this study to analyse all the different lines of inquiry emerging in the positive and negative emotions phase, it is important to note that there is a growing awareness of positive emotions in the L2 learning process (e.g., enjoyment, happiness, empathy).<sup>114</sup> In the context of the present investigation, the notion of ‘positive affect’, that is to say, a learner’s tendency to experience positive emotions and meet challenges, is a key consideration that has been mapped

<sup>112</sup> Dewaele and Chengchen, “Emotions in Second Language Acquisition...” It is important to note here that this development has also emerged because of widespread acceptance of the competition model, which will be discussed further in Chapter Two.

<sup>113</sup> Positive psychology, a relatively new branch of psychology, which emerged in the late 1990s embodies ‘the scientific study of positive human functioning and flourishing on multiple levels that include the biological, personal, relational, institutional, cultural, and global dimensions of life’. Martin Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, “Positive psychology: An introduction,” *American Psychologist* 55, no. 1 (2000): 5.

<sup>114</sup> For a detailed overview of developments taking place in this regard see Plamen Kushkiev, “The Role of Positive Emotions in Second Language Acquisition: Some Critical Considerations,” *MEXTESOL Journal* 43, no. 4 (2019).

onto pedagogical innovation and practices. As will be observed in chapters seven and eight, the synergy between performative pedagogy and language education endeavours to create a positive emotional outlet for learners so that they may engage with and enjoy the language learning process.

#### **1.4 Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the reader with important and valuable background information about the field of SLA. In this regard, it has highlighted some difficulties of definition, accentuated significant historical and theoretical developments in the field, and has made some preliminary connections between affect and the language acquisition process. Having historicised the evolution of the field, Chapter Two now moves on to examine three major schools of thought (i.e., psychological, linguistic, and interactionist) that have delineated the process of L2 acquisition and, in doing so, aims to shed further light upon the manner in which an L2 is acquired and consolidated.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION IN THEORY: NAVIGATING THE TERRAIN**

## Chapter Two

### Second Language Acquisition in Theory: Navigating the Terrain

#### 2.0 Introduction

Approximately ‘forty theories, models, perspectives, metaphors, hypotheses, and theoretical claims’ have been proposed to account for the process of L2 acquisition.<sup>115</sup> These diverse approaches and theories have sparked considerable debate, controversy, and numerous counterarguments among scholars. Within this plethora of both competing and complimentary theoretical frameworks, three dominant schools of thought have emerged in the field - psychological, linguistic, and interactionist - each with their own theoretical assumptions and key players who have respectively influenced the trajectory of theory building.

This chapter seeks to problematise the divarication and trace the evolution of L2 acquisition theory, while shedding light upon its contribution to language education. The first section interrogates the concept of a ‘good’ theoretical framework in order to conceptualise, evaluate, and come to informed conclusions about the theories presented thereafter. Subsequently, the work of notable theorists, including Skinner, Chomsky, Krashen, Vygotsky, Ochs and Schieffelin, and Schumann, is drawn upon in order to highlight central ideas, concepts, and variables that mediate and facilitate the process of L2 acquisition, within which the present study is located. The contributions of these notable figures have been chosen for analysis based upon the considerable impact they have had on pedagogic theory building and pedagogical practices in educational research. Finally, this chapter concludes by interrogating three key developments in the field of SLA since this early theory building, namely, the competition model, complex dynamic systems theory, and statistical learning, with a view to highlight the manner in which the field of SLA has evolved and come of age.

#### 2.1 Second Language Acquisition Theory Development

Theories of L2 acquisition have primarily been characterised according to their form and content. As regards form, Gitsaki (1998) clarifies that theories of L2 acquisition may be

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<sup>115</sup> Diane Larsen-Freeman and Michael Long, *An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition Research* (London: Routledge, 2014), 288.

classified along a deductive-inductive continuum.<sup>116</sup> Theories developed through a deductive lens ‘contain concepts and constructs that are assumed true, without proof’, while those developed in line with an inductive approach ‘formulate hypotheses based on certain empirical facts’.<sup>117</sup> With regard to content, theories of L2 acquisition may be categorised as macro theories, which are far reaching and encompass a wide range of language learning phenomena (e.g., Krashen’s monitor model), or micro theories, which have a limited scope and address specific language learning phenomena (e.g., Horwitz et al.’s theory of foreign language classroom anxiety; John Schumann’s acculturation model).<sup>118</sup>

Furthermore, theory construction in L2 acquisition may either be process-oriented, condition/product-oriented or, in some cases, a combination of the two approaches (e.g., sociocultural theory).<sup>119</sup> Process-orientated frameworks of L2 development contemplate the strategies or practices that may be implemented in the learning process in order to realise L2 development (e.g., behaviourist framework and habit formation). In contrast, condition/product-oriented frameworks place emphasis on the human and physical dimensions of language acquisition (e.g., interactionist framework and social environment). Theories of L2 development that adopt a condition/product-orientated approach contemplate the conditions required to progress in L2 development, in other words, they consider different factors that may impact upon the process (e.g., learner characteristics, learning environment, teaching practices etc.).

In an effort to shed light upon the reliability and validity of theoretical frameworks advanced to delineate the process of L2 acquisition, psychologist Barry McLaughlin (1987), in his comprehensive examination of *Theories of Second Language Learning*,<sup>120</sup> proposes core standards according to which theories may be assessed and evaluated. McLaughlin’s work on the characteristics of a ‘good theory’ is particularly valuable to the present study as his criteria greatly facilitates an analysis of theory construction in the field of SLA. According to McLaughlin, a good theory of L2 acquisition should have sound definitional adequacy.<sup>121</sup> This is an essential property of a good theory because strong definitional adequacy eliminates the

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<sup>116</sup> Christina Gitsaki, “Second Language Acquisition Theories: Overview and Evaluation,” *Journal of Communication and International Studies* 4, no. 2 (1998).

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>119</sup> Jack C. Richards and Theodore S. Rodgers, *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

<sup>120</sup> Barry McLaughlin, *Theories of Second Language Learning* (London: Edward Arnold, 1987).

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

possibility for misunderstanding and ambiguity and also ‘ensures that the theory [...] is understood and interpreted by different people in the same manner’.<sup>122</sup> Secondly, a ‘good theory’ should demonstrate robust explanatory power. A theory that possesses strong explanatory power is consistent with the ‘facts that it intends to explain’.<sup>123</sup> Building upon this assertion further, McLaughlin affirms that a ‘good theory’ must also be rational and consistent with the established knowledge base in the field of research and be compatible with associated legitimate theories. Finally, a ‘good theory’ should be ‘heuristically rich’ in order to navigate and encourage the ongoing process of scientific investigation in the field.<sup>124</sup>

When analysing theoretical frameworks of L2 acquisition, it is also important to bear in mind that there are some challenges or caveats to be considered. Spolsky (1990), for example, draws our attention to the transient nature of L2 acquisition theories, highlighting that ‘new theories do not generally succeed in replacing their predecessors but continue to coexist with them comfortably.’<sup>125</sup> This sentiment is also echoed by Shakouri and Shokouhi (2015) who, in their informative article *Theories in Second Language Acquisition Need to be Corroborated*, assert that there is ‘an eternal and inevitable pendulum oscillating backwards and forwards between theories’.<sup>126</sup> Indeed, this analogy captures the perpetual ontological and theoretical divide that the field has experienced since preliminary investigations in the 1950s.

Although theoretical fields evolve at a significantly fast pace, it is important to acknowledge that theories are largely assumption based.<sup>127</sup> In this respect, it is possible that L2 acquisition theories cannot always be applied in a practical context.<sup>128</sup> That said, Menezes (2013) affirms that different theories of L2 acquisition are all plausible and rational; however, in many cases, they are not extensive and only explicate certain components of the L2 acquisition process.<sup>129</sup> Furthermore, L2 acquisition is a non-linear process and, therefore, is not as ‘predictable as many models [...] have hypothesized it to be’.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, 90.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> Bernard Spolsky, “Introduction to a Colloquium: The Scope and Form of a Theory of Second Language Learning,” *Tesol Quarterly* 24, no. 4 (1990): 609.

<sup>126</sup> Nima Shakouri and Mehdi Shokouhi, “Theories in Second Language Acquisition Need to be Corroborated,” *Studies in English Language Teaching* 3, no. 1 (2015): 74.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> Vera Menezes, “Second Language Acquisition: Reconciling Theories,” *Open Journal of Applied Sciences* 3, (2013).

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 404.



Much of the current SLA discourse surrounding theoretical analysis does not juxtapose theoretical assumptions with empirically substantiated findings; thus, lessening the potential concrete applications of L2 acquisition theories. Further, in some instances, theoretical ideologies may be somewhat limited, allowing little opportunity for flexibility. Consequently, Goldsmith (2006) accentuates that individuals may ‘resist new conceptual frameworks because ideologies unite group interests and offer [...] interpretations of how the world is, or how it ought to be’.<sup>131</sup> Educators who adhere to the principles of a particular theory or model of L2 acquisition often see no reason to change their position until their ideology is in line with a legitimate reality, which further accentuates the ontological and theoretical tension in the field.

From a pedagogical perspective, a final important issue to consider is the inconsistency that often exists between an espoused theory and a theory-in-use. While an espoused theory refers to ‘a set of beliefs about instruction or about one’s own way of teaching’,<sup>132</sup> a theory-in-use describes ‘a set of beliefs enacted during teaching’.<sup>133</sup> In other words, an espoused theory is associated with an educator’s philosophy, while a theory-in-use is closely related to an educator’s behaviour. This distinction is beneficial as it provides a framework for consistency; yet, in some instances, this boundary becomes blurred. Otherwise stated, the principles an educator claims to follow may not always reflect or align with those enacted in practice.

An educator’s behaviour (e.g., method of delivery, rapport with students, communication style etc.) will usually reflect their perception of the teaching context; however, Cassidy, Jones, and Potrac (2009) assert that ‘the clarification of purposes and guidelines encapsulated in a philosophy is still valuable as it leads to informed choices and better priorities.’<sup>134</sup> An espoused theory may assist educators in identifying potential challenges that may arise in the L2 classroom and provide them with the opportunity to enrich their practice. The aim here is not to restrict the educator, or to confine them to a ‘prearranged act’.<sup>135</sup> In contrast, aligning an espoused theory with a theory-in-use permits an educator to ‘definitively guide action while maintaining the required flexibility to be contextual’.<sup>136</sup> Particularly relevant

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<sup>131</sup> Pat A. Goldsmith, “Learning to understand inequality and diversity: Getting students past ideologies,” *Teaching Sociology* 34, (2006): 264-265.

<sup>132</sup> Anna Uhl Chamot and Vee Harris, *Learning Strategy Instruction in the Language Classroom: Issues and Implementation* (Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2019), 306.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>134</sup> Tanya Cassidy, Robyn Jones, and Paul Potrac, *Understanding Sports Coaching: The Social, Cultural and Pedagogical Foundations of Coaching Practice*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Routledge, 2009), 61.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> John Lyle and Neville Cross, *The Coaching Process: Principles and Practice for Sport*, eds. N. Cross and J. Lyle (Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, 1999), 37.

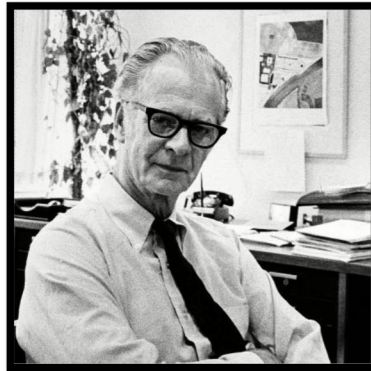
to the present investigation is the notion of bridging the gap between theory and pedagogical application through performance practices or praxes, which will be discussed later in Chapter Five.

Although much work remains to bridge the gap between the ‘complementary agendas’ of theory and practice,<sup>137</sup> the field of SLA has made a remarkable contribution to the body of knowledge pertaining to the workings of the human mind, the nature of language, and the process of language acquisition. Notwithstanding certain shortcomings, the theoretical frameworks that have emerged over the past seven decades have impacted how language acquisition is conceptualised, investigated, and viewed in practice. The analysis now moves on to delineate the psychological, linguistic, and interactionist orientations to L2 acquisition and, further, interrogate their respective contributions to the field. Examined collectively, these schools of thought provide invaluable insight and a rich context for contemplating L2 acquisition. It is important to stress here that although points of divergence may be perceived between the different theoretical frameworks proposed, they cannot be explicitly compared with one another because underlying these frameworks are assumptions derived from distinct schools of thought. The theoretical frameworks and models are, therefore, contemplated with regard to their function in and contribution to L2 pedagogy.

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<sup>137</sup> Florence Myles, “Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Research: Its Significance for Learning and Teaching Issues,” *Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies* (2004), accessed October 18, 2021, url: <https://www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/421.html>.

## 2.2 Psychological Perspectives on Language Acquisition: ‘Do what I do!’



Give me a child, and I'll shape him into anything.

(B. F. Skinner, 1904 – 1990)<sup>138</sup>

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, behaviourism emerged as a new psychological approach to learning. The emergence of behaviourist psychology can be traced back to the work of American psychologist Edward Thorndike (1874-1949).<sup>139</sup> Although not a behavioural psychologist himself, his work was nonetheless fundamental to the underpinnings of behaviourism. Regarded as the father of educational psychology, Thorndike ‘almost single-handedly’ founded and delineated educational psychology as a scientific discipline.<sup>140</sup> Over the course of his career, Thorndike developed several fundamental laws in order to provide insight into the process of learning, one of which was the law of effect.<sup>141</sup> Thorndike drew attention to the interconnection between behaviour and its consequences and, more specifically, he highlighted that reinforcement in learning can impact on and lead to changes in behaviour.

In his stimulus-response theory,<sup>142</sup> Thorndike proposed that ‘satisfying consequences (e.g., rewards or escape from punishment) strengthen a stimulus-response connection, whereas annoying consequences (e.g., punishers/punishment) weaken the connection’.<sup>143</sup> Otherwise stated, behaviour that results in satisfying or rewarding consequences is learned, while

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<sup>138</sup> B. F. Skinner, quoted in Annett Schirmer, *Emotion* (London: Sage Publications, 2015), 323; Encyclopædia Britannica, B.F. Skinner, photograph (Public Domain), Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed June 1, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/B-F-Skinner#/media/1/547663/109857>

<sup>139</sup> John C. Malone, *Theories of Learning: A Historical Approach* (California: Wadsworth Publishing, 1990).

<sup>140</sup> Guy R. Lefrançois, *Theories of Learning*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (California: Wadsworth Publishing, 2000), 67.

<sup>141</sup> For a more in-depth analysis of the four laws proposed by Thorndike, see John C. Malone, *Theories of Learning: A Historical Approach* (California: Wadsworth Publishing, 1990).

<sup>142</sup> In the educational literature, this theory has also been referred to as Thorndike’s theory of reinforcement.

<sup>143</sup> Jon E. Roedelein, *Elsevier’s Dictionary of Psychological Theories* (London: Elsevier, 2006), 521.

behaviour that leads to annoying or negative consequences is not learned. This law succinctly describes the basic principles of what would later be specified by B. F. Skinner as operant conditioning or learning. Thorndike's stimulus-response theory, however, has not escaped criticism on the grounds that behavioural learning is reduced to incidental stimulus and response pairings and, moreover, that it overlooks the mental processes which produce such pairings. Yet, it is important to note that Thorndike's work is significant as it sheds light upon the important role that *association* has in the learning process. How, then, does the principle of association assist in understanding the process of language acquisition and, furthermore, how may this principle be applied to the pedagogical process? In order to address these probing questions, we now transition to the work of one of the most influential American psychologists and radical behaviourists of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, B. F. Skinner.

Consistent with the behaviourist perspective, also referred to as the empiricist perspective, Skinner argued that children enter the world as blank slates, or *tabula rasa*, and acquire language through a process of operant conditioning.<sup>144</sup> The basic premise of operant conditioning can be described as follows: An infant's response (i.e., behaviour) to a stimulus is either strengthened or weakened (i.e., behaviour is repeated or discontinued) by the presence or absence of reinforcement (i.e., positive or negative consequence). This is frequently referred to as the stimulus-response-reinforcement model, or SRR model. According to behaviourists, an infant acquires language through association, imitation, and reinforcement. In order to shape an infant's verbal behaviour, language is either positively or negatively reinforced depending on whether it has been imitated correctly or incorrectly. The infant begins to associate their behaviour (i.e., language use) with the type of reinforcement they receive (i.e., positive or negative consequence) and modify their behaviour accordingly.<sup>145</sup>

In this context, the mind of the L1 learner can be characterised as pure or untainted. It is still in its original state and has not yet been changed by experience. It is primed to set a new habit by responding to the natural stimuli it encounters. As a child acquires their primary language/s, they engage in a process of cognitive, neurological, social, and physical development. The L2 learner, however, will have already undergone these early developmental

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<sup>144</sup> B. F Skinner, *Verbal Behavior* (Massachusetts: Copley Publishing Group, 1957).

<sup>145</sup> In the field of psychology, the term behaviour modification is used to refer to the process through which an individual's behavioural patterns are altered.

stages. Thus, it is important to give due consideration to the interaction between maturation and learning in the context of L2 acquisition:

Maturation and learning are so inextricably interwoven in the growth process that it is scientifically futile to attempt complete separation [...] Maturation emphasises the influence of variables that are internal to the organism, while learning is more concerned with environmental conditions external to the organism [...] Learning is highly related to maturation and the previous experiences of the individual. Maturation and experience set the limits of the individual's behaviour repertoire and determine the motivating conditions.<sup>146</sup>

The initial state of language learning for an L2 learner is not the same as that of an L1 child because their mind is already shaped by the habits they have formed during L1 acquisition. Put simply, the L2 learner begins the process of language acquisition 'with the attributes of maturation appropriate to their age, not those of the L1 child, whether emotional, conceptual, or any other changes that growing up entails'.<sup>147</sup> Unlike the L1 child, the adolescent or adult L2 learner has already developed an irreversible theory of mind.<sup>148</sup> In this regard, the behaviourist approach to L2 acquisition involves configuring the mind with another set of habits. But how can the L2 learner's mind be reconfigured in the pedagogical process? Otherwise stated, how does the framework of behaviourist learning translate theory into practice? What follows provides a description of how behaviourist principles may be employed in the L2 classroom and, in doing so, aims to help build connections between L2 acquisition theory and practice.

### **2.2.1 From Theory to Practice: Pedagogical Applications of Behaviourism**

Behaviourist principles of language acquisition made a noteworthy contribution to early foreign language teaching pedagogies. The SRR model initially received considerable attention

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<sup>146</sup> D. N. Tutoo and C. L. Kundu, *Educational Psychology* (New Delhi: Sterling publishers, 1998), 32-33.

<sup>147</sup> Vivian Cook, "The Relationship between First and Second Language Learning Revisited," in *The Continuum Companion to Second Language Acquisition*, ed. Ernesto Macaro (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010), 149.

<sup>148</sup> A theory of mind is a term employed in the field of psychology to describe 'a related set of intellectual abilities that enable us to understand that others have beliefs, desires, plans, hopes, information, and intentions that may differ from our own'. A theory of mind is a 'composite function', which necessitates 'memory, joint attention, complex perceptual recognition (such as face and gaze processing), language, executive functions (such as tracking of intentions and goals and moral reasoning), emotion processing-recognition, empathy, and imitation'. A theory of mind is contingent on the development of different brain systems and is influenced by parenting, social interactions, and education. Baris Korkmaz, "Theory of Mind and Neurodevelopmental Disorders of Childhood," *Pediatric Research* 69, (2011): 101.

from the educational world of 1950s America.<sup>149</sup> Foreign language education in the United States can be traced back to America's entry into World War II.<sup>150</sup> In the early 1940s, language learning programmes were established in order to cultivate military personnel's knowledge of languages such as German, French, and Italian.<sup>151</sup> Early foreign language teaching pedagogies reflected the behaviourist inclination of the period. Language teaching methods, such as the audiolingual method (ALM), were largely drill based as they were developed in a military context. The foundations of such teaching methods were extensively based on behaviourist principles. Knowledge construction of an L2 was regarded as a process of automatised response through habit formation. Errors were to be avoided and corrected immediately in order to reinforce accuracy. While the instructor was active in the teaching/learning process, the learner was typically passive and a strong emphasis was placed on rote learning, mimicry, pattern drilling, and exercises were largely oral based.

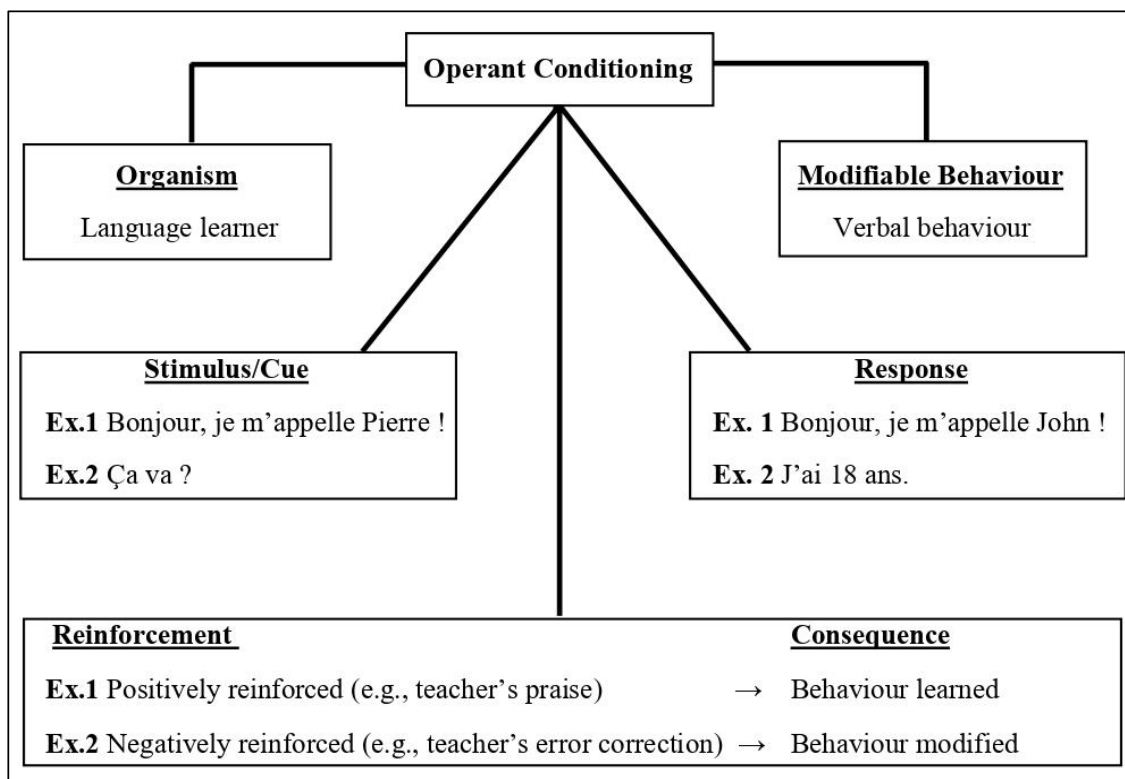
Figure 2.1 presents an overview of how behaviourist theory (i.e., operant conditioning) may be applied in a French language learning scenario. As stated earlier, the principal aim of employing operant conditioning in a teaching setting is to modify an organism's behaviour. In the present example, the organism is the language learner and the behaviour to be modified is verbal. In the first example, the learner is provided with the following stimulus to which they must respond: "Bonjour, je m'appelle Pierre !" (Hello, my name is Pierre!). The learner's response to the stimulus is: "Bonjour, je m'appelle John !" (Hello, my name is John!). The learner successfully responded to the stimulus or cue presented. The learner's verbal behaviour is positively reinforced by the instructor through praise. The learner equates their verbal behaviour with positive reinforcement and then learns the behaviour. This first example demonstrates the pattern drilling and parroting frequently associated with behaviourist teaching methods. However, within such a context, it is important to contemplate the extent to which learners understand the material they are repeating and devise other activities and use other approaches to uncover their awareness of the material being taught.

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<sup>149</sup> Michael Byram and Adelheid Hu, *Routledge Encyclopedia of Language Teaching and Learning*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Routledge, 2013).

<sup>150</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>151</sup> Kees De Bot, Wander Lowie, and Marjolyn Verspoor, *Second Language Acquisition: An Advanced Resource Book* (New York: Routledge, 2005).



**Figure 2.1 Operant Conditioning in a French Language Teaching Scenario.** Based on Skinner's SRR model, this figure demonstrates how behaviourist principles may be employed within the context of an L2 learning scenario.

In the second example, the learner is provided with the following cue: “Ça va?” (How are you?) to which they respond “J’ai 18 ans” (I am 18 years old). Since the learner responded incorrectly to the stimulus, their behaviour is negatively reinforced through error correction. For example, the instructor may say: ‘No. The response should be “ça va bien” (I am doing well) or “ça ne va pas” (I am not well). Now try again, please.’ The learner associates their incorrect verbal behaviour with negative reinforcement and modifies it until the instructor hears the desired response, whereupon they receive positive feedback and learn the correct verbal behaviour.

In short, the behaviourist approach to L2 acquisition advances that ‘the basic background of exercises, either oral or written [is] viewing language as a stimulus and response.’<sup>152</sup> Although the behaviourist orientation highlighted that association is an important component of the learning process, there are however limits to how far its principles may be taken. As

<sup>152</sup> Mehmet Demirezen, “Behaviorist Theory and Language Learning,” *Hacettepe Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi* (Hacettepe University Faculty of Education) 3, no. 3 (1988): 139.

Graham (2000) remarks, a major criticism of Skinner's argument is that language mastery is condensed to a stimulus-response pairing:

The deepest and most complex reason for behaviorism's decline in influence is its commitment to the thesis that behavior can be explained without reference to non-behavioral and inner mental (cognitive, representational, or interpretative) activity.<sup>153</sup>

The behaviourist approach is contingent on an explicit stimulus that enables the L2 learner to respond automatically as a result of the cue or prompt it provides. However, what will the language learner do in a context when the stimulus that triggers the response is not present? This is a significant pedagogical limitation that must be considered by educators who may employ behaviourist principles in their teaching practice. Furthermore, it is important to contemplate how this shortcoming may come to bear on an L2 learner's language learning experience both within and outside the confines of the classroom. For instance, how may the L2 learner feel if they are unable to communicate successfully in the target language? Will they feel judged, embarrassed, or incompetent? How may this perceived lack of ability impact on them emotionally and psychologically? These questions will be addressed in more detail in Chapter Three.

Significantly, during the cognitive revolution, or cognitive turn, in psychology, several critiques emerged about the scope of the behaviourist framework. Scholars including Lashley (1951), Breland and Breland (1961), and perhaps most notably Chomsky (1959) argued that Skinner's view of behavioural development was reductionist in nature on the grounds that language acquisition was viewed as a highly mechanical and systematic process, which did not take into consideration the various cognitive, social, and contextual factors that may impact on this process. In 1959, Chomsky published what has been referred to as a scathing critique of Skinner's work in an article entitled *A Review of B. F. Skinner's Verbal Behavior*.<sup>154</sup> In his review, Chomsky scrutinised the fundamental principles of behaviourism, arguing that language is too complex to be acquired through the over-simplistic SRR model on the following grounds: (1) Poverty of the Stimulus (i.e., Plato's problem),<sup>155</sup> (2) The notion that

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<sup>153</sup> George Graham, "Behaviorism," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2019 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, 2019, accessed January 17, 2022, url: <https://plato.stanford.edu/behaviorism/#WhyAntiBeha>

<sup>154</sup> Noam Chomsky, "A Review of B. F. Skinner's Verbal Behavior," *Language* 35, no. 1 (1959).

<sup>155</sup> The poverty of the stimulus counterargument was put forward by the field of linguistics. It argues that environmental input alone cannot account for language development in children. In order to account for the process of L1 acquisition, linguists, therefore, propose that children must be born with an innate capacity to acquire language. This assertion is further elaborated upon later in this chapter.



constraints and parameters cannot be learned, and (3) Patterns of development are universal.<sup>156</sup> Chomsky's critique of what he dubbed a 'Skinnerian orthodoxy' was devastating and, as asserted by Smith (1999), 'sounded the death-knell for behaviourism'.<sup>157</sup> The review played a central role in ending the widespread acceptance that the behaviourist approach had garnered in the early 1950s.

While educators have, ultimately, rejected the notion that behaviourism exclusively accounts for all phenomena observed in L2 acquisition, some of its fundamental principles continue to influence popular 21<sup>st</sup>-century language teaching methods, including the presentation, practice, and production model, total physical response, the silent method, and situational language teaching.<sup>158</sup> Nevertheless, by the 1970s, the behaviourist narrative had given way to mentalist linguistics and cognitive science. In the same year that Skinner published his book, *Verbal Behaviour* (1957), in which he provided a rationale for language development within a behaviourist framework, Chomsky also wrote a book entitled *Syntactic Structures* (1957),<sup>159</sup> which gave rise to linguistic theories of language development. The analysis now moves on to consider counterarguments to the behaviourist orientation raised within the context of linguistic perspectives of language acquisition. Particular emphasis is placed upon Chomsky's nativist theory and Krashen's monitor model, which respectively have made a major contribution to L2 acquisition research by interrogating the mental processes that underpin the language acquisition process.

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<sup>156</sup> Ewa Dąbrowska, "What exactly is Universal Grammar, and has anyone seen it?," *Frontiers in Psychology* 6, no. 852 (2015).

<sup>157</sup> Neil Smith, *Chomsky: Ideas and ideals* (Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 97.

<sup>158</sup> For a detailed account of these foreign language teaching methods, see Diane Larsen-Freeman and Marti Anderson, *Techniques and Principles in Language Teaching*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

<sup>159</sup> Noam Chomsky, *Syntactic Structures* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1957).

### 2.3 Linguistic Perspectives on Language Acquisition: ‘It’s all in your mind.’



In the ‘nature vs. nurture’ debate, I fall on the side of nature. I reject the premises of behavioral science, believing that the mind has essential faculties.

(Noam Chomsky, 1928 – Present)<sup>160</sup>

Chomsky, in contrast to Skinner, advocates a nativist theory of child language acquisition, which is particularly evident in his views on the nature-nurture debate.<sup>161</sup> The nativist view claims that the logical problem<sup>162</sup> of child language acquisition can be explained by a genetic component of the language faculty that already possesses ‘innate knowledge of various linguistic rules, constraints and principles’ (i.e., Poverty of the Stimulus).<sup>163</sup> The nativist theory of language acquisition centres on the universal grammar (UG) hypothesis, which proposes that children have a biologically given capacity for linguistic competence. Chomsky claims that every child is born with a LAD, which consists of an innate grammar and endows them with the tools required to acquire language quickly. Innate grammar ‘grows in contact with input triggering its development and that limits the otherwise infinite possibilities that a purely computational system would generate’.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>160</sup> Javier Virués-Ortega, “The Case Against B. F. Skinner 45 years Later: An Encounter with N. Chomsky,” *The Behavior Analyst* 29, no. 2 (2006): 247; Encyclopædia Britannica, Noam Chomsky, photograph (Public Domain), Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed June 1, 2022, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Noam-Chomsky#/media/1/114218/232747>

<sup>161</sup> In language acquisition discourse, Chomsky’s theory has also been referred to as the innate theory, the innatist theory, the rationalist theory, and the mentalist theory.

<sup>162</sup> The expression ‘logical problem’ has been employed in language acquisition literature when trying to delineate the process through which children acquire such a complex skill as language.

<sup>163</sup> Fiona Cowie, “Innateness and Language,” in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2017 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, 2017, accessed October 31, 2021, url: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/innateness-language/>

<sup>164</sup> Cristina Sanz, *Mind and Context in Adult Second Language Acquisition: Methods, Theory, and Practice* (Washington: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 6.

Input, defined as ‘language that encodes meaning to which the learner attends for its propositional content’,<sup>165</sup> is widely acknowledged as an important component of language acquisition. Much of the input infants receive, however, is subject to ‘ungrammaticalities and disfluencies which make it an inadequate source of information for language acquisition’.<sup>166</sup> Chomsky contends that children would not have the ability to recognise what is grammatically correct or incorrect from this input. Moreover, he argues that input alone would not provide a child with all of the knowledge required to uncover the rules of language. The UG, however, is a hypothetical tool that justifies how an infant may overcome the inadequacies of input.

Contact between the language faculty and linguistic data produces ‘a new body of linguistic knowledge’, that is to say, knowledge of a language.<sup>167</sup> Since the 1970s, the UG has also been a significant object of research in the field of SLA. From the nativist perspective, when children acquire an L1 they must depend on their innate knowledge of language; however, in the context of L2 acquisition, the learner must rely on their L1. Since L2 learners acquire more knowledge about a target language than feasibly possible from exposure alone, researchers have proposed that they must also have indirect access to the UG through their L1. This notion is reinforced in the indirect access hypothesis, which maintains that L2 learners only have access to the UG through their L1: ‘[L2 learners] have already accessed the range of principles applying to their L1, and set parameters to the L1 values, and this is the basis for their L2 development.’<sup>168</sup>

Nevertheless, the UG has been criticised on the grounds that it is a suspect concept, which cannot be physiologically examined. There is a lack of empirical evidence to substantiate the UG and LAD. Yet, this is also one of the main reasons why the nativist theory has been ‘unassailable’ for close to sixty years.<sup>169</sup> In the context of the present study, another weakness to consider is that Chomsky does not grant any particular attention to various subjective components that may impact on the language learning experience. While social experience and interaction are necessary to develop the biologically determined LAD, affect appears to serve no purpose in this innately wired system.

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<sup>165</sup> Bill Vanpatten and Teresa Cadierno, “Input Processing and Second Language Acquisition: A Role for Instruction,” *The Modern Language Journal* 77, no.1 (1993): 46.

<sup>166</sup> Hulya Ipek, “Comparing and Contrasting First and Second Language Acquisition: Implications for Language Teachers,” *English language Teaching* 2, no. 2 (2009): 157.

<sup>167</sup> Cowie, “Innateness and Language.”

<sup>168</sup> Mitchell et al., *Second Language Learning Theories*, 92.

<sup>169</sup> Dąbrowska, “What exactly is Universal Grammar, and has anyone seen it?”

Chomsky presents two key concepts to describe the final state of the language faculty: (1) Linguistic competence and (2) Linguistic performance. Parallels have been drawn between Chomsky's distinction and the Saussurean theoretical linguistic dichotomy of *langue* (language) and *parole* (speech).<sup>170</sup> At this point, it is particularly insightful to quote Ferdinand de Saussure's well-known symphony analogy in order to shed light on the Chomskyan distinction between linguistic competence and linguistic performance:

Language is comparable to a symphony in that what the symphony actually is stands completely apart from how it is performed; the mistakes that musicians make in playing the symphony do not compromise this fact.<sup>171</sup>

In Saussure's analogy, the symphony serves as a fitting point of comparison for linguistic competence or 'langue'. A symphony relative to language is a 'system of abstract objects'.<sup>172</sup> Linguistic competence, comparable to 'langue', refers to knowledge of the language system. Linguistic performance, similar to 'parole', is associated with verbal behaviour and thus can be compared to the performance that the symphony delivers to its audience based on their knowledge of the 'appropriate system of abstract objects'.<sup>173</sup> Both linguistic competence and linguistic performance are required in order to understand and use language. Linguistic competence is the system that makes linguistic performance possible, in the same way that 'langue' facilitates 'parole'.

Katz and Postal (1964) further elucidate this relationship by clarifying that 'just as symphonic performances are not invariant realizations of a symphony, so speech performances are not invariant realizations of the abstract objects that comprise language.'<sup>174</sup> Notwithstanding faultless L2 competency, performance in an L2 may still be imperfect. But why may this be the case? It is important to recognise that although 'performers have learned the appropriate abstract objects, many other parameters partially determine the character of the actual performances'.<sup>175</sup> Essentially, competency is a psychological property, while performance is an actual event. Many L2 language teaching programmes place great emphasis

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<sup>170</sup> Annabelle Mooney and Betsy Evans, *Language, Society and Power: An Introduction*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: Routledge, 2010).

<sup>171</sup> Ferdinand de Saussure and Albert Riedlinger, *Course in General Linguistics* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1959), 18. Ferdinand de Saussure (1857 – 1913) was a Swiss linguist, philosopher, and semiotician. His work made many significant contributions to these fields in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

<sup>172</sup> Mooney and Evans, *Language, Society and Power: An Introduction*, 261.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>174</sup> Jerrold J. Katz and Paul M. Postal. *An Integrated Theory of Linguistic Descriptions* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1964), 30.

<sup>175</sup> Mooney and Evans, *Language, Society and Power: An Introduction*, 262.

on language competence because it is often assumed that once a learner has acquired knowledge of a target language, they should then be able to apply it to productive and receptive language skills. A shortcoming of this outlook, however, is that the learner's focus is on knowing (competence) rather than doing (performance). Moreover, since Chomsky made this initial distinction, research has demonstrated that the nexus between linguistic competence and linguistic performance can be impacted upon by several extraneous variables including attention, memory, motivation, and anxiety. The inconsistency that may arise between competence and performance and, more specifically, the impact that affect may have on this imbalance will be considered in greater detail in Chapter Three.

As noted in Chapter One, the validity of the contrastive analysis hypothesis was also interrogated during this 'formative' phase of L2 acquisition research. Discrepancies between the principles of contrastive analysis and Chomsky's nativist theory led to error analysis research, which confirmed that 'certain errors recur among language learners of various L1 backgrounds and seem to be more related to the intrinsic difficulty of the subsystem involved than cross-lingual influence.'<sup>176</sup> As highlighted by Jabeen, Kazemian, and Mustafai (2015), error analysis research made an important contribution to the field of SLA by providing 'insights into the complicated processes of language development as well as a systematic way for identifying, describing and explaining students' errors'.<sup>177</sup>

Pit Corder (1967) drew on Chomsky's work in order to examine the errors that can occur during L2 processing and acquisition.<sup>178</sup> He affirmed that learner errors must not be considered as a negative event in the learning process but 'an indication of active participation by the learners [...] during which their ability to form hypotheses about the rule system of the target language might be observed'.<sup>179</sup> Further, error analysis also investigated the characteristics underlying learner errors. This middle ground was termed interlanguage. In his well-known paper *Interlanguage*,<sup>180</sup> Larry Selinker (1972) proposed this concept to describe 'a distinctive learners' language which comes in between native language and second language [...] like a pidgin in the background phases and a creole in the later phases of the continuum'.<sup>181</sup> The

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<sup>176</sup> Lennon, "Contrastive Analysis, Error Analysis, Interlanguage," 53.

<sup>177</sup> Aqsa Jabeen, Bahram Kazemian, and Muhammad Mustafai, "The Role of Error Analysis in Teaching and Learning of Second and Foreign Language," *Education and Linguistics Research* 1, no. 2 (2015): 52.

<sup>178</sup> Corder, "The Significance of Learner Errors."

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, 161.

<sup>180</sup> Larry Selinker, "Interlanguage," *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching* 10, no. 4 (1972).

<sup>181</sup> Neupane, "Second Language Acquisition as a Discipline: A Historical Perspective," 58.

concept of interlanguage underscores the systematic, dynamic, and permeable nature of language. An important pedagogical implication of interlanguage theory lies in the proposition that educators should accept errors as an inevitability of the learning process and, further, that errors should be considered as a natural and necessary feature of language experimentation and not regarded as a negative event in the L2 acquisition process.

In her probing paper, *Interlanguage Theory: Implications for the Classroom*, May Frith (1978) stresses that if educators continually penalise learner errors then they may upset ‘the learner’s capacity to organize his or her progress’.<sup>182</sup> Frith’s insight into the role of errors in the language learning process sheds some light on the questions raised throughout the present analysis vis-à-vis the behaviourist framework and, more specifically, the potential negative affective response which may transpire in reaction to continual negative reinforcement. In order to provide further insight into the role of the affective response in the L2 acquisition process, the analysis now draws upon the work of renowned linguist and educational researcher Stephen Krashen who, in his comprehensive monitor model, extends and enhances our knowledge of the manner in which a learner’s affective filter may inhibit the L2 acquisition process.

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<sup>182</sup> May Frith, “Interlanguage Theory: Implications for the Classroom,” *McGill Journal of Education* 13, (1978): 162.

## 2.4 Stephen Krashen's Monitor Model



Language acquisition proceeds best when the acquirer is 'open' to the input, not 'on the defensive', not anxious about performance.

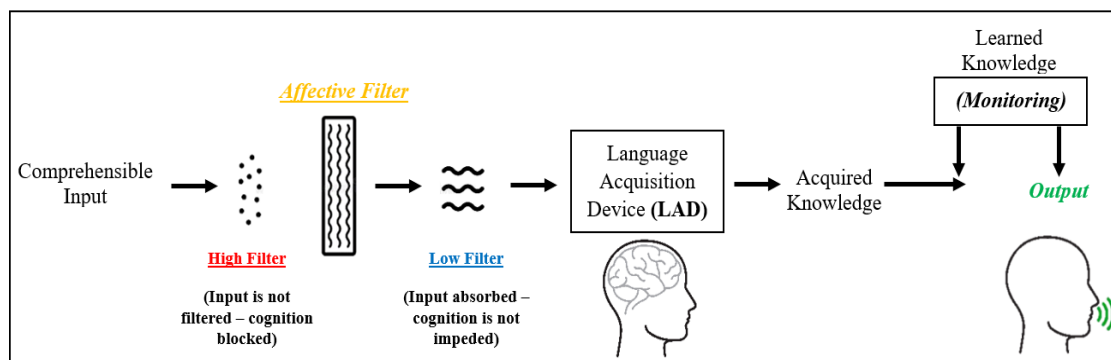
(Stephen Krashen, 1941 - Present)<sup>183</sup>

As the field of SLA transitioned from the 'formative' to the 'developmental' phase, research had revealed that L2 acquisition was not governed by the same rules as L1 acquisition and, therefore, could not be wholly characterised on the basis of an L1 replica model. In this regard, researchers began to contemplate the potential impact of diverse factors (e.g., psychological, cognitive, social) on the process of L2 acquisition. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, Krashen, perhaps most well-known for his concept of comprehensible input, formulated a comprehensive macro theory of L2 acquisition called the monitor model. The theory, influenced by some elements of Chomsky's work on L1 acquisition, comprises five principal hypotheses: (1) The input hypothesis, (2) The natural order hypothesis, (3) The affective filter hypothesis, (4) The acquisition-learning hypothesis, and (5) The monitor hypothesis. Notwithstanding certain limitations and critiques, Krashen's theory remains one of the most well-respected and referenced theories of L2 acquisition in the field. This discussion seeks to illustrate how the five hypotheses interrelate in the process of L2 acquisition and also considers the contributions that Krashen's work has made to pedagogical practice. Within this context, it is important to note that, in the monitor model, we encounter a number of conceptual phenomena including comprehensible input, the affective filter, the LAD, acquired knowledge, learned knowledge, monitoring, and output. While the relationship between these key

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<sup>183</sup> Stephen Krashen, interview by John Fotheringham, May 31, 2009, transcript, LanguageMastery.com "Interview with Stephen Krashen: Linguist, Researcher & Education Activist."; Stephen Krashen, EDiversity "We Need Choices" Education Conference 2014 Fall, video (Public Domain), accessed May 10, 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t3lv7ExApHM>

components is explicated throughout the discussion, Figure 2.2 serves as a visual overview of where and how these pieces of the puzzle connect.



**Figure 2.2** Krashen’s Monitor Model of L2 Acquisition and Production. Adapted from Krashen (1985), this figure exemplifies the interplay between each of the conceptual phenomena specified in the monitor model of L2 acquisition.

As outlined in Chomsky’s nativist theory, in order for acquisition to take place input must be processed. Input processing theory, first proposed by Bill VanPatten (2004; 1993), evolved from Krashen’s input hypothesis (1985). Input processing is concerned with how language learners perceive and acquire underlying grammar. Unlike the unlimited input that children receive during L1 acquisition, the input available to an L2 learner in a formal educational setting is restricted. Halliday (1986) explains that a foreign language serves two main purposes in the classroom: (1) To carry out particular activities and (2) To construct situations where those activities may be understood based on the context in which they are used.<sup>184</sup> In this respect, the L2 is frequently employed in isolated situations in order to complete a specific task, while situational context is neglected. In light of these contextual limitations, some researchers argue that language is unteachable in a classroom setting. In a formal instructional setting, the input learners receive is often limited to teachers’ explanations or textbooks, which segmentalise language lessons. From this perspective, classroom limitations significantly influence the effectiveness of the L2 acquisition process.

Dick Allwright (1988), one of the most prominent applied linguists in the field, emphasises that formal planned teaching is only one component of input available to learners in the

<sup>184</sup> Michael Halliday, *Learning How to Mean: Explorations in the Development of Language* (London: Edward Arnold, 1986).



classroom context.<sup>185</sup> Failure to recognise this can negatively impact upon a learners' development in the L2. As remarked by Amin et al. (2016), it is therefore important to acknowledge that 'formal and informal language learning are interwoven, acting as the two axes of language fluency.'<sup>186</sup> Building upon this assertion further, Krashen maintains that it is possible for language learning to take place in a classroom setting, if the educator is able to devise purposeful and meaningful language learning contexts that are scaffolded through comprehensible input.<sup>187</sup> He illustrates this notion with the condition or formula: (i+1). This formula proposes the ideal language learning scenario, where (i) = input and (+1) = comprehensible input one level above the learner's current ability. If input was set at (i+2) or (i+4), for instance, it would surpass the learner's level and, consequently, would be too challenging to encode, while input pitched at (i+0) would be below the student's level and would not present an appropriate degree of challenge to the learner for progression to take place. This formula, that is to say, the input hypothesis, has since become a key pedagogical principle and has guided many educators in their practice.

Krashen's rationale for the input hypothesis was based upon the predictable sequencing of acquisition, in other words, the natural order hypothesis. The natural order hypothesis advances that L2 learners acquire the rules of language in a predictable order. Put simply, while certain grammatical rules are acquired early, others are acquired at a later stage. This hypothesis is predominantly attributed to morpheme order studies, such as those carried out by Brown (1973), Dulay and Burt (1975), and Krashen et al. (1977). Early morpheme studies with L2 learners appeared to demonstrate 'a more or less invariant order of acquisition which was independent of L1 background and age' in addition to 'the existence of universal cognitive mechanisms which enabled learners to discover the structure of a particular language'.<sup>188</sup> Since L2 learners frequently commit more than one transitional competence error at a time, Krashen suggests that 'several streams of development are taking place at the same time [and] a performer at a given stage in one stream will usually be at a predictable stage in another stream.'<sup>189</sup> Based upon the natural order hypothesis, Krashen proposes that grammatical sequencing should be rejected when constructing syllabi, if the goal is for students to acquire

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<sup>185</sup> Dick Allwright, *Observation in the Language Classroom* (London: Routledge, 1988).

<sup>186</sup> Muhammad Amin et al., "Comparison and Contrast between First and Second Language Learning," *Advances in Language and Literary Studies* 7, no. 1 (2016): 130.

<sup>187</sup> Stephen Krashen, *The Input Hypothesis: Issues and Implications* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1985).

<sup>188</sup> Tony McEnery, Richard Xiao, and Yukio Tono, *Corpus-based Language Studies: An Advanced Resource Book* (London: Routledge, 2006), 250.

<sup>189</sup> Krashen, *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*, 53.

language. Alternatively, he suggests that comprehensible input will result in a natural order of acquisition provided that the condition of (i+1) is met. The input hypothesis is therefore strongly connected to the natural order hypothesis in that the latter supposes a predictable order of acquisition on the assumption that comprehensible input is available to the L2 learner: ‘We move from i, our current level, to i+1, the next level along the natural order, by understanding input containing i+1.’<sup>190</sup>

Yet, it is important to note that, in the 1980s, research emerged which offered contradictory findings about the predicted order of acquisition for L2 learners. Wells (1986), for example, drew attention to the impact of inter-learner variables, such as social background, intelligence, and rate of learning on the order of acquisition,<sup>191</sup> while McLaughlin (1987) placed emphasis on research findings which indicated that the learner’s L1 can alter the sequence of L2 acquisition by either slowing a learner’s development or modifying it.<sup>192</sup> A particular drawback of Krashen’s argument is that it disregards the influence of inter-learner and contextual factors on L2 acquisition order. In light of these contradictory findings, it is important that an invariant order of L2 acquisition is not always assumed. Instead, as noted by Ipek (2009), additional emphasis should be placed on a flexible order of L2 acquisition, together with inter-learner variation in L2 development: ‘One should be careful not to claim for an invariant order of acquisition but for a more flexible order of acquisition and be aware of the variations affecting this order.’<sup>193</sup>

That said, Krashen does highlight the important role that the variable of affect plays in the process of L2 acquisition. While he does not contemplate affect in terms of the potential impact it may have on the predicted order of acquisition, he does draw attention to the manner in which it may negatively impede the language acquisition process. As noted in Chapter One, the concept of affect has come to refer to anything related to emotion. Affect in language learning, also referred to as the *language affect*, encompasses the ‘feelings or emotional reactions [that a language learner has] about the language, about the people who speak the language, or about the culture where the language is spoken’.<sup>194</sup> Krashen’s affective filter hypothesis highlights the role of the affective filter in L2 development. The affective filter can be described as an

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<sup>190</sup> Krashen, *The Input Hypothesis: Issues and Implications*, 2.

<sup>191</sup> Gordon Wells, *The Meaning Makers: Children Learning Language and Using Language to Learn* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1986).

<sup>192</sup> McLaughlin, *Theories of Second Language Learning*.

<sup>193</sup> Ipek, “Comparing and Contrasting First and Second Language Acquisition...,” 156.

<sup>194</sup> Susan M. Gass and Larry Selinker, *Second Language Acquisition: An Introductory Course* (London: Routledge, 2008), 398.

imaginary barrier, which may arise between the comprehensible input the learner receives and the LAD, where it will be encoded. Krashen identifies motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety as three principal variables of interest that have a significant impact upon a learner's filter. As accentuated by Carrasquillo, Kucer, and Abrams (2004), within the context of L2 acquisition, the learner's filter is variable:

The learners emotional state or attitude acts as an adjustable 'filter' that either promotes or impedes language acquisition. Learners with a 'low affective filter' seek and receive more input in the second language, show more confidence in interacting with their peers, and reach higher levels of proficiency. Learners who, because of fear or embarrassment, have high affective filters, are impeded in making progress in learning the new language.<sup>195</sup>

A heightened affective filter, which in the context of the present study would be an anxious reaction, acts as a mental barrier in the L2 acquisition process because it obstructs passage of input to the LAD. In contrast, a low filter does not activate this barrier and block cognition and permits learners to understand and absorb input more easily. As a result, more target language input will be processed, encoded, and accessible at the output stage of language production. While a thorough investigation into the impact of language anxiety on the language acquisition process will be presented in Chapter Three, it was considered useful here to note the two models that have been proposed in SLA discourse to explicate how FLA interferes with cognition during the language learning process. Building on Krashen's work, renowned research scientist Sigmund Tobias (1986) established that anxiety impacts upon cognition in two distinct ways.<sup>196</sup> Firstly, anxiety may act as a barrier to learning at the input and processing stages of L2 acquisition. This is called the interference model of anxiety. Secondly, anxiety may impede the output stage of language acquisition. This is known as the interference retrieval model.

Nevertheless, if a learner is in a low affective state and input does reach the LAD, it is then assumed, according to the monitor hypothesis, that the learner's 'monitor' edits linguistic output based on *learned knowledge*. Krashen (1982) emphasises that the act of learning serves one main purpose for the L2 learner: To function as a monitor.<sup>197</sup> Comparable to a computer processing system, the learner's monitor or editor forms an integral part of their internal system, which engages in conscious linguistic processing. The learner's new knowledge

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<sup>195</sup> Angela Carrasquillo, Stephen B. Kucer, and Ruth Abrams, *Beyond the Beginnings: Literacy Interventions for Upper Elementary English Language Learners* (Toronto: Multilingual Matters, 2004), 24.

<sup>196</sup> Sigmund Tobias, "Anxiety and Cognitive Processing of Instruction," in *Self-Related Cognition in Anxiety and Motivation*, ed. R. Schwarzer (New Jersey: Erlbaum, 1986).

<sup>197</sup> Krashen, *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*.

enables them to adapt, rationalise, alter, or substantiate the utterances they have produced from their *acquired knowledge*.<sup>198</sup> The monitor is believed to ‘alter the output of the acquired system before or after the utterance is actually written or spoken, but the utterance is initiated entirely by the acquired system’.<sup>199</sup> In order for the monitor to function properly, three conditions must be met: (1) The learner must have enough time at their disposal, (2) The learner must know the rule, and (3) The learner’s focus must be on form and not meaning.

As highlighted in Chapter One, acquisition and learning are two phenomena that have been actively discussed and investigated in the field of SLA, and yet they remain the subject of much debate. While some researchers argue that only children can acquire and adults can learn, others consider the acquisition process to be significant for the adult learner. Krashen’s acquisition-learning hypothesis maintains that acquisition differs from learning in a number of respects and are ‘two distinct and independent ways of developing competence in a second language’.<sup>200</sup> Although it is beyond the scope of this study to provide an in-depth analysis of the debate surrounding the acquisition-learning distinction, it is important to note that, within the framework of Krashen’s monitor model, a fine distinction is drawn between them. This dichotomous view is particularly evident in the case of the monitor hypothesis.

Many researchers, such as McLaughlin (1987) and Mitchell and Myles (2004), are critical of Krashen’s monitor hypothesis due to the fact that its underlying assumptions cannot be verified. Another issue that arises around the functioning of the ‘monitor’ relates to determining whether a learner is actually using acquired or learned knowledge. The monitor hypothesis, essentially, undermines the acquisition-learning hypothesis in which Krashen draws an explicit distinction between acquisition and learning. Otherwise stated, learned knowledge cannot be transformed into acquired knowledge. Yet, the monitor hypothesis deduces that ‘initial utterances are generated from the acquired competence, and the learned knowledge monitors those utterances’,<sup>201</sup> which, in principle, provides some evidence to suggest that a relationship does exist between acquisition and learning.

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<sup>198</sup> Rod Ellis, *Understanding Second Language Acquisition*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

<sup>199</sup> McLaughlin, *Theories of second-language learning*, 24.

<sup>200</sup> Krashen, *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*, 10.

<sup>201</sup> Neupane, “Second Language Acquisition as a Discipline: A Historical Perspective,” 60.

### 2.4.1 From Theory to Practice: Pedagogical Applications of Krashen's Monitor Model

Notwithstanding certain criticisms of Krashen's conceptualisation of the L2 acquisition process, his comprehensive macro theory does offer some important insights that educators can draw upon in practice. As highlighted by Bailey and Fahad (2021), although theoretical frameworks of L2 acquisition propose 'a broad and abstract perspective on language development', it is ultimately at the discretion of the educator 'to determine what it all means for their particular learners, in specific classroom settings'.<sup>202</sup> In order to explore the potential practical applications of Krashen's model in an educational setting, it is particularly insightful to consider the re-conceptualisation of the educator within his framework.

In the context of Krashen's monitor model, the L2 educator is re-envisioned as a facilitator as opposed to a controller. This has a significant impact on the authority structure of the classroom, the manner in which teaching is enacted, and the learning process. The educator as a controller is a classroom management style closely related to the conventional role of the teacher and traditional teaching approaches, such as the *teacher-centred* ALM as observed in the behaviourist framework. A controller is 'in charge of every moment in the classroom [and] master controllers determine what the students do, when they should speak, and what language forms they should use'.<sup>203</sup> Further, it is often possible for controllers to 'predict many student responses because everything is mapped out ahead of time, with no leeway for divergent paths'.<sup>204</sup> In contrast, the educator, when viewed as a facilitator, assumes a less directive role and instead facilitates the learning process by 'making learning easier for students: helping them to clear away roadblocks [and] negotiate rough terrain'.<sup>205</sup> A facilitator, therefore, adopts a *student-centred approach* and 'capitalizes on the principles of intrinsic motivation by allowing students to discover language through using it pragmatically, rather than by telling them about language'.<sup>206</sup> This approach is consistent with L2 teaching methodologies centred on communicative language teaching (CLT), such as Krashen's *natural approach*.

Krashen's natural approach is based upon the understanding that a facilitator can constructively transfer input to the language learner in a comprehensible manner and low

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<sup>202</sup> Francis Bailey and Ahmed Kadhum Fahad, "Krashen Revisited: Case Study of the Role of Input, Motivation and Identity in Second Language Learning," *Arab World English Journal* 12, no. 2 (2021): 541.

<sup>203</sup> Majid Wajdi, *Classroom Discourse: A Model of Classroom Language Research* (Surabaya: Jakad Publishing, 2018), 53.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, 54.

affective state, which produces a favourable language learning environment. Facilitators may adopt certain strategies such as ‘focusing on the message, neglecting the form, and not insisting on early production unless [they] feel that the students are ready’.<sup>207</sup> It is anticipated that by enforcing such changes in the classroom, a learner’s affective filter will be lowered and they will encode more input and progress in L2 development:

The best methods are therefore those that supply ‘comprehensible input’ in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear. These methods do not force early production in the second language but allow students to produce when they are ‘ready’, recognizing that improvement comes from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not from forcing and correcting production.<sup>208</sup>

Krashen places considerable emphasis on the importance of exposing L2 learners to comprehensible or intelligible input in order for L2 acquisition to take place. Prominence is accorded to message over form. In this regard, it is also necessary to provide learners with a challenge appropriate for their level (i.e., i+1). While the concept of comprehensible input has not escaped criticism from researchers on the grounds that it is principally theory-based and lacks empirical corroboration,<sup>209</sup> it has, however, been supported by ‘teachers around the world’ because this formula provides them with clear guidance on how L2 development may be realised in the classroom:

Support your students as they attempt to make sense of new, raw linguistic material in the second language. For educators creating new curriculum, [comprehensible input] illuminated a path forward: build a course or language program around students comprehending increasingly complex language structures.<sup>210</sup>

This key consideration, fundamentally, underpins Krashen’s proposed language teaching methodology. His approach to language education signalled a significant change in L2 pedagogy. The once popular grammar-based L2 teaching approaches of the 1960s and 1970s were substituted for methods centered on communication in the 1980s. In the context of CLT, Mu’in, Arini, and Amrina (2018) clarify that interaction – ‘the collaborative exchange of thoughts, feelings or ideas between two or more people resulting in a reciprocal effect on each

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<sup>207</sup> Ibrahim Naser Oteir and Abdullah Nijr Al-Otaibi, “Foreign Language Anxiety: A Systematic Review,” *Arab World English Journal* 10, no. 3 (2019): 312.

<sup>208</sup> Krashen, *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*, 7.

<sup>209</sup> Comparable to the issues raised when examining Chomsky’s nativist theory, Krashen does not consider the internal mechanisms of the human brain where information is processed or, in other words, does not substantiate the LAD.

<sup>210</sup> Bailey and Fahad, “Krashen Revisited: Case Study of the Role of Input...,” 542.

other’ – is central to communication.<sup>211</sup> In order to further interrogate the impact of this variable on the process of language acquisition, the analysis moves on to consider interactionist views of language development, which contemplate interactions within a learner’s larger social system, including intersections between language, identity, culture, and social dynamics.

## **2.5 Interactionist Views of Language Development: ‘With a little help from my friends.’**

Thus far, the theoretical frameworks examined have concentrated primarily on psychological and linguistic orientations to L2 acquisition. While these frameworks have provided some significant insights into how linguistic knowledge is acquired and consolidated, they do, however, somewhat overlook the manner in which pragmatic knowledge is developed, that is to say, the ability to use language appropriately in varying communicative contexts.<sup>212</sup> Further, within the context of the pedagogical process, there is no clear reference as to how language itself may be employed as a tool for learning. Indeed, these concerns have become central issues in the field of language education because, as Shu (2019) highlights, language learning is not uniquely ‘the elaboration of a grammatical system, but also the ability to use language as an instrument for learning and the ability to use language appropriately in varying contexts’.<sup>213</sup>

In view of these pedagogical concerns, language classrooms have been re-explored as sociolinguistic environments and discourse communities, and language development as a socially mediated and interaction-driven process.<sup>214</sup> Consonant with this conceptualisation of language education are interactionist views of language acquisition, which maintain that language development takes place as a result of the complex interaction or interplay between a learner’s mental faculties and their surrounding environment.<sup>215</sup> Interactionism, a broad sociological and biological perspective of language development, comprises a number of approaches which, as Paul (2009) emphasises, have ‘had a marked influence on the thinking

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<sup>211</sup> Fatchul Mu’in, Dini Noor Arini, and Rosyi Amrina, *Language in Oral Production Perspectives* (Banjarasin: Rasi Terbit, 2018), 83.

<sup>212</sup> Áine Cregan, *Promoting Oral Language Development in the Primary School* (Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Development/Foráis sa bhunscolaíocht, 2019).

<sup>213</sup> Xiaoyang Shu, “Sociolinguistics in Language Learning and Language Teaching,” *Open Access Library Journal* 6, no. 5650 (2019): 1.

<sup>214</sup> Joan Kelly Hall and Lorrie Stoops Verplaetse, *Second and Foreign Language Learning Through Classroom Interaction* (London: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>215</sup> Nor and Rashid, “A review of theoretical perspectives...”

regarding the relationship(s) between thought and language'.<sup>216</sup> These include the cognitive-interactionist approach, which principally focuses on the interplay between cognition and language development, connectionist models, which seek to understand language development through the use of computational processing and, finally, social-interactionist approaches, which concentrate on the interrelation between social development and language acquisition.<sup>217</sup>

This analysis is primarily concerned with social-interactionist models of language development, as these frameworks shed light upon the significant role that interactions have in the language acquisition process within and across learning spaces. At the core of social interactionism is the concept of communication. It contends that language development is, ultimately, a result of our need to communicate with others in our linguistic environment. Social-interactionist models, such as Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (SCT), Ochs and Schieffelin's language socialisation theory, and Schumann's acculturation model, permit us to explore both permanent and transitory mediators and facilitators of the language acquisition process located in the learner's environment, where they engage with many nested layers of environmental contexts.<sup>218</sup>

Social interactionism emphasises the role of two important theoretical concepts that have received considerable attention in the field of SLA and, more specifically, in the literature on the 'affective turn' in language development: *identity* and *culture*. It is important to note that when a student enters a language classroom, that is to say, their immediate environment, they do so as 'representatives of the identity and culture of their first language[s] and where they come from'.<sup>219</sup> The process of L2 acquisition, however, requires a learner to refine their understanding of identity and culture, which may result in confusion, uncertainty, and doubt relative to 'where they belong in the community'.<sup>220</sup> These issues are also central considerations in theoretical frameworks developed to elucidate the psychological construct of FLA. The initial introduction to these concepts, in this chapter, seeks to contextualise the nexus between language, identity, and culture, while also accentuating the specificity of their role in language acquisition.

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<sup>216</sup> Peter V. Paul, *Language and Deafness*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Massachusetts: Jones and Bartlett, 2009), 93.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>218</sup> In the context of the present investigation, the relationship or interaction between the language learner and the different layers of their environment (i.e., ecosystem) will be discussed at length in Chapter Four.

<sup>219</sup> Tatjana A. Dumitrašković, "Culture, Identity and Foreign Language Teaching and Learning," *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* 1, no. 3 (2014): 251.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*



Further, it is important to note that the ‘social-interactive milieu’ of a language learner is not limited to the language classroom, but anywhere that communicative competency may be fostered (i.e., input received and encoded) in both the physical and virtual world. In this investigation, technology-mediated communication notably became a fixture of the collaborative act of learning or collective exchange between student and teacher.<sup>221</sup> Thus, in order to bridge the gap between theory and practice, this section also briefly explores the manner in which ICT and related technologies may be employed to facilitate L2 learning and develop L2 communicative competency. This knowledge is firmly rooted in a sub-field of SLA known as computer-assisted language learning (CALL).

### 2.5.1 The Social-Interactionist Position on Language Development



What a child can do today with assistance, she will be able to do by herself tomorrow.

**(Lev Vygotsky, 1896 – 1934)<sup>222</sup>**

In any exploration of the social dimension of language development, it is important that the pioneering work of Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky is given due consideration. Often referred to as the Mozart of psychology, Vygotsky was one of the first researchers who investigated how social interaction impacts upon cognitive growth.<sup>223</sup> The SCT of learning evolved from Vygotsky’s belief that ‘human learning presupposes a specific social nature and

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<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>222</sup> Lev Vygotsky, “Thinking and Speech,” in *The collected works of L. S. Vygotsky. Vol. 1. Problems of general psychology*, eds. R. W. Rieber and A. S. Carton (New York: Plenum, 1987), 87; The Vygotsky Project, Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934), photograph (Public Domain), The Vygotsky Project, 1934.

<sup>223</sup> Olga Vasileva and Natalia Balyasnikova, “(Re)Introducing Vygotsky’s Thought: From Historical Overview to Contemporary Psychology,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 10, no. 1515 (2019).

a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them.<sup>224</sup> From a sociocultural perspective, mediation is believed to be a significant component of language development. It is proposed that ‘children’s early language learning arises from processes of meaning-making in collaborative activity with other members of a given culture.’<sup>225</sup> Language, in this context, assumes the role of a cultural artefact that mediates social and psychological activities.

From a sociocultural perspective, Cole and Wertsch (1996) accentuate that ‘society is the bearer of the cultural heritage without which the development of mind is impossible.’<sup>226</sup> Vygotsky specifies that children acquire this societal and cultural heritage along two planes; the first being an interpsychological plane (i.e., social level) through which they acquire knowledge from interactions with social actors in their environment, and the second being an intrapsychological pane (i.e., individual level) through which children absorb, internalise, and personalise this knowledge.<sup>227</sup> In this context, Turuk (2008) draws attention to the manner in which the Vygotskian notion of transition from social to personal property may be interpreted in the context of language education:

This transition from social to personal property according to Vygotsky is not a mere copy, but a transformation of what had been learnt through interaction, into personal values. Vygotsky claims that this is what also happens in schools. Students do not merely copy teachers’ capabilities; rather they transform what teachers offer them during the processes of appropriation.<sup>228</sup>

As highlighted in the literature on collaborative learning, *instructional scaffolding*, a central concept associated with the Vygotskian school of thought, is used as a primary means through which this transition may be actualised in pedagogical practice. Instructional scaffolding is associated with another important developmental concept proposed by Vygotsky called the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD, as defined by Vygotsky, is:

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<sup>224</sup> Lev Vygotsky, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, eds. Michael Cole, Vera John-Steiner, Sylvia Scribner, and Ellen Souberman (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1978), 88.

<sup>225</sup> Mitchell et al., *Second Language Learning Theories: Second Edition*, 200.

<sup>226</sup> Michael Cole and James V. Wertsch, “Beyond the Individual-Social Antinomy in Discussions of Piaget and Vygotsky,” *Human Development* 39, no. 5 (1996): 253.

<sup>227</sup> Vygotsky, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*.

<sup>228</sup> Mamour Choul Turuk, “The Relevance and Implications of Vygotsky’s Sociocultural Theory in the Second Language Classroom,” *Annual Review of Education, Communication and Language Sciences* 5, (2008): 246.

The distance between the *actual developmental* level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of *potential development* as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.<sup>229</sup>

In a manner comparable to Krashen's natural approach, instructional scaffolding also positions the educator as a facilitator in the language acquisition process. The role of the educator is to model or demonstrate how to solve a problem. They then stand back while the learner actively engages with the task, only providing help when necessary. The scaffolding process necessitates flexibility, a period of fading, and delegating responsibility.<sup>230</sup> Further, a central role is accorded to language in teacher-student interactions during the scaffolding process, supporting the position that language development is a socially mediated process. The use of scaffolding strategies permits educators to accommodate differentiated instruction in the language classroom, by providing diverse learners with the necessary amount of input and support they need to reach their highest potential.<sup>231</sup> Importantly, this enables learners to take ownership of their learning.

While some scholars in the field of SLA have proposed that parallels may be drawn between Vygotsky's ZPD and Krashen's input hypothesis (i.e., i+1), others, perhaps most notably Dunn and Lantolf (1998), argue that the two concepts are completely unrelated.<sup>232</sup> This assertion has been supported by researchers on the grounds that the ZPD insists upon the importance of a dialogic relationship between novice and expert in order for the novice to achieve 'greater self-regulation through the language'.<sup>233</sup> In contrast, the input hypothesis places particular emphasis on the role of the LAD in language acquisition, assuming that once the device 'receives and comprehends input containing linguistic features at i+1',<sup>234</sup> then language will be acquired. Therefore, the function of linguistic interaction is essentially inconsequential in the process.<sup>235</sup> Lantolf and Thorne (2014) shed further light upon this debate by highlighting its implications for pedagogical practice. While it is impossible to definitively

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<sup>229</sup> Vygotsky, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, 86.

<sup>230</sup> Julie Radford et al., "Scaffolding learning for independence: Clarifying teacher and teaching assistant roles for children with special educational needs," *Learning and Instruction* 36, (2015).

<sup>231</sup> H. Lee Swanson, Karen R. Harris, and Steve Graham, *Handbook of Learning Disabilities*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: The Guilford Press, 2013).

<sup>232</sup> William E. Dunn and James P. Lantolf, "Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and Krashen's i+1: Incommensurable Constructs; Incommensurable Theories," *Language Learning* 48, no. 3 (2008).

<sup>233</sup> James P. Lantolf and Steven L. Thorne, "Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning," in *Theories in Second Language Acquisition*, eds. B. van Patten and J. Williams (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2007), 210.

<sup>234</sup> Dunn and Lantolf, "Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development...", 423.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*

establish the ‘i+1 of any given learner in advance of development’,<sup>236</sup> it is however possible to anticipate a learner’s development according to the ZPD based upon their receptiveness to mediation. In other words, what a learner is ‘capable of with mediation at one point in time, he or she will be able to do without mediation at a future point in time’.<sup>237</sup>

As language develops, a sophisticated interchange is taking place between the learner and their surrounding environment. The social-interactionist approach contends that language development necessitates both nature and nurture (i.e., cognition and environment), maintaining that linguistic competence, that is to say, knowledge of the language system can only be determined by linguistic performance, otherwise stated, using language in a social context. Several different variables, including identity, culture, and interaction, impact upon this complex interplay between the L2 learner and the social and linguistic environments of their homes and communities. In this context, Ochs and Schieffelin’s language socialisation theory and Schumann’s acculturation model may shed further light on the nexus between language, identity, culture, and social interaction.

### **2.5.1.1 Language, Identity, Culture, and Social Interaction**

Language socialisation theory draws upon the foundations of SCT and investigates the ‘socialization of language and socialization through language’.<sup>238</sup> The theory emerged in the field of linguistic anthropology, during the 1970s and 1980s, with Elinor Ochs and Bambi Schieffelin’s (1984) seminal work on language acquisition and socialisation.<sup>239</sup> Their research paved the way for illuminating case studies on infants and their caregivers and explored how social routine influenced the acquisition of language, culture, and community values. In order to understand the workings of each process, they proposed that language acquisition and cultural acquisition should be examined together as they are interrelated. Brown (2000) also draws significant attention to the indivisible relationship between language and culture: ‘A language is a part of culture, and a culture is a part of language; the two are intricately

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<sup>236</sup> Lantolf and Thorne, “Sociocultural Theory and Second Language Learning,” 210.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>238</sup> Douglas Sperry, Linda Sperry, and Peggy Miller, “Language Socialization,” in *The International Encyclopedia of Language and Social Interaction*, eds. K. Tracy, C. Llie, and TJ Sandel (Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 933.

<sup>239</sup> Elinor Ochs and Bambi Schieffelin, “Language Acquisition and Socialization: Three developmental stories and their implications,” in *Essays on the Mind, Self, and Emotion*, eds. R. Shweder and R. Levine (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984).

interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture.’<sup>240</sup>

Ochs and Schieffelin assert that ‘language socialization mediates the dualisms of nature and nurture, development and learning, individual and society, and mind and culture.’<sup>241</sup> It interrogates the interrelationship between linguistic and cognitive development and other associated types of knowledge acquired through language, including identities, ideologies, cultures, and values. Language socialisation theory, therefore, embodies both a ‘theoretical and methodological framework for understanding how linguistic and cultural competence are developed through everyday communities of practice’.<sup>242</sup> From a social-interactionist perspective, a child’s L1 linguistic system progresses as they develop their social system. The input children receive from their caregivers is limitless and varies in terms of quality and quantity. They also encounter various forms of language including formal, semi-formal, and colloquial utterances. Children become proficient at using language as they acquire new skills through interaction. As interaction increases, children develop different strategies of storage and retrieval.<sup>243</sup>

Halliday (1986) emphasises that children have the advantage of developing language and culture concurrently because the language they receive from birth onwards is contextual and culturally enveloped.<sup>244</sup> However, when an individual decides to learn an L2, they do so with preconstructed social histories. Adolescent or adult language learners will have already ‘formed a pretty robust sense of self-image or identity together with their norms of communication, (i.e., theory of mind) which are forged by their primary cultural, personal, situational and relational experiences’ before entering, what could be termed, target *languacultural* contexts.<sup>245</sup> The concept of *languaculture* was originally conceived by American anthropologist Michael Agar in his book, *Language Shock* (1995).<sup>246</sup> He employs the concept to designate the fundamental link that exists between language and culture.

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<sup>240</sup> Brown, *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*, 177.

<sup>241</sup> Elinor Ochs and Bambi Schieffelin, “The Language Socialization Theory,” in *The Handbook of Language Socialization*, eds. Alessandro Duranti, Elinor Ochs, and Bambi Schieffelin (Massachusetts: John Wiley & Sons, 2014), 8.

<sup>242</sup> Jin Sook Lee and Mary Bucholtz, “Language Socialization Across Learning Spaces,” in *The Handbook of Classroom Discourse*, ed. N. Markee (Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), 319.

<sup>243</sup> Amin et al., “Comparison and Contrast between First and Second Language Learning.”

<sup>244</sup> Halliday, *Learning How to Mean: Explorations in the Development of Language*.

<sup>245</sup> Xingsong Shi, “Gender, Identity and Intercultural Transformation in Second Language Socialisation,” *Language and Intercultural Communication* 6, (2006): 6.

<sup>246</sup> Michael Agar, *Language Shock: Understanding the Culture of Conversation* (New York: HarperCollins, 2005).

Contrary to Chomsky's UG Hypothesis, the concept of languaculture maintains that language not only requires a learner to draw on grammar and vocabulary, but also on prior knowledge and experiences, their biography, cultural information, and habits and behaviours they have already developed.<sup>247</sup> Examining Agar's concept of languaculture in conjunction with language socialisation theory serves to shed further light upon the manner in which L2 learners 'become speakers of cultures', and also the challenges that can arise during this process.<sup>248</sup>

In a series of lectures delivered at the University of California, in 2006, Agar problematised the concept of culture, arguing that traditional concepts of culture regard it as a 'closed, coherent system of meaning and action in which an individual always and only participates'.<sup>249</sup> Agar, however, contends that culture is not a fixed, coherent system in constant equilibrium. He argues that culture is an open, dynamic system that co-exists in the learner's environment. He asserts that culture is a construction and, more specifically, a translation, through which language and culture are 'co-constructed and mutually contextualised'.<sup>250</sup> The translation occurs between the language learner's LC1 and LC2, where the latter refers to the target languaculture and the former to the source languaculture. As L2 learners begin a boundary crossing journey, they will encounter significant changes in their communities of practice, which will have a considerable impact on their identity negotiation and renegotiation. Agar clarifies that 'the amount of material that goes into the translation',<sup>251</sup> that is to say, the co-construction of language and culture, will differ depending on the boundary that learners perceive between them. The learner will distinguish the LC1/LC2 border when their contact produces rich points, which are 'those surprises, those departures from an outsider's expectations that signal a difference between LC1 and LC2 and give direction to subsequent learning'.<sup>252</sup> The magnitude of these rich points may, thus, engender a conflict or modification in an L2 learner's language ideology.

Within the context of pedagogical practice, language socialisation theory, therefore, encourages educators to devise a central locus for socialising novices into a linguistic community because as 'novices become fluent communicators, they also become increasingly

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<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>248</sup> Elinor Ochs and Bambi Schieffelin, "The Language Socialization Theory."

<sup>249</sup> Michael Agar, "Culture: Can You Take It Anywhere?" in *Lecture Presented at the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education, 2006* (Santa Barbara: University of California), 3-5.

<sup>250</sup> Shi, "Gender, Identity and Intercultural Transformation," 4.

<sup>251</sup> Michael Agar, "Culture: Can You Take It Anywhere?"

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*

adept members of communities'.<sup>253</sup> However, as Ochs and Schieffelin highlight, the efficacy of communication is contingent upon a learner's 'grasp of shifting and enduring perspectives that give meaning to an array of relationships, institutions, moral worlds, and knowledge domains'.<sup>254</sup> Consistent with the tenets of SCT, language socialisation theory places emphasis on the importance of developing educational frameworks through which learners interact with more experienced or proficient individuals, such as their teachers, peers, or members of their community in order to progress in L2 linguistic, cultural, and communicative proficiency. Through this interaction, learners are encouraged to create and recreate cultural and linguistic practices both within and across learning spaces.<sup>255</sup> In doing so, learners 'acquire, reproduce, and transform the knowledge and competence that enable them to participate appropriately within specific communities of language users' and, furthermore, permits them to integrate their current linguistic and cultural knowledge with innovative ways of interrogating and using language.<sup>256</sup>

This conceptualisation of L2 development bears comparison with the central component that underpins linguist John H. Schumann's model of L2 acquisition known as *acculturation* – the process through which language learners engage in cultural exchange and adaptation. Schumann (1978) proposes that the social and psychological variables which may impact upon the process of L2 acquisition can be grouped together into one variable, referred to as acculturation.<sup>257</sup> The model maintains that the more a language learner assimilates with a target language group, the more proficient they will become in a foreign language. This hypothesis has been corroborated empirically, as evidenced by Tollefson's (1991) analysis which demonstrated that learners who aspire to assimilate with a target language community are 'generally more successful than learners who [are] concerned about retaining their original cultural identity'.<sup>258</sup> Similar to the LC1/LC2 boundary described by Agar, a learner's process of acculturation may be influenced by the distance they perceive between themselves and the target language group. It has been revealed that psychological factors including language shock, culture shock, and ego permeability, as well as social factors including cultural

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<sup>253</sup> Elinor Ochs and Bambi Schieffelin, "The Language Socialization Theory," 7.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>255</sup> Lee and Bucholtz, "Language Socialization Across Learning Spaces," 319.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>257</sup> John Schumann, "The Relationship of Pidginization, Creolization and Decreolization to Second Language Acquisition," *Language Learning* 28, no. 2 (1978).

<sup>258</sup> James Tollefson, *Planning Language, Planning Inequality: Language policy in the community* (New York: Longman, 1991), 23.

congruence, attitude, and integration patterns have an unfavourable impact on the process of acculturation.<sup>259</sup>

In this context, it is also important to note that culture and identity are intimately linked and regulate an individual's cognitive function and affective filter. From an educational perspective, Duff and Uchida (1997) affirm that learners' 'identities and beliefs are co-constructed, negotiated, and transformed on an ongoing basis by means of language'.<sup>260</sup> In the 1990s, the field of SLA saw a boom in research on the interrelationship between identity and L2 learning.<sup>261</sup> Different terminology, such as the 'self', 'agent', 'role', 'subject', 'position', and 'subjectivity', has been employed when discussing identity. Definitions of identity, in the field of SLA, underscore that it is deeply rooted and constructed in the language learner's socio-cultural context, thus, theoretical foundations of identity-focused research in the field are largely grounded in post-structuralist and sociocultural theories.<sup>262</sup> While structuralist theories hold the view that that language learning is an incremental and individual process that requires the learner to internalise 'a set of rules, structures, and vocabulary of a standard language',<sup>263</sup> from a post-structuralist perspective, language is theorised as a dialogic process in which a learner struggles 'to use language to participate in specific speech communities'.<sup>264</sup> Language is not regarded as an assemblage of idealised structures that are detached from their speaker or speaking.<sup>265</sup> On the contrary, it is contemplated as situated utterances in which speakers endeavour to construct meaning while communicating and interacting with others.

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<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>260</sup> Patricia Duff and Yuko Uchida, "The Negotiation of Teachers' Sociocultural Identities and Practices in Postsecondary EFL Classrooms," *TESOL Quarterly* 31, no. 3 (1997): 452. Identity research has played a particularly significant role in the social sciences and humanities. Given the broad scope of the field, it is however important to recognise that 'no one perspective "owns" the identity concept' (Côté 2015, 527) because the concept of identity is too extensive to be capsulized by any one theoretical perspective or academic discipline (Pratt et al., 2015).

<sup>261</sup> This development is often attributed to the publication of Firth and Wagner's (1997) article entitled *On Discourse, Communication, and (Some) Fundamental Concepts in SLA Research*. This article, however, has also been the subject of considerable debate in the SLA community. While some argue that it signalled 'a part of a general push to open up SLA beyond its roots in linguistics and cognitive psychology' (Block 2007 864), others (e.g., Gass, Lee and Roots 2007) contend that it did not foreshadow a shift in a new research direction but was an extension of a research dialogue that was ongoing at the time. Although some researchers understate the influence the article had on identity research in SLA, they do, however, acknowledge that it did play an important and positive role in expanding the research base.

<sup>262</sup> Prior to the post-structuralist shift in SLA research on identity, language learner identities were generally considered in binary terms (e.g., introverted or extroverted, motivated or unmotivated).

<sup>263</sup> Bonny Norton, "Identity and Poststructuralist Theory in SLA," in *Identity and Poststructuralist Theory in SLA*, eds. Sarah Mercer and Marion Williams (Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2014), 63.

<sup>264</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>265</sup> Post-structuralist theories of language gained prominence in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century. They are chiefly associated with the work of scholars including Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin, French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, and Australian Semiotician Gunther Kress, to name but a few.



From a post-structuralist perspective, identity can be described as decentralised.<sup>266</sup> It is viewed as a construct that is variable, multifaceted, and unequivocally social. Through a post-structuralist lens, language learner identity is ‘dynamic, context-dependent, and context-producing’.<sup>267</sup> In the L2 acquisition process, a learner is in a constant cycle of identity construction and reconstruction. They oscillate between perceptions they have of themselves as speakers of their L1 and as learners of an L2. In essence, language learners are in an ongoing process of identity negotiation. Norton Pierce (1995) asserts that through language ‘a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time’.<sup>268</sup> From a pedagogical perspective, language is, therefore, a chief site ‘for the construction of self-identification or group affiliation’.<sup>269</sup> This sentiment is echoed by Byram (2006) who affirms that ‘languages symbolise identities and are used to signal identities by those who speak them.’<sup>270</sup> Identity, in the context of L2 acquisition could, therefore, be more precisely described as ‘a sense of self’ or ‘a sense of belonging’.<sup>271</sup> Changes in a language learner’s socio-cultural environment may conceivably influence identity and motivate learners to rearrange their self-definition. Thus, it is important to contemplate an L2 learner’s identity within a social context.

It could therefore be said that language fulfils the function of a *social anchor* in that one cannot be contemplated without taking the other into consideration. Edwards (2009) emphasises that ‘people need psychosocial ‘anchors’: it is as simple as that.’<sup>272</sup> An anchoring framework, as Grzymała-Kazłowska (2015) explains, ‘links the issues of identity, security and integration’.<sup>273</sup> Social anchoring, an emerging concept in identity research, gives prominence to ‘the role of identity for adaptation and ways in which individuals [...] establish essential footholds in their lives in a complex and changeable society’.<sup>274</sup> One of the most significant socio-cultural markers that has served as an indicant of identity and, by association culture, throughout modern human history is language. Identity is ‘at the heart of the person, and the

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<sup>266</sup> Bonny Norton, “Identity: Second Language,” in *Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics*, ed. K. Brown (Oxford: Elsevier, 2006).

<sup>267</sup> Azadeh Nematzadeh and Mehry Haddad Narafshan, “Construction and re-construction of identities: A study of learners’ personal and L2 identity,” *Cogent Psychology* 7, no. 1 (2020): 4.

<sup>268</sup> Bonny Norton Peirce, “Social Identity, Investment, and Language Learning,” *TESOL Quarterly* 29, no. 1 (1995): 13.

<sup>269</sup> Nematzadeh and Narafshan, “Construction and re-construction of identities,” 12.

<sup>270</sup> Michael Byram, “Languages and Identities,” in *Proceedings of Intergovernmental Conference Languages of Schooling: Towards a Framework for Europe, Strasbourg, 16-18 October, 2006* (Strasbourg: Intergovernmental Conference, 2006).

<sup>271</sup> Nematzadeh and Narafshan, “Construction and re-construction of identities,” 12.

<sup>272</sup> John Edwards, *Challenges in the Social Life of Language* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 98.

<sup>273</sup> Aleksandra Grzymała-Kazłowska, “Social Anchoring: Immigrant Identity, Adaptation and Integration Reconnected?,” *Sociology* 50, no. 6 (2015): 1123.

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid.*

group, and the connective tissue that links them’.<sup>275</sup> It is both an individual and collective need – it is ‘the socio-cultural glue that gives any community its *raison d’être*’.<sup>276</sup> Edwards (2009) proposes that an individual needs to anchor their identity, comparable to that of a vessel, in order to have a stable and coherent awareness of the ‘self’. Yet, just as a vessel’s anchor may be temporary or permanent, the weight of an individual’s anchoring framework is also infinitely adjustable. Supposing an individual’s anchoring framework is restricted and, by extension, their identity is limited – what consequences may this have on the individual? Indeed, this is a significant issue that has been raised in the literature on language anxiety and will be discussed at greater length in Chapter Three.

#### **2.5.1.1.1 From Theory to Practice: Pedagogical Applications of Social Interactionism through ICT**

The manner in which we interact and communicate has changed dramatically in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Technology has become a ‘fixture’ around the globe and has infiltrated many aspects of life and industry, changing how we interact, work, and learn.<sup>277</sup> Today, technology-mediated communication and, more specifically, *technology-mediated learning* (TML) has become a key feature of the educational sphere. TML is employed as a broad term in the literature that encompasses the different ways in which computers and related technologies may be incorporated into teaching and learning.<sup>278</sup> TML continues to have a significant and extensive impact upon teaching and learning, perhaps nowhere more so than in the field of language education. ICT has notably been employed in order to interrogate processes of L2 acquisition and has also been investigated as a significant mediator of these processes.<sup>279</sup>

In the 1920s and 1930s, early pedagogical applications of technology that sought to foster communication and interaction in language education included the phonograph and gramophone.<sup>280</sup> As the nature of technology developed, so too did its use in language education.

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<sup>275</sup> Edwards, *Challenges in the Social Life of Language*, 99.

<sup>276</sup> Hassen Zriba, *Readings in Language and Identity: “I Am What I Say”* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2020), 16.

<sup>277</sup> Zhonghao Zhou, “Second Language Learning in the Technology-Mediated Environments,” *International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Studies* 4, no. 10 (2017): 28.

<sup>278</sup> Lesley Shield, *Technology-Mediated Learning* (Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies, 2008), accessed April 25, 2022. <https://www.llas.ac.uk/resources/gpg/416>

<sup>279</sup> Dorothy M. Chun, “The Role of Technology in SLA Research,” *Language Learning & Technology* 20, no. 2 (2016).

<sup>280</sup> Rafael Salaberry, “The Use of Technology for Second Language Learning and Teaching: A Retrospective,” *The Modern Language Journal* 85, no. 1 (2001).

These earlier listening devices were gradually replaced by the magnetic tape recorder in the 1940s and cassette/tape recorders from the 1960s onwards for use in language laboratories.<sup>281</sup> In the 1950s, however, is when we observe the dawning of CALL.<sup>282</sup> CALL research specifically examines the manner in which the wide range of ICT and related technologies may be employed in order to develop communicative competence in L2 learning.<sup>283</sup> CALL may be implemented in two distinctive ways in the language learning process: (1) Students may learn from technology and/or (2) Students may learn with technology.<sup>284</sup> In this context, it is important to draw attention to the word ‘assisted’. While technology plays a key role in the language learning process, CALL does not mean learning without the aid and support of instructors. It simply means that technology is used by educators as a pedagogical tool in order to facilitate and enhance the language learning process.

The evolution of CALL has been documented, most prominently, by Mark Warschauer and Deborah Healey (1998) in their distinguished article, *Computers and Language Learning: An Overview*,<sup>285</sup> and Stephen Bax (2003),<sup>286</sup> a prominent CALL scholar and researcher, in his intriguing publication *CALL – Past, Present and Future*. In order to traverse the landscape of CALL, Warschauer and Healey’s historical overview has been chosen, firstly, based upon its prominence in the literature and, secondly, because of the manner in which it harmonises with the broader phases of transition in the field of SLA, explored earlier in this chapter. As can be observed in Figure 2.3, Warschauer and Healey have chronicled the evolution of CALL according to three principal phases of transition: (1) Behaviourist CALL (1960s), (2) Communicative CALL (1970s-1980s), and (3) Integrative CALL (late 1980s to present). Each phase is informed by the most prominent theoretical orientation of language acquisition of that period.<sup>287</sup> Broader views of L2 acquisition have, therefore, notably impacted upon the manner in which computers have been used and viewed in the pedagogical process and have also

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<sup>281</sup> A language laboratory is a dedicated space, usually on a college or university campus, with specialised audio and visual equipment used to facilitate language learning.

<sup>282</sup> The CALL acronym was approved at the 1983 annual TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) convention in Toronto, Canada. Michael Thomas, *Project-Based Language Learning with Technology: Learner Collaboration in an EFL Classroom in Japan* (London: Routledge, 2017).

<sup>283</sup> Ken Beatty, *Computer-Assisted Language Learning*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Routledge, 2010).

<sup>284</sup> Sylvie Thouësny and Linda Bradley, “Introduction on Views of Emergent Researchers in L2 Teaching and Learning with Technology,” in *Second Language Teaching and Learning with Technology: Views of Emergent Researchers*, eds. Sylvie Thouësny and Linda Bradley (Dublin: Research-publishing.net, 2011).

<sup>285</sup> Mark Warschauer and Deborah Healey, “Computers and Language Learning: An Overview,” *Language Teaching* 31, (1998).

<sup>286</sup> Stephen Bax, “CALL – Past, Present, and Future,” *System* 31, (2003). Bax did not change the definitions proposed by Warschauer and Healey, he revised the names/phases of CALL to restricted, open and integrated CALL.

<sup>287</sup> Namely, behaviourist, linguistic, and social perspectives of language learning.

influenced the key objectives of CALL activities developed to encourage communicative competency (i.e., the skills targeted – fluency, grammatical complexity, agency etc.).<sup>288</sup>

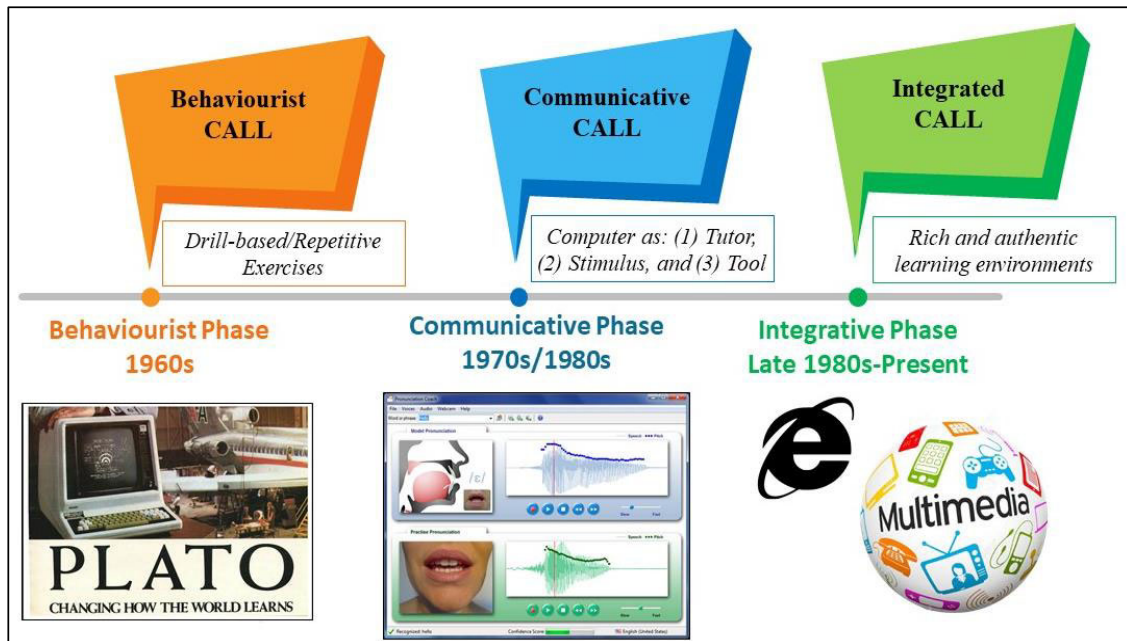


Figure 2.3 The Evolution of CALL.

The rise of CALL can be traced back to 1960s America, during which a number of ‘high-profile projects [...] pioneered the use of mainframe computers for language learning’.<sup>289</sup> This early phase of CALL was characterised by the behaviourist model of language learning. Thus, the SRR model and ALM exceptionally influenced the use of computers (i.e., drill and practice) and the objectives of CALL activities (i.e., developing accuracy). The PLATO tutorial system (see Figure 2.3) was the leading computer in this regard. Initially developed during the mainframe era, the PLATO system ‘featured a number of services that foreshadowed contemporary use of computers: tutorials and practice exercises, testing, email, forums, message boards, instant messaging, and multiplayer games’.<sup>290</sup> This significant technological development permitted learners to practice language forms (e.g., grammar and vocabulary),

<sup>288</sup> Thomas, *Project-Based Language Learning with Technology...*

<sup>289</sup> Sue E. K. Otto, “From Past to Present: A Hundred Years of Technology for L2 Learning,” in *The Handbook of Technology and Second Language Teaching and Learning*, eds. Carol A. Chapelle and Shannon Sauro (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons), 12.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*

increased their accuracy by giving them instant feedback on their performance, and reduced teachers' correction workload.<sup>291</sup>

Nevertheless, just as behaviourism gave way to linguistic perspectives of L2 acquisition, so too did CALL. In the 1970s, CALL entered the communicative phase, during which the role of the computer in language learning transformed into a tutor (i.e., teacher), stimulus (i.e., encourage critical thinking), and tool (i.e., to employ and build an awareness of language):

Proponents of communicative CALL stressed that computer-based activities should focus more on using forms than on the forms themselves, teach grammar implicitly rather than explicitly, allow and encourage students to generate original utterances rather than just manipulate prefabricated language, and use the target language predominantly or even exclusively.<sup>292</sup>

Based upon the communicative approach to language teaching and learning (e.g., Krashen's natural approach), the chief focus of CALL, during this phase, was on communication in the target language. This involved more active participation on the part of the language learner. Activities moved beyond drilling and viewing language as distinct components and instead required learners to engage in collaborative and task-based activities that regarded language as a whole. As the computer developed, so too did its software interface and programming.<sup>293</sup> Students could now perform activities such as text reconstruction, text manipulation, practice their pronunciation with software programmes and CD-ROMS (e.g., Rosetta Stone, Linguaphone etc.) and play simulation games to encourage discussion (e.g., roleplay) in order to enhance their fluency in the target language. In this context, language learning was regarded as 'a process of discovery, expression, and development' because 'the focus was not so much on what students did with the machine, but rather what they with each other while working at the computer'.<sup>294</sup>

Despite the significant strides that communicative CALL made in the advancement of language learning, by the late 1980s and early 1990s, it was also strongly contested on the

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<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>292</sup> Warschauer and Healey, "Computers and Language Learning: An Overview," 57.

<sup>293</sup> During this phase of CALL, programming was also advanced. Two types of programmes now existed: (1) Authoring programmes – A teacher could develop/enter their own content and (2) Dedicated programmes – The programme content was pre-set and could not be modified. Theo Bongaerts et al., *Computer Applications in Language Learning* (Dordrecht: Foris Publications Holland, 2019).

<sup>294</sup> Warschauer and Healey, "Computers and Language Learning: An Overview," 57.

grounds that it was being employed ‘in an *ad hoc* and disconnected fashion’.<sup>295</sup> Thus, researchers such as Kenning and Kenning (1990) argued that the computer found ‘itself making a greater contribution to marginal rather than central elements’ of the language learning process.<sup>296</sup> Warschauer and Healey accentuate that many language teachers were shifting their perspective of communicative teaching from the linguistic orientation to a more ‘social’ perspective, which attached greater importance to ‘language use in authentic social contexts’.<sup>297</sup> This paradigm shift, once again, was reflective of the broader theoretical transition occurring in the field of SLA at that time.

In the late 1980s, CALL progressed to the integrative phase, which coincided with the expansion of the Internet and innovation in multimedia technology. Arguably, technology has been integrated now more than ever in the language learning process. The development of both productive and receptive language skills has been targeted owing to the remarkable technological advancements that have materialised in the past four decades. From early developments such as the video cassette, compact disc (i.e., CD), digital video disc (i.e., DVD), digital camera, and gaming console, to modern media, including video podcasts, electronic books, audio slideshows, animated videos, mobile applications, video conferencing software, social media, smartphones, and tablets, the computer has transformed and optimised language education by providing rich and authentic learning environments which, by extension, has given learners more agency over the language learning process.

Technology continues to expand the field of language education. Presently, attention has been drawn to the advantages of using CALL in order to address the needs of and promote language teaching in the plurilingual and multilingual classroom. Chun (2016) insists that the function of technology in language education now extends beyond developing linguistic and communicative competence, and addresses ‘newer types of symbolic competence and intercultural competence, which include integral technological components and are a part of general digital literacies or multiliteracies’.<sup>298</sup> This view is also echoed in Brautlacht et al.’s (2016) informative publication, *European Dialogue Project: Collaborating to Improve on the Quality of Learning Environments*, wherein it is stated that one of the chief goals of CALL

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<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>296</sup> Marie-Madeleine Kenning and MJ Kenning, *Computers and Language Learning: Current Theory and Practice* (New York: Ellis Horwood, 1990), 90.

<sup>297</sup> Warschauer and Healey, “Computers and Language Learning: An Overview,” 58.

<sup>298</sup> Chun, “The Role of Technology in SLA Research,” 98. In the context of teaching and learning, digital literacy or multiliteracy encompasses the individual and social skills required in order to successfully navigate different channels of communication in the digital age.

today is ‘to prepare students for active citizenship in a global and networked society’.<sup>299</sup> This is also reflective of Warschauer and Healey’s future vision of CALL, termed *intelligent CALL*:

The idea [of intelligent CALL] is to have software that uses the power of the computer to offer easy interaction with the material to be learned, including meaningful feedback and guidance; comprehensible information in multiple media designed to fit the learning style of individual students; and ways for students to carry communication beyond an individual computer screen.<sup>300</sup>

In this regard, Carol A. Chapelle and Shannon Sauro (2017), influential authorities on CALL, contend that the distinctive features of language study, in this day and age, could be better typified by the term *lingua-technoculture*, an expansion of Agar’s languaculture, in order to ‘denote the technology-mediated nature of so much of learners’ second language experience’.<sup>301</sup>

As of today, research in CALL has been conducted for nearly four decades. It is stated in the European Association of Computer Assisted Language Learning’s (i.e., EUROCALL) Research Policy Statement (2010) that:

Research in CALL [...] has now reached a significant level of volume and maturity. It is a truly international discipline and has led to notable improvements in the teaching and learning of languages in secondary and higher education institutions worldwide.<sup>302</sup>

The landscape of CALL continues to evolve thanks to a new iteration of technology. Since its inception, the role of the language learner has transformed from knowledge recipient to communicator, commentator, and creator. By using technology as a tool to enhance and enrich the language learning process, educators have the ability to reinvent the pedagogical process. CALL permits flexibility and adaptability in the teaching and learning process and, further, as renowned CALL scholar and researcher Lesley Shield affirms, it allows learners to engage with ‘authentic resources, texts and target language speakers in a way that was previously impossible without living in the target culture’.<sup>303</sup> While using multiple instructional mediums

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<sup>299</sup> Regina Brautlacht et al., “European Dialogue Project: Collaborating to Improve on the Quality of Learning Environments,” in *Handbook of Research on Innovative Pedagogies and Technologies for Online Learning in Higher Education*, eds. Phu Vu, Scott Fredrickson, and Carl Moore (Pennsylvania: IGI Global, 2017), 399.

<sup>300</sup> Warschauer and Healey, “Computers and Language Learning: An Overview,” 65.

<sup>301</sup> Carol A. Chapelle and Shannon Sauro, *The Handbook of Technology and Second Language Teaching and Learning* (New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, 2017), 460.

<sup>302</sup> EUROCALL, “EUROCALL Research Policy Statement (2010),” *EUROCALL*, Last Modified May 26, 2022, <https://www.eurocall-languages.org/about/research-policy>

<sup>303</sup> Shield, *Technology-Mediated Learning*.

in the pedagogical process is a powerful instruction strategy that will continue to inform and influence teaching practice, it is also important to develop ways to work around the ‘limits’ of technology. This grey area is unpacked further in Chapter Three, which contemplates the impact of distance education on the language acquisition process, and in Chapter Eight, which interrogates the extent to which technology has the potential to facilitate a performative pedagogical process.

## **2.6 The field of SLA Comes of Age: The Competition Model, Complex Dynamic Systems Theory, and Statistical Learning of an L2**

Thus far, the present discussion has provided a detailed overview of how different psychological, linguistic, and interactionist theories of L2 acquisition have influenced the manner in which language acquisition and, further, language teaching approaches have been delineated over the past seven decades. However, it is important to remember that ‘one of science’s characteristics is that it is progressive, in constant search of the truth [...] this characteristic of science results in new paradigms emerging, or what is called a paradigm shift.’<sup>304</sup> In order to further advance our understanding of the process of L2 acquisition, a growing body of research has emerged in recent years which offers an alternative and broader conceptualisation of the L2 acquisition process.

While it lies beyond the scope of this chapter to provide a detailed account of all the work taking place in furtherance of this paradigm shift, this section aims to provide the reader with an overview of the how the field of SLA has evolved in more recent years by interrogating three critical developments in this regard. It begins by examining two significant usage-based approaches to L2 acquisition: the *competition model* and *complex dynamic systems theory*. Usage-based approaches to L2 acquisition are characterised by the view that ‘language learning is primarily based on learners’ exposure to their second language in use, that is, the linguistic input they receive.’<sup>305</sup> Further, usage-based approaches maintain that learners ‘induce the rules of their L2 from input by employing [...] general cognitive mechanisms [which] work in any kind of learning, including language learning.’<sup>306</sup>

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<sup>304</sup> Shahryar Banan, Muhammad Ridwan, and Abdurahman Adisaputera, “A Study of Connectionism Theory,” *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute Journal* 3, no. 3 (2020): 2335.

<sup>305</sup> Nick C. Ellis and Stefanie Wulff, “Usage-Based Approaches to SLA,” in *Theories in second language acquisition: An Introduction*, eds. B. VanPatten and J. Williams (New York: Routledge, 2014), 75.

<sup>306</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.



The *competition model* offers both a functionalist and connectionist view of L2 acquisition and considers acquisition to be a largely constructive and data-driven process depending upon universals of cognitive structures as opposed to universals of linguistic structure.<sup>307</sup> *Complex dynamic systems theory*, which has gained significant momentum in the field of SLA since the 1990s, ‘brings together the many factors that interact in the complex system of language, learning, and use.’<sup>308</sup> Finally, these theoretical frameworks are built upon further by considering acquisition from a *statistical* perspective and, more specifically, the manner in which statistical mechanisms play a role in language development proficiency.

### 2.6.1 The Competition Model

Developed by Elizabeth Bates and Brian MacWhinney, in 1982, the competition model is a psycholinguistic, functional theory of language acquisition, which considers how sentences are processed.<sup>309</sup> In contrast to scholars who uphold the formalist perspective on language acquisition, such as Chomsky, functionalists believe that language development is largely informed by functional constraints which determine language forms both diachronically and synchronically.<sup>310</sup> Both statistical and probability factors play a central role in the principles underpinning the model. It is argued that language acquisition takes place when competing probabilities are stimulated by a learner’s memory. More specifically, it is the result of ‘competition’ between a learner’s different thinking processes which impacts upon language development.

Comparable to a computer programme, the competition model posits that the brain collects and organises the information or input that it receives and, ultimately, analyses and makes sense of it through a process of cognitive computations. In this regard, perception has an important role because, as Ghaemi and Haghani (2011) highlight:

As far as perception is concerned, many ideas are called to the mind, but few are chosen. The final perception of a situation is determined by those constructs which, together, most

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<sup>307</sup> Brian MacWhinney, “Second Language Acquisition and the Competition Model,” in *Tutorials in Bilingualism Psycholinguistic Perspectives*, eds. Annette M. B. de Groot and Judith F. Kroll (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Publishers, 1997).

<sup>308</sup> Nick C. Ellis, “Dynamic systems and SLA: The wood and the trees,” *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 10, no. 1 (2007): 23.

<sup>309</sup> Brian MacWhinney and Li Ping, “Competition model,” in *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, ed. Carol A. Chapelle (New Jersey: Blackwell Publishing, 2013).

<sup>310</sup> Brian MacWhinney and Elizabeth Bates, *The Crosslinguistic Study of Sentence Processing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

successfully matched the stimulus. The ideas can win out only if they are in harmony with the other ideas in that particular context.<sup>311</sup>

In this regard, MacWhinney describes the ‘core representational structure’, or perceived unit of competition, as the lexical item.<sup>312</sup> In the literature, a lexical item is generally understood to be either a single word or a chain of words (e.g., a phrase, a phrasal verb, a proverb), which serves to inform meaning and understanding. Lexical items are characterised as a set of auditory properties (e.g., voicing onset time, noise bursts, formant frequencies) and they have a semantic function.<sup>313</sup> During language processing each lexical item is ‘formed by the related meanings and sounds and by the range of responses of the lexical items with which it competes.’<sup>314</sup> Thus, each lexical item creates an expectation for other lexical items. If sentence processing functions properly, then these expectations or ‘calculations’ are consolidated. However, with any system there may also be some inconsistencies or discrepancies which may result in errors. When a language learner receives auditory input, many variables may impact upon the manner in which the sentence is processed; therefore, each sentence may give rise to several interpretations. When the brain starts to process the auditory input it receives, it is quickly calculating all of these possible interpretations. In this context, the language learner is moving through four key stages of learning: (1) functional acquisition; (2) jumping-in; (3) competition; and (4) conflict learning.<sup>315</sup>

Functional acquisition is associated with ‘the functions that underly the forms of language’, in other words, lexical acquisition initially begins as a result of a learner’s interest in meaning making and expressing themselves.<sup>316</sup> Bates and MacWhinney describe this as *functional readiness* – a learner’s ‘interest in the concept expressed by a word before actually acquiring that word.’<sup>317</sup> This connection is achieved through a process of reinforcement, which involves ‘strengthening the links between a set of semantic cues and a central node concept.’<sup>318</sup> Once the central node of a lexical item is established, the learner then begins to ‘jump-in’, that

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<sup>311</sup> Farid Ghaemi and Mastaneh Hagani, “The competition model: From language processing to pedagogical implications,” *Journal of Language and Culture* 2, no. 11 (2011): 194.

<sup>312</sup> Brian MacWhinney, “The Competition Model,” in *Mechanisms of Language Acquisition: The 20th Annual Carnegie Mellon Symposium on Cognition*, ed. Brian MacWhinney (London: Routledge, 2014).

<sup>313</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>314</sup> Ghaemi and Hagani, “The competition model ...,” 194.

<sup>315</sup> MacWhinney, “The Competition Model.”

<sup>316</sup> *Ibid.*, 287.

<sup>317</sup> Brian MacWhinney and Elizabeth Bates, “Competition, Variation, and Language Learning,” in *Mechanisms of language acquisition*, ed. Brian MacWhinney (London: Routledge, 2014), 176.

<sup>318</sup> MacWhinney, “The Competition Model,” 287.

is to say, they can make reasonable assumptions about a lexical domain. Errors committed during this stage can be rectified in later learning through the technique of ‘finding the unknown within the known’.<sup>319</sup> This requires the learner to make an initial ‘fast mapping’ of the sound they hear and, in doing so, identify the component of the incoming auditory input that is unknown. For example, if the language learner has already acquired and consolidated to memory the French word for ‘mom’ (*maman*) and they hear the sentence ‘mom is coming’ (*maman arrive*), the lexical item ‘*maman*’ will quickly achieve full activation with no competing forms as it is ‘able to “commit” the auditory cues that led to its activation.’<sup>320</sup> In this context, the lexical item also “commits” the semantic cues associated with ‘*maman*’. The remaining auditory cues are /aʁiv/ and the remaining semantic cues are: (A (auditory input) -- arrive --- H (hearing) --- present tense). If the learner is intrigued by the semantic remainder, then they will link it with the auditory remainder and acquire a new lexical item.<sup>321</sup>

The learner will then enter the competition phase, which is associated with the ‘long-term development of strength in the connections between cues and lexical items.’<sup>322</sup> As noted earlier, the connections that initiate item recall win in competitions and thus become stronger, while those that lose in competition become weaker. MacWhinney underscores that the most important connections in regulating the ‘correct output are the ones that are favoured most by competitive learning.’<sup>323</sup> In this context, cue validity and cue strength play a central role, both of which are related to task frequency. If a certain cue always guides the learner towards the correct conclusion, then they will depend upon it as it is ‘maximally high in reliability’.<sup>324</sup> This in turn leads to cue validity – the product of reliability multiplied by availability. In this regard, the notion of conflict validity or learning, in other words, ‘the validity of the cue in those particular instances where it conflicts with other cues to the same role’ is just as important.<sup>325</sup> Such conflicts in language learning may involve case marking or syntactical errors. Let us take, for example, the sentence “*les chats voit elle*” (the cats see she) in French. This conflict may be resolved by changing the word order and giving the sentence a SVO (subject, verb, object) interpretation (i.e., *elle voit les chats*). As the mind is calculating the various possibilities for interpretation, which are based upon past learning and cue development, the mind opts for the

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<sup>319</sup> *Ibid.*, 289.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.*, 290. This example, included in MacWhinney’s chapter entitled *The Competition Model* (p. 290), has been adapted and translated into French for the purposes of this chapter.

<sup>321</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.*, 291.

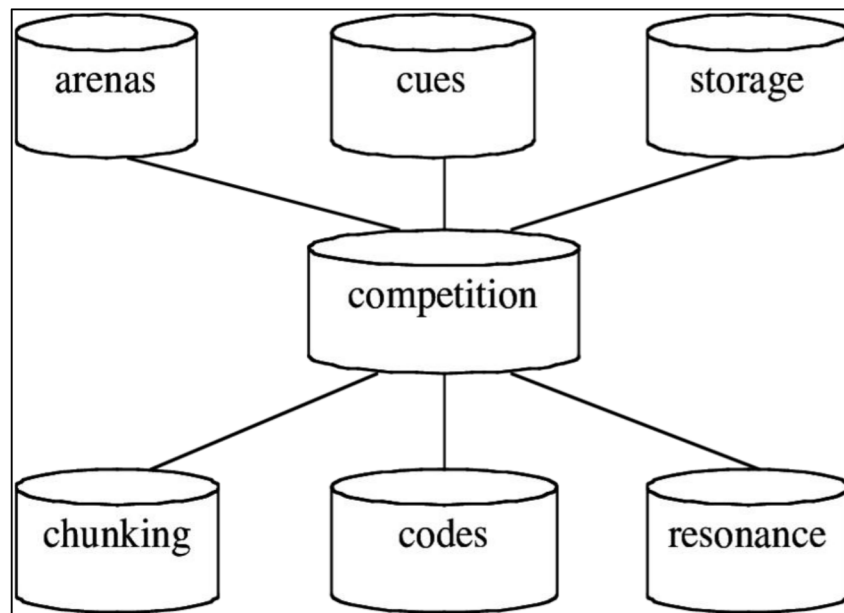
<sup>323</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*, 293.

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid.*, 294.

interpretation or understanding that has the highest statistical probability and suitability for that given situation.<sup>326</sup>

Since its initial conceptualisation, MacWhinney (2005) has extended the competition model to include several key inputs to competition, which are outlined based upon six sub-components: (1) arenas, (2) cues, (3) chunking, (4) storage, (5) codes, and (6) resonance.<sup>327</sup> This revised version is known as the *unified competition model* (See Figure 2.4).



**Figure 2.4** The Unified Competition Model (MacWhinney 2005).

MacWhinney emphasises that the unified competition model should not be understood as a processing model, but rather ‘a logical decomposition of the general problem of language learning into a series of smaller but interrelated structural and processing components.’<sup>328</sup> At the core of this model is still the factor of ‘*competition*’; however, its characteristics now go beyond cue summation and interactive activation to include resonance. Resonance occurs most notably during covert inner speech or verbal thinking. It has a crucial role in ‘understanding code separation, age-related effects, and the microprocesses of learning and processing’.<sup>329</sup> The

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>327</sup> Brian MacWhinney, “A Unified Model of Language Acquisition,” in *Handbook of cognitive linguistics and second language acquisition*, eds. J. F. Kroll & A. M. B. de Groot (London: Routledge, 2008).

<sup>328</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

lexical ‘arenas’ in which competition may occur consist of phonology, lexicon, morphosyntax, and conceptualization. In the revised model, the fundamental role of ‘cues’, that is to say, the ‘notion of the linguistic sign as a mapping between form and function’, is highlighted once again.<sup>330</sup> In this context, it is underscored that the consolidation of new mappings depends upon both short-term and long-term memory storage. The scope of different mappings then relies upon the processes involved in chunking in order to expand syllables, words, and sentences. Finally, the theory of ‘code’ activation explores the notions of *transfer* (i.e., positive and negative transfer in the various linguistic arenas) and *code interaction* (e.g., code selection, switching, and mixing).<sup>331</sup>

The competition model has proven successful in the field of SLA, particularly in the domain of psycholinguistics. As underscored by Segalowitz and Lightbown (1999), one of its key strengths is that it is based upon ‘clearly articulated general principles of cognitive functioning, including those underlying connectionist theories.’<sup>332</sup> Furthermore, empirical evidence (e.g., Zhao and Fan 2021; Figueiredo 2019; Gibson 1992) has supported the hypotheses that have emanated from the model. In this context, it is also important to note that MacWhinney has also acknowledged areas for improvement in the model in order to expand our current understanding of language development. Some researchers have, however, questioned the explanatory power of the competition model in terms of how the learner begins to “commit” the cue dimensions considered in the lexical hierarchy (e.g., Gass 1993) and also the fact that in studies researchers have often drawn on semantically atypical sentences when examining the model (e.g., McLaughlin and Harrington 1989). Despite these weaknesses, the unified competition model has provided new insight into and detailed analysis of how language is constructed through use and in doing so presents us with a more refined conceptualisation of the psychology of language learning. In order to further expand our understanding of usage-based approaches to language development, the next section now moves on to explore complex dynamic systems theory, which gained significant momentum in the field of SLA in the late 1990s.

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<sup>330</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>331</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>332</sup> Norman Segalowitz and Patsy M. Lightbown, “Psycholinguistic Approaches to SLA,” *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 19 (1999): 47.

## 2.6.2 Complex Dynamic Systems Theory

Complex dynamic systems theory is a meta-theory which was initially introduced to the field of applied linguistics by American linguist Diane Larsen Freeman in the 1990s and, thereafter, by Dutch linguist Cornelis Kees de Bot in the mid-2000s.<sup>333</sup> The term is generally employed to refer to both *chaos/complexity theory* (i.e., a transdisciplinary systems theory which seeks to elucidate the underpinnings of complex, non-linear, and dynamic systems) and *dynamics systems theory* (i.e., an emergentist theory that explores the manner in which language development is a complex process involving many interconnected variables, such as social and cognitive factors).<sup>334</sup> Language development research underpinned by complex dynamic systems theory, thus, considers language to be a complex, adaptive, and non-linear system. In this regard, three essential criteria are addressed in the literature: (1) the existence of interconnected subsystems in language development; (2) self-organisation among systems; and (3) the occurrence of non-linear, chaotic patterns of development. Considering its usage-based, or emergentist view of language acquisition, many researchers (e.g., Larsen-Freeman and Cameron 2008; Kees de Bot, Lowie, and Verspoor 2007) have emphasised that this perspective has the potential to ‘unfold the development of language learning systems and reveal some features that remain elusive with traditional approaches.’<sup>335</sup>

From a complex dynamic systems theory perspective, it is maintained that a learner’s language system is composed of embedded subsystems which account for all aspects of language production and perception including semantics, syntax, phonology, lexicon, and phonetics, to name but a few.<sup>336</sup> In this context, it is argued that these dynamic subsystems are open, interconnected, and developing. Within these subsystems, it is affirmed that additional languages acquired are not set aside in ‘different anatomical localizations’, but are ‘possibly

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<sup>333</sup> See Diane Larsen-Freeman, “On the parallels between chaos theory and second language acquisition,” (Paper Presentation) (Montreal, Second Language Research Forum, McGill University, 1994) and, more recently, Diane Larsen-Freeman, “Complexity theory: Relational systems in interaction and in interlocutor differences in second language development,” in *Cross-theoretical explorations of interlocutors and their individual differences*, ed. L. Gurzynski-Weiss (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2018); Diane Larsen-Freeman, “Complexity theory: The lessons continue,” in *Complexity theory and language development: In celebration of Diane Larsen-Freeman*, eds. L. Ortega & Z. Han (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2017). Further, see Cornelis Kees de Bot, “Introduction: Second Language Development as a Dynamic Process,” *The Modern Language Journal* 92, no. 2 (2008).

<sup>334</sup> Diane Larsen-Freeman, Phil Hiver, and Ali H. Al-Hoorie, “Toward a transdisciplinary integration of research purposes and methods for complex dynamic systems theory: beyond the quantitative–qualitative divide,” *International Review of Applied Linguistics in Language Teaching* 60, no. 1 (2022).

<sup>335</sup> Jihua Dond, “A dynamic systems theory approach to development of listening strategy use and listening performance,” *System* 63 (2016): 149.

<sup>336</sup> Wander Lowie, “Dynamic Systems Theory Approaches to Second Language Acquisition,” in *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, ed. Carol A. Chapelle (New Jersey: Blackwell Publishing, 2013).

nested within the phonological, morphosyntactic, and semantic subsystems’, as advanced by linguist Michel Paradis (2004) in his *subsystems hypothesis*.<sup>337</sup> The subsystems hypothesis posits that each language within a learner’s repertoire comprises a subset with a common shared language system. Broersma et al. (2020) clarify that items which are ‘connected more strongly within than between languages’ indicates that ‘subsystems can function as separate units’, for instance in terms of a mental lexicon.<sup>338</sup> In this regard, it is highlighted that ‘when a word is activated, this adds to the activation of all the words in the same language’ which would then ‘make it possible for the selection of a cognate to affect the level of activation of all the words of the non-selected language at once.’<sup>339</sup> Thus, certain features of one language (e.g., its lexicon or phonology) may impact upon those of other languages stored in the subsystem. Lowie (2013) clarifies that this interplay will fluctuate overtime.<sup>340</sup> Furthermore, it is important to note that the cognitive system in which the language system is embedded also interacts and works together with the physical system of the body, that is to say, a *self-organising state space*.

Self-organisation has emerged as a significant component of contemporary cognitive theories of language development. Linguist Paul Van Geert emphasises that language development, comparable to other phenomena demonstrating natural progression and evolution, is a self-organising and organisational system.<sup>341</sup> In this context, Van Geert clarifies that self-organisation is a key feature of a complex dynamic system which may assist in explaining why children are able to acquire complex elements of grammar despite poverty of the stimulus (i.e., input). Thus, it is rationalised that an innate language learning structure (e.g., the LAD) is not necessary for children to acquire increasingly complex forms of language. This position has been corroborated by several computer simulations of connectionist neural networks, which have demonstrated that, in the case of first language acquisition, self-organisation may inform the development of a complex language system (e.g., Moulin-Frier, Nguyen, and Oudeyer 2014; MacWhinney, Li, and Zhao 2007).

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<sup>337</sup> *Ibid.*, 2. See Michel Paradis, *A neurolinguistic theory of bilingualism* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2004).

<sup>338</sup> Broersma et al., “Triggered codeswitching: Lexical processing and conversational dynamics,” *Bilingualism: Language and Cognition* 23 (2020): 296.

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>340</sup> Lowie, “Dynamic Systems Theory Approaches to Second Language Acquisition.”

<sup>341</sup> See Paul Van Geert, “Transmission, self-organization, and the emergence of language: A dynamic systems point of view,” in *Cultural Transmission: Psychological, Developmental, Social, and Methodological Aspects*, ed. U. Schönplflug (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Similar results have also emerged in the field of SLA. For example, in their informative article, *Constructing a Second Language: Analyses and Computational Simulations of the Emergence of Linguistic Constructions of Usage*, Ellis and Larsen-Freeman (2009) explored verb argument constructions in the English language and the interactions that take place in the usage, structure, cognition, and coadaptation of conversational partners and, further, the emergence of linguistic constructions.<sup>342</sup> It was observed that the organisation of verbs and constructions contained in the input an L2 learner receives is *Zipfian*, and that the verb with the highest frequency in each sentence construction is acquired first. The frequency distribution of words has been an important area of interest in statistical linguistics for over seven decades. *Zipf's law* is illustrated by the formula:

$$f(r) \propto \frac{1}{r^\alpha}$$

**Figure 2.5 Zipf's Law Formula.**

This empirical law maintains that the frequencies (i.e.,  $f$ ) of certain words in natural language are inversely proportional to their rank ( $r$ ).<sup>343</sup>

However, it is important to remember that a learner's system is dynamic and therefore it is constantly fluctuating. The situation in which a system finds itself at a certain moment in time is labelled a *state*. Lowie (2013) clarifies that 'the manifold of changing dimensions as a whole is therefore referred to as the multidimensional *phase state* of the system, which in mathematics is described as vectors in its *state space*.'<sup>344</sup> It is assumed that learning is an evolving process that occurs overtime and is largely contingent on the preceding state of the system, that is to say, 'learning strongly depends on pre-existing knowledge.'<sup>345</sup> In the context of language acquisition, this feature of complex dynamic systems theory has important

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<sup>342</sup> Nick C. Ellis and Diane Larsen-Freeman, "Constructing a Second Language: Analyses and Computational Simulations of the Emergence of Linguistic Constructions from Usage," *Language Learning: A Journal of Research in Language Studies* 59, no. 1 (2009).

<sup>343</sup> Steven T. Piantadosi, "Zipf's word frequency law in natural language: A critical review and future directions," *Psychonomic Bulletin & Review* 21, no. 5 (2014).

<sup>344</sup> Lowie, "Dynamic Systems Theory Approaches to Second Language Acquisition," 3.

<sup>345</sup> *Ibid.*



implications for the language learner. It implies that learning is by no means a steady and effortless process and may be nonlinear and rather abrupt due to both competition and co-operation between a learner's sub-systems. Further, complex dynamic theory highlights the individualistic nature of language acquisition:

Languages do not develop according to a predetermined sequence that is identical for all learners but emerge as iterations from the system's self-organizing state space in interaction with its environment.<sup>346</sup>

In order to evolve or 'grow' a learner's system, resources play an essential role. Resources not only include the educational materials available to the learner, such as books, notes, and technology, but also the learner's environment, time at their disposal, their pre-existing abilities and motivations, and working memory. Van Geert (2003) sheds light on the impact of 'limitations on resources' in his work, *Dynamic Systems Approaches and Modelling of Developmental Processes*, in which he states that resource limitations are 'not only a delimiting factor on what would otherwise be exponential growth, but a crucial driving force in development.'<sup>347</sup>

Although it has been nearly a quarter of a century since complex dynamic systems theory was introduced to the field of applied linguistics, it is still a rather new paradigm.<sup>348</sup> Therefore, it has been subject to certain limitations. Firstly, it has been argued by some researchers (e.g., Byrne and Callaghan 2014) that further work is necessary in the area of systemic intervention. In this context, it has been stressed that 'while the field has been quick to amass evidence that many phenomena are relational, non-mechanistic, and indeterminate in their development' much work is still required in order to 'understand whether and how to intervene in and influence the complex dynamic realities of the phenomena under investigation.'<sup>349</sup>

Secondly, the importance of developing robust methodological research tools that specifically address the exploratory and descriptive aims of complex dynamic theory studies is emphasised in the literature. Finally, it is underscored that, going forward, studies underpinned

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<sup>346</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>347</sup> Paul Van Geert, "Dynamic systems approaches and modeling of developmental processes," in *Handbook of developmental psychology*, eds. J. Valsiner & K. J. Connolly (London: Sage, 2003), 656.

<sup>348</sup> Phil Hiver, Ali H. Al-Hoorie, and Reid Evans, "Complex dynamic systems theory in language learning: A scoping review of 25 years of research," *Studies in Language Acquisition* 44, no. 4 (2021).

<sup>349</sup> *Ibid.*, 933.

by complex dynamic systems theory must be more explicit and specific in their methodological approach. For example, in Hiver, Evans, and Al-Hoorie's (2022) thorough review of the manner in which complex dynamic systems theory has been applied in language learning they observed that often 'the general approach to data collection and the length of study was unspecified, or the data analysis technique unclear.'<sup>350</sup> Furthermore, they drew attention to certain issues that emerged in data analysis, such as 'complexity' being used as a metaphor as opposed to an 'empirical reality' when analysing phenomena in the field of SLA.<sup>351</sup> That said, it is important to bear in mind that these limitations should be viewed as a 'natural part of its growth and more mainstream acceptance of this meta-theory.'<sup>352</sup> The theory has made significant advancements in elucidating the various complex systems at work in language development and specifying the various patterns of dynamic change that may emerge in the learning context, and at present there is ongoing progress being made in demonstrating how complex mechanisms and dynamic patterns may be modelled and exhibited which will continue to further strengthen the applications of complex dynamic systems theory in the field of SLA.

### 2.6.3 Statistical Learning of an L2

As highlighted in the earlier discussion, *statistical learning* has come to play a significant role in usage-based models of L2 acquisition. In the literature, statistical learning has been understood as a learner's ability to ascertain patterns in the input that they receive. Romberg and Saffran (2010) emphasise that 'human learners, including infants, are highly sensitive to structure in their environment.'<sup>353</sup> Statistical learning is the 'process of extracting this structure.'<sup>354</sup> In the context of language acquisition, it has been suggested that statistical learning may take several different forms including: (1) Operant conditioning (i.e., learning that certain behaviours lead to positive or negative reinforcement); (2) Unsupervised pattern detection; and (3) Probability learning (e.g., as observed in a *Bayesian model*)<sup>355</sup> or transitional

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<sup>350</sup> *Ibid.*, 935.

<sup>351</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>352</sup> *Ibid.*, 937.

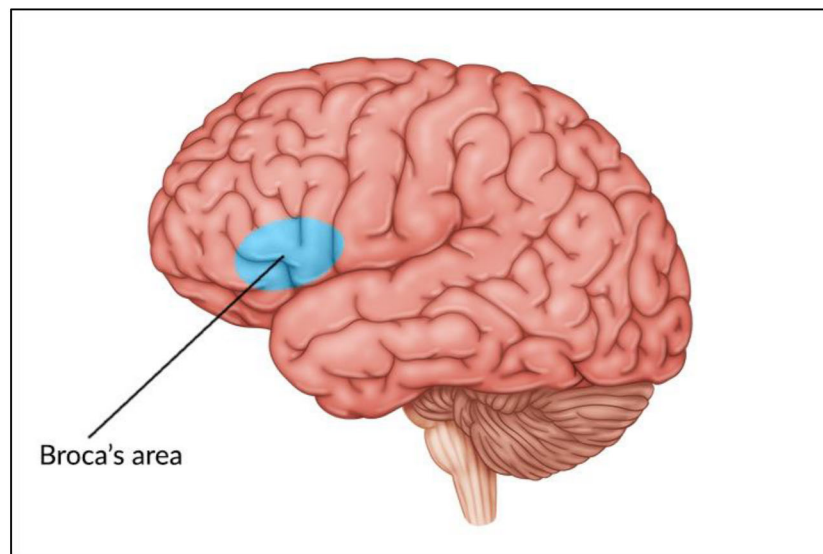
<sup>353</sup> Alexa R. Romberg and Jenny R. Saffran, "Statistical learning and language acquisition," *Wiley Interdisciplinary Review Cognitive Science* 1, no. 6 (2010): 906.

<sup>354</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>355</sup> A Bayesian model is an approach to data analysis based on Bayes' theorem, where available knowledge about parameters in a statistical model is updated with the information in observed data.

probabilities<sup>356</sup> in word segmentation or grammar learning tasks). The manner in which patterns are tracked and recorded by a statistical learning mechanism may be ‘quite simple, such as a frequency count’ or ‘more complex, such as conditional probability.’<sup>357</sup> Similarly, the elements which form the basis of a computation may differ in *complexity* (e.g., faces) or in *concreteness* (e.g., syllables or syntactic categories).<sup>358</sup> As language is comprised of many statistical regularities, it has been argued that statistical learning functions according to ‘these regularities and facilitates processes as varied as word segmentation, vocabulary learning, and syntax.’<sup>359</sup>

To date, there has been significant evidence which has revealed that statistical learning employs the same areas of the brain involved in language processing. More specifically, studies using functional magnetic resonance imaging (i.e., fMRI) have shown that Broca’s area (See figure 2.6), also known as the motor speech area of the brain, plays an important role in ‘artificial grammar learning paradigms as well as in the implicit learning of structured motor sequences.’<sup>360</sup>



**Figure 2.6 Broca’s Area.** Located in the frontal part of the left hemisphere of the brain, Broca’s area is the region of the brain that contains the neurons involved in speech function (Flint Rehab 2022).

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<sup>356</sup> A transitional probability is the conditional probability of Y given X in the sequence XY.

<sup>357</sup> Romberg and Saffran, “Statistical learning and language acquisition,” 906.

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>359</sup> Joanne Arciuli and Janne von Koss Torkildsen, “Advancing Our Understanding of the Link between Statistical Learning and Language Acquisition: The Need for Longitudinal Data,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 3, no. 324 (2012): 1.

<sup>360</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

In the context of L2 development, Indefrey and Davidson (2009) found, in their electrophysiological study of L2 processing, that similar brain areas for L1 and L2 sentence processing were employed in sentence production.<sup>361</sup> Comparable activation levels for both the L1 and L2 were observed in the frontal and temporal regions of the brain when bilingual speakers were asked to report the events of the previous day, which contributes to the hypothesis that statistical learning also serves an important function in L2 acquisition. Furthermore, based upon research carried out in the context of L1 acquisition, Uddén and Bahlmann (2012) established the *structured sequence processing perspective*, which maintains that:

Language is seen as structured sequences of linguistic elements. A sequence is an ordered combination of elements. In a structured sequence, certain elements predict other elements. A structured sequence is thus different from a random sequence, where there are no dependencies between elements.<sup>362</sup>

Further, this perspective advances that there are ‘domain general mechanisms’ located in the brain which serve a universal function in the processing of structured sequences, such as those involved in language, music, and action.<sup>363</sup> Their comprehensive review of the literature corroborated this position and revealed that the *left inferior frontal gyrus* (i.e., a key region of the brain for language comprehension and production) is involved in processing structured sequences regardless of whether they are linguistic, musical, or action related.<sup>364</sup>

The key idea behind statistical learning is that learners start to develop categories in their minds and allocate items (e.g., words, symbols, shapes, etc.) to these categories. Both reading and spelling, in particular, require learners to master the relationship between ‘arbitrary visual symbols’ and the ‘linguistically meaningful sounds of a language.’<sup>365</sup> In the context of L2 development, the mapping between letters and sounds can be viewed as probabilistic. For

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<sup>361</sup> Peter Indefrey and Douglas J. Davidson, “An event-related potential study on changes of violation and error responses during morphosyntactic learning,” *Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience* 21, no. 3 (2009).

<sup>362</sup> Julia Uddén and Jörg Bahlmann, “A rostro-caudal gradient of structured sequence processing in the left inferior frontal gyrus,” *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences* 367, no. 1598 (2012): 2024.

<sup>363</sup> Arciuli and Koss Torkildsen, “Advancing Our Understanding of the Link between Statistical Learning and Language Acquisition.”

<sup>364</sup> Uddén and Bahlmann, “A rostro-caudal gradient of structured sequence processing in the left inferior frontal gyrus.”

<sup>365</sup> Arciuli and Koss Torkildsen, “Advancing Our Understanding of the Link between Statistical Learning and Language Acquisition,” 3.

instance, in French, the language learner may observe the following common statistical regularities:

- **on, om:** These letter combinations are pronounced the same before a consonant.
- **tion, (s)sion:** These combinations found in feminine nouns are pronounced the same in French.
- **é, er, ez:** These same-sounding letters are often found in verb forms.
- **é, ée, és, ées:** When you add a mute e, an s, or an es after é, the sound doesn't change.

Furthermore, when explicit instruction is not available, overtime L2 learners may also become adept at discerning contextual clues.<sup>366</sup> For example, in the French language, patterns that the learner may come to detect include grammatical gender, the use of masculine possessive adjectives in front of a noun that begins with a vowel, and the endings of regular verbs in different tenses. Rastelli (2014) accentuates that ‘statistical learners eventually also get as far as abstracting away from concrete instances and extending the ‘privileges of category’ to unseen, novel items which ‘means that learners gradually become capable of assigning an item to a category even if they have not seen this item before.’<sup>367</sup> Learners deduce that a new lexical item encountered in input must be connected to a specific category because it is similar to other items in that category. A learner’s ability to perform abstraction is based upon the frequency with which the lexical items occur in learner’s input. Interestingly, more recent findings (e.g., Arciuli and Conway 2018) have also highlighted that learners use the output from statistical learning in language development and this could be one explanation to account for individual differences in language proficiency. That said, further research and empirical evidence is required in order to expand the current knowledge base in this area and establish causal rather than correlational links.

#### **2.6.4 From Theory to Practice: Towards a New Vision of Language Proficiency - The Extended Version of the CEFR Scale**

As highlighted in the introduction to this thesis, the CEFR is one of the most established Council of Europe policy instruments and, further, ‘has been the subject of recommendations by its Committee of Members and Parliamentary Assembly’.<sup>368</sup> Since the initial publication of its illustrative descriptor scales in 2001, the Council of Europe has produced an extended

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<sup>366</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>367</sup> Stefano Rastelli, “Statistical Learning of a Second Language,” in *Discontinuity in Second Language Acquisition: The Switch between Statistical and Grammatical Learning* (Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2014), 135.

<sup>368</sup> Council of Europe, *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages ...*, 21.

version of the scale after a five-stage emendation of the framework. Descriptors have most notably been developed and elaborated upon in the areas of reception, production, interaction/online interaction, mediation, communicative language competences (e.g., linguistic, sociolinguistic, pragmatic) as well as plurilingual and pluricultural competence, all of which play a significant role in the present investigation (See Appendix V for a thorough overview of the revised descriptors). The key functions of the CEFR include:

1. Providing a metalanguage for discussing the complexity of language proficiency and for reflecting on and communicating decisions on learning objectives and outcomes that are coherent and transparent.
2. Providing inspiration for curriculum development and teacher education.
3. Providing a shared basis for reflection and communication among the different partners in the field, including those involved in teacher education and in the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, textbooks, examinations, etc., across the member states of the Council of Europe.<sup>369</sup>

The modified CEFR ‘reflects the increasing awareness of the need for an integrated approach to language education across the curriculum.’<sup>370</sup> As will be observed in Chapter Four, at present Ireland’s educational policy outlook is at a stage of transition as it moves away from more traditional perspectives of language education and starts to emphasise the role of communication, action, and social dynamics in the learning process. Both the Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate programmes in Ireland have adopted the CEFR tool in order to gauge and measure language competence and skills and, more specifically, inform curriculum pedagogy. Further, several Irish universities (e.g., Mary Immaculate College, University College Dublin, University of Galway, Ireland) employ the CEFR framework in order to assess and evaluate students’ language abilities, while others are being encouraged to do so.<sup>371</sup>

Underpinning the CEFR framework is the principle that ‘educational aims and outcomes at all levels’ should be promoted in a positive manner, as highlighted by its ‘*can do*’ description of proficiency, which serves as a ‘clear, shared roadmap for learning, and a far more nuanced instrument to gauge progress than an exclusive focus on scores in tests and examinations.’<sup>372</sup> Furthermore, as emphasised in the *CEFR: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*

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<sup>369</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

<sup>370</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>371</sup> National University of Ireland, “Foreign Language Learning and Ireland’s Languages Connect Strategy,” *Education and Society*, no. 1 (2019).

<sup>372</sup> Council of Europe, *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages ...*, 27.

*Companion Volume with New Descriptors* (2018), the revised CEFR ‘brings a new, empowering vision of the learner’ as a social agent.<sup>373</sup> This development is particularly relevant to the present study. As will be discussed in Chapter Five, performative pedagogy serves as a means through which the learner may transform from passive recipient to active participant in the language learning process. This new perspective of the language learner/user proposed by the CEFR as a ‘social agent acting in the social world and exerting agency in the learning process’ aligns with the aims of this investigation as a significant paradigm shift may be observed ‘in both course planning and teaching, promoting learner engagement and autonomy’ in the context of a performance-based language learning experience.<sup>374</sup> In this respect, it is also necessary to draw attention to the CEFR’s action-oriented approach to teaching and learning which signals:

A shift away from syllabuses based on a linear progression through language structures, or a pre-determined set of notions and functions, towards syllabuses based on needs analysis, oriented towards real-life tasks and constructed around purposefully selected notions and functions.<sup>375</sup>

In a similar vein, the performance-based approach to teaching and learning, at the core of this study, was devised according to the learners’ communicative needs and was designed with a real-world focus in mind and, thus, conforms with the CEFR’s ‘planning of curricula, courses and examinations by working backwards from what the users/learners need to be able to do in the language.’<sup>376</sup>

As observed in this chapter, the field of SLA has developed significantly since initial theory building in the 1950s. The CEFR is evidence of this evolution in that it accentuates ‘the social nature of language learning and use, [as well as] the interaction between the social and the individual in the process of learning’, which is consistent with contemporary perspectives of language learning.<sup>377</sup> Furthermore, the CEFR also provides insight into and presents a potential solution to Chomsky’s performance/competence problem in an educational setting because learners are considered as language users, this ‘implies extensive use of the target language in the classroom – learning to use the language rather than just learning about the language (as a subject)’, thus blurring the boundaries that often exist between a learner’s

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<sup>373</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>374</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>375</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>376</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>377</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

knowledge of a language (e.g., phonology, syntax, morphology etc.) and performance, that is to say, the ability to use that knowledge in practice.<sup>378</sup>

## **2.7 Conclusion**

Building upon the valuable background information presented in Chapter One, this exploration introduced the reader to prominent theories of L2 acquisition and key perspectives of L2 learning, within which the present study is located. It drew attention to important debates surrounding L2 acquisition, highlighting the work of key figures in the psychological, linguistic, and interactionist schools of thought and also shed light upon more contemporary usage-based models of L2 development. The points at which these orientations intersect and diverge were identified, pedagogical implications were delineated, and the interplay between theory and practice was illustrated. The social-interactionist approach to language development, in particular, plays a significant role in the present investigation. The dynamic and evolving ideas, concepts, and variables that have materialised in this discourse, such as the ‘dialogic’, identity, culture, and new iterations of communication, shed important light on the multifaceted nature of L2 acquisition. Further, this approach also draws attention to the internal and external features of a language learner’s environment that may directly or indirectly impact upon the language acquisition process. These emergent and defining features of the language acquisition process provide a firm foundation upon which interdisciplinary thought in theory and practice may be elucidated in this study. This will especially become evident in later chapters when exploring the ‘performative turn’ in language education – a pedagogical reorientation that fosters a learning culture centered on learner engagement, ownership, and active participation. However, it is important firstly to gain a greater understanding of the ‘affective turn’ in the SLA literature by interrogating the complex psychological phenomenon of FLA.

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<sup>378</sup> *Ibid.*



## **CHAPTER THREE**

# **FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY: DOCUMENTING THE INTANGIBLE**

## Chapter Three

### Foreign Language Anxiety: Documenting the Intangible

#### 3.0 Introduction

Thus far, it has been established that delineating the parameters of the L2 acquisition process is by no means a simple undertaking. A number of hypotheses posited by three distinct schools of thought (i.e., psychological, linguistic, and interactionist) as well as new developments and directions in research continue to influence an ever-oscillating theoretical pendulum in the field of SLA. As evidenced by the preceding discussion, in recent years, the field has also been marked by an ‘affective turn’, which has highlighted the important role that emotion plays in language acquisition. This chapter seeks to advance knowledge of this increasingly important variable in the multifaceted process of L2 acquisition by interrogating the complex psychological construct of xenoglossophobia or, as it is more commonly referred to in the literature, FLA. Psychological constructs, such as emotion, intelligence, and memory, exist in the human brain. They involve complex internal processes and are not explicitly observable behaviours. Psychological constructs often consist of experiential, behavioural, and physiological manifestations, usually referred to as ‘reaction/response patterns’ or ‘indicators’.<sup>379</sup>

In order to understand how language anxiety came to be a significant psychological construct in the field of SLA and, further, to elucidate the manner in which it impacts upon the process of L2 acquisition, this chapter, firstly, paints the broad brushstrokes of the anxiety construct by historicising and conceptualising its representation from past to present. The second section then moves from the conceptual to the concrete by interrogating anxiety from a clinical perspective, shedding light on its psychological and physiological manifestations. Finally, this chapter concludes by exploring how anxiety specifically maps onto language learning. In this regard, the work of several key figures, who have each set out to negotiate, measure, and decipher manifestations of anxiety in the language learning context, is drawn upon. Some of the most notable models developed to expound FLA, which have informed this exploration, include Horwitz et al.’s (1986) theory of foreign language classroom anxiety,

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<sup>379</sup> Alexandra D. Crosswell and Kimberly G. Lockwood, “Best practices for stress measurement: How to measure psychological stress in health research,” *Health Psychology Open* 7, no. 2 (2020).

Tobias' (1986) interference model and interference retrieval model of anxiety, and Bigdeli and Bai's (2009) triunal model of anxiety.<sup>380</sup>

### 3.1 The Etymology of a Term: Understanding Anxiety

There is no question that the problem of anxiety is a nodal point at which the most various and important questions converge, a riddle, whose solution would be bound to throw a flood of light on our whole mental existence.<sup>381</sup>

(Sigmund Freud, 1917)

The term anxiety originates from the Latin noun *angor*, which signifies mental distress, anguish, or vexation, and its equivalent verbification *ango*, meaning to trouble, distress, or cause mental pain.<sup>382</sup> While the term *angst* (fear, anxiety, worry) in contemporary German has its roots in these terms, the French terms *anxiété* and its cognate *angoisse* derive respectively from the Latin terms *ānxiētās* (anxiety) and *angŭstīa* (anguish). In centuries past, alternative terminology was often used to diagnose anxiety-like symptoms. For example, *mélancolie* (melancholia) and *affection vaporeuse* (vapors) were particularly common during the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, while neurasthenia and neuroses were prevalent in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>383</sup>

The psychological construct of anxiety is by no means a new emotional phenomenon. Indeed, references to anxiety can be found as far back as ancient times, as evidenced by Latin philosophical literary works. A particularly poignant example may be found in political leader Marcus Cicero's (106 B.C. – 43 B.C.) *Tusculanae Disputationes* (Tusculan Disputations), written in 45 B.C., wherein he aptly describes anxiety as a disorder that is characterised by a troubled mind and diseased body:

In some there is a continual anxiety, owing to which they are anxious; in some a hastiness of temper, which differs from anger, as anxiety differs from anguish: for all are not anxious who are sometimes vexed, nor are they who are anxious always uneasy in that manner [...] Now this propensity to these particular disorders may be called a sickness from analogy

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<sup>380</sup> Shoaleh Bigdeli and Heesoon Bai, "The Triunal Model of Anxiety and Its Application to Anxiety Reduction in Learning and Teaching Environments," *TESL Canada Journal* 27, no. 1 (2009).

<sup>381</sup> Sigmund Freud, "Introductory Lectures of Psychoanalysis (Part III)," in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, xvi. 1916-1917, trans. and ed. James Strachey and Anna Freud (London: Hogarth, 1963), 393.

<sup>382</sup> Marc-Antoine Crocq, "A history of anxiety: from Hippocrates to DSM," *Dialogues in Clinical Neuroscience* 17, no. 3 (2015).

<sup>383</sup> *Ibid.*

with the body [...] Even as there may be, with respect to the body, a disease, a sickness, and a defect, so it is with the mind.<sup>384</sup>

In his commentary, Cicero provides an impressive clinical distinction between *ānxiētās* and *angŭstīa*. The latter of these terms implies that anguish is equated with an individual's current state of anxiousness, while the former suggests that anxiety is equated with an enduring anxiousness. In modern psychological usage, this significant distinction would henceforth be more commonly referred to as trait and state anxiety.<sup>385</sup> Psychologist Hans Eysenck, perhaps best known for his work on intelligence and personality, affirms that Cicero is in fact proposing a prevenient theory of what would become the state-trait theory of anxiety, first hypothesised in 1961 by psychologists Raymond B. Cattell and Ivan H. Scheier. Indeed, Robertson (2019) highlights that many leading figures in the field of behavioural-cognitive therapy, such as Albert Ellis and Aaron T. Beck,<sup>386</sup> 'found the "philosophical origins", or, at least, the "rudiments", or basic "elements", of their approach in Hellenistic philosophers such as Cicero and Epictetus'.<sup>387</sup>

In the early modern period, definitions of anxiety remained deeply rooted in both philosophical and religious tradition. This is reflective of the broader intellectual and cultural movement that spanned from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> Century – the Renaissance. French philosopher René Descartes, regarded as the father of modern philosophy, contributes a particularly insightful characterisation of anxiety during this period. Descartes advances that where an imbalance exists between hope and fear, there will be a destructive outcome. While a profusion of fear expels all hope and renders an individual immobile, a profusion of hope that expels all fear does not necessarily result in constructive action, but on the contrary gives rise to complacency.<sup>388</sup> This exposition captures the essence of 'the Cartesian anxiety', which

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<sup>384</sup> Marcus Cicero, *Cicero's Tusculan Disputations*, trans. C. D. Yonge (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 2018), 105.

<sup>385</sup> The classifications of state and trait anxiety are further elaborated upon later in this section.

<sup>386</sup> Albert Ellis (1913-2007) was an American psychologist and psychotherapist who established rational emotive behaviour therapy in the 1950s. Aaron T. Beck (1921-2021) was an American psychologist, known as the father of cognitive therapy and cognitive behavioral therapy.

<sup>387</sup> Donald Robertson, *The Philosophy of Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy (CBT): Stoic Philosophy as Rational and Cognitive Psychotherapy* (London: Routledge, 2018), 9.

<sup>388</sup> See René Descartes, *The Passions of the Soul and Other Late Philosophical Writings*, trans. Michael Moriarty (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015). 'Hope is a disposition of the soul to persuade itself that what it desires will come to pass, which is caused by a particular movement of the spirits [...] And fear is another disposition of the soul, which persuades it that the thing will not come to pass [...] When we are certain that what we desire will come to pass, even though we go on wanting it to come to pass, we nonetheless cease to be agitated by the passion of desire which caused us to look forward to the outcome with anxiety. Likewise, when fear is so extreme that it leaves no room at all for hope, it is transformed into despair; and this despair, representing the thing as impossible, extinguishes desire altogether, for desire bears only on possible things' (p. 264).

materialises from ‘the craving for an absolute ground’.<sup>389</sup> Varela, Thompson, and Rosch (2017) clarify that ‘when this craving cannot be satisfied, the only other possibility seems to be nihilism or anarchy [...] the tendency is to search either for an outer ground in the world or an inner ground in the mind’.<sup>390</sup>

Against this backdrop, Descartes set forth his controversial and much disputed theory of Cartesian mind-body dualism. Although it has been over four centuries since Descartes espoused that the psyche and soma were distinct entities, his hypothesis, as noted by Mohammed (2012), has gone ‘a long way in stirring the tide of scholarship, both in his lifetime, and thereafter’.<sup>391</sup> Robert C. Smith (2018) suggests that because Descartes’ philosophy of the mind received considerable recognition during the period in question, ‘the mind and its mental disorders became the province of the 17<sup>th</sup>-century church while medicine and science focused on the body and its diseases.’<sup>392</sup> Indeed, many scholars ascribe modern medicine’s separation of the mind and mental health issues from the body and its afflictions to Descartes. The intense debate surrounding the tenets of dualism has led researchers in different fields to shed new light on the interaction between the mind and body. This has inspired alternative hypothetical propositions from idealist, behaviourist, and materialist positions, to name but a few.<sup>393</sup> Interestingly, the ‘riddle of interaction’ between the body and mind remains highly debated and, at present, there is no general agreement on any alternative theory that has been put forward to offer insight into their interconnection.<sup>394</sup> In a similar vein, much emphasis has been laid on the importance of studying the role of the mind in L2 acquisition. The cognitive dimension of language acquisition has dominated and engrossed the field of SLA since its early inception, while researchers have only recently started to interrogate the function of intrinsic and extraneous variables in the L2 acquisition process such as emotion.

Towards the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, the Age of Enlightenment began to take hold across Europe. This intellectual and cultural movement was marked by ground-breaking

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<sup>389</sup> Francisco J. Varela, Evan Thompson, and Eleanor Rosch, *The Embodied Mind, revised edition: Cognitive Science and Human Experience* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2017), 141.

<sup>390</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>391</sup> Akomolafe Akinola Mohammed, “A Critique of Descartes’ Mind-Body Dualism,” *KRITIKE* (Journal of Philosophy) 6, no. 1 (2012): 110.

<sup>392</sup> Robert C. Smith, “Rene Descartes - Villain or Savior for Mental Health Care?” *Psychology Today*, August 21, 2018, accessed November 20, 2020, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/ie/blog/patient-zero/201808/rene-descartes-villain-or-savior-mental-health-care>

<sup>393</sup> The idealist philosophical position draws attention to the importance of the spiritual in the elucidation of experience. As observed in Chapter Two, the behaviourist position stresses the significance of external behavioural properties of thought. Materialist philosophy propounds that mental states are a consequence of material interactions.

<sup>394</sup> Mohammed, “A Critique of Descartes’ Mind-Body Dualism,” 110.

advancements in the realms of politics, culture, and philosophy.<sup>395</sup> During this period, anxiety was largely considered to be an intellectual problem.<sup>396</sup> In his work, *France in the Enlightenment*, Daniel Roche (1998) asserts that ‘daring to know implied the possibility of the anxiety of consciousness, of the necessity of doubt.’<sup>397</sup> He goes on to clarify that ‘without preestablished truths, everything remained for man to do on his own.’<sup>398</sup> Within the context of L2 acquisition, the concept of the ‘unknown’ or the ‘other’ – that which is foreign or alien to learners – has the potential to engender a conflict or inconsistency in the language acquisition process by threatening learners’ preestablished truths. As a result, learners may activate their defence mechanism and resort back to the comfort of the ‘self’ or, as will be explored later in this chapter, the ‘unchanging self’.<sup>399</sup>

Indeed, French philosophy historian Jean Deprun concludes that anxiety was possibly a repercussion of the Enlightenment.<sup>400</sup> The construct of anxiety was not only significant philosophically speaking, but it also became an integral component in the cultural realm, acting as a ‘bridge between doctrine and representation’.<sup>401</sup> Interestingly, Roche draws attention to the fact that while ‘writers of *sensibilité* used the idea of feeling to overturn accepted beliefs about man and aesthetics’, the ‘writers of *inquiétude* used the idea of dissatisfaction’.<sup>402</sup> For example, in his posthumously published collection of philosophical notes and essays, *Pensées* (1670), French philosopher Blaise Pascal, an early pioneer of existentialism, likens his *inquiétude* to being in a state of otherness:

The eternal silences of these infinite spaces frighten me [...] It is a matter at once of a feeling of the radical alterity of the world – I am not in my place – and of one’s foreignness to oneself – I do not know who I am or what I am. Thus, fright is a kind of stupor that emerges from the relation to the world and the consideration of oneself.<sup>403</sup>

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<sup>395</sup> Gregory Fremont Barnes, *Encyclopedia of the Age of Political Revolutions and New Ideologies, 1760-1815* (Connecticut: Greenwood, 2007).

<sup>396</sup> Scott Stossel, *My Age of Anxiety: Fear, Hope, Dread, and the Search for Peace of Mind* (New York: Knopf Publishing Group, 2014).

<sup>397</sup> Daniel Roche, *France in the Enlightenment* (London: Harvard University Press, 1998), 602.

<sup>398</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>399</sup> Bigdeli and Bai, “The Triunal Model of Anxiety and Its Application to Anxiety Reduction...”

<sup>400</sup> Jean Deprun, *La philosophie de l’inquiétude en France au XVIIIe siècle* (Paris: Vrin, 1979).

<sup>401</sup> Roche, *France in the Enlightenment*, 602.

<sup>402</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>403</sup> Alexandre Declos, “Inquiétude in Pascal’s *Pensées*,” *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* 78, no. 2 (2013): 168.

Anxiety manifested itself in the Enlightenment as a result of ‘different ways of conceiving subjectivity’.<sup>404</sup> Pascal, for instance, emphasises an inner conflict provoked by an elevated sense of self-awareness and self-conscious reflection. His description, in particular, highlights some of the major preoccupations of Enlightenment thinkers: conceptions of identity, the ‘self’, and the ‘other’. In his work, *Representing Humanity in the Age of Enlightenment*, Alexander Cook (2015) offers considerable insight into the critical role that self-interest played in the philosophical anthropology of the period.<sup>405</sup> He maintains that a ‘subject’s knowledge of the world was shaped by their desires long before arising to the faculty of rationality’.<sup>406</sup> Given that the concept of self-interest was considerably embedded within the context of this tradition, ‘the problem of the other’ represented a threat or danger to the status quo.<sup>407</sup> In the context of the present investigation, it is important to note that foreign language learning is a significant area of academic study that has the potential to cause tension between a learner’s *true self* (i.e., the unlimited ability to use one’s MT) and *limited self* (i.e., a learner’s inability to perform in an L2 in line with the identity that they have constructed in their native language).<sup>408</sup> As noted in Chapter Two, L2 acquisition is a process that necessitates learners to engage in a cycle of acculturation. Language and the ‘self’ are intimately bound; thus, the L2 acquisition process (i.e., ‘the other’) may threaten a learner’s self-concept and world-concepts (i.e., ‘the self’), which are seldom contested in their MT. In other words, the language learner’s ‘quality and authenticity of self-presentation’ is called into question.<sup>409</sup> As a result, students may perceive threat towards the belief system they have constructed as part of their native language identity. This assertion is further elaborated upon later in this chapter.<sup>410</sup>

While representations of anxiety during the Enlightenment period were largely concerned with the mind, during the Victorian period (1837-1901) conceptions of a more concrete nature began to emerge. The Victorian period saw significant technological change and development. Within a period of fifty years a largely agricultural society transformed into an industrial one. In this context, Shuttleworth et al. (2019) affirm that the rapidity of change in the 1800s resulted in ‘overpressure’.<sup>411</sup> Nowadays, ‘overpressure’ is more commonly

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<sup>404</sup> Roche, *France in the Enlightenment*, 602.

<sup>405</sup> Alexander Cook, *Representing Humanity in the Age of Enlightenment* (New York: Routledge, 2015).

<sup>406</sup> *Ibid.*, 176.

<sup>407</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>408</sup> Horwitz et al., “Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety.”

<sup>409</sup> Agnieszka Habrat, *The Role of Self-Esteem in Foreign Language Learning and Teaching* (Switzerland: Springer, 2018), 42.

<sup>410</sup> See specifically the philosophical dimensions of Bigdeli and Bai’s triunal model of anxiety.

<sup>411</sup> Sally Shuttleworth et al., *Anxious Times: Medicine and Modernity in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2019).

referred to as ‘executive burnout’.<sup>412</sup> The profound societal and intellectual developments that took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century engendered a proclivity for fear and anxiety, while capitalism provoked ‘a growing sense of isolation and alienation’.<sup>413</sup> Superstition and fear of the ‘other’ marked gothic literature synonymous with the Victorian era and, further, the construct of anxiety pervaded the writings of philosophers, novelists, and poets alike. For example, in his masterwork *The Concept of Dread* (1844), influential 19<sup>th</sup>-century Danish existential philosopher and theologian Søren Kierkegaard professes that:

Learning to know anxiety is an adventure which every man has to affront if he would not go to perdition either by not having known anxiety or sinking under it. He therefore who has learned rightly to be in anxiety has learned the most important thing.<sup>414</sup>

Kierkegaard’s message is clear. The manner in which man orients himself to anxiety, which he later describes as ‘the dizziness of freedom’, will determine man’s success or failure in life. Kierkegaard’s probing work provides a captivating modern analysis of anxiety as a psychological construct that centres on the paradox of choice. Central to Kierkegaard’s analysis is the notion that anxiety can be either constructive (‘he who is educated by possibility’) or destructive (‘he who sinks in possibility’), depending on how it is confronted by an individual. This early distinction is more frequently referred to in contemporary anxiety research as *facilitative anxiety* and *debilitative anxiety*.<sup>415</sup> He sheds further light upon the concept of anxiety by explaining that it should be differentiated from fear, because fear alludes to something concrete, definite, while ‘anxiety is freedom’s actuality as the possibility of possibility’ – the ‘unknown’.<sup>416</sup> This useful distinction is still maintained in contemporary psychological discourse. Although the primary role of both anxiety and fear ‘is to act as a signal of danger, threat, or motivational conflict, and to trigger appropriate adaptive responses’,<sup>417</sup> anxiety does so in response to our emotions (i.e., anticipation of an unspecified danger), while fear does so in response to a perceived danger in our environment. Fear may, however, become an analogy of anxiety as the impending unknown may give rise to a ‘fear of novelty’ in a familiar and

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<sup>412</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>413</sup> David Punter and Glennis Byron, *The Gothic* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2004), 20.

<sup>414</sup> Søren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Dread*, trans. Walter Lowrie (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1957), 139.

<sup>415</sup> The notions of facilitative anxiety and debilitative anxiety are further elaborated upon later in section two of this chapter.

<sup>416</sup> Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Dread*, 139.

<sup>417</sup> Thierry Steimer, “The Biology of Fear- and Anxiety-Related Behaviors,” *Dialogues in Clinical Neuroscience* 4, no. 3 (2002): 233.



specific environment, that is to say, when anxiety becomes *situation-specific*.<sup>418</sup> The notion of situation-specific or situational anxiety plays a prominent role in the present case study. Language anxiety has been identified as a situation-specific anxiety in the literature as it is associated with apprehension that is unique to a specific and well-defined situation – language learning. This categorisation of anxiety will be further elaborated upon later in the chapter.

While the 19<sup>th</sup> Century was marked by primarily philosophical perceptions of anxiety, the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries saw a rise in medical or clinical perspectives of anxiety as it became a ‘key component of various new diagnostic categories, from neurasthenia to neuroses’.<sup>419</sup> American neurologist and psychiatrist, George Miller Beard, was the first to introduce the term neurasthenia in 1869. Its symptoms ranged greatly from malaise, poor appetite, neuralgic pains, hysteria, insomnia, hypochondriasis, to symptoms of anxiety and chronic depression.<sup>420</sup> It was Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud, however, who distinguished anxiety neurosis from the overarching and poorly defined medical condition of neurasthenia.<sup>421</sup> German psychiatrist Emil Kraepelin was another prominent figure who had a significant influence on modern psychiatry and, more specifically, its awareness of mental illness. Kraepelin accentuates that *angst* is the most common of all atypical affective disorders and defines anxiety as a combination of inner tension and displeasure, which pervades both body and mind.<sup>422</sup>

These nascent, evolving historical perspectives are echoed in contemporary definitions of anxiety which capture the psychological, physiological, and philosophical dimensions of the construct. For example, clinical psychologist Charles Spielberger (1972), who established the *State-Trait Anxiety Inventory*, defines anxiety as ‘an unpleasant emotion state or condition which is characterized by subjective feelings of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry’,<sup>423</sup> while Tom Scovel (1991), a leading figure in psycholinguistics, characterises anxiety as ‘a state of apprehension, a vague fear that is only indirectly associated with an object’.<sup>424</sup>

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<sup>418</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>419</sup> Crocq, “A History of Anxiety...,” 322.

<sup>420</sup> Edward Shorter, *A Historical Dictionary of Psychiatry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

<sup>421</sup> Crocq, “A History of Anxiety...”

<sup>422</sup> See Emil Kraepelin, *Psychiatrie* (Leipzig: Verlag Von Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1903). Original German: ‘Eine Verbindung von Unlust mit innerer Spannung’ (p. 249).

<sup>423</sup> Charles D. Spielberger, “Conceptual and Methodological Issues in Anxiety Research,” in *Anxiety: Current Trends in Theory and Research*, vol. 2, ed. Charles D. Spielberger (New York: Academic Press, 1972), 482. The State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (STAI) is a measurement tool employed in clinical settings to assess levels of state and trait anxiety.

<sup>424</sup> Tom Scovel, “The Effect of Affect on Foreign Language Learning: A Review of the Anxiety Research,” in *Language Anxiety: From Theory and Research to Classroom Implications*, ed. Elaine Horwitz and Dolly Jesusita Young (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1991), 18.

American psychologist David Barlow (2014) is considerably more precise in his definition, reporting that anxiety is ‘a unique, coherent cognitive-affective structure within the defensive motivational system’.<sup>425</sup> Within this context, he posits that anxious apprehension is consistent with a *future-orientated mood state*, which involves anticipating and confronting an impending negative situation.

While the historical trajectory of anxiety presented is certainly not exhaustive, it is evident that descriptions and representations of anxiety have maintained a significant common thread throughout history. Whether interpreted according to Classical Antiquity, the Renaissance period, Enlightenment period, Victorian era, early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, or contemporary views of the construct, it is clear that an anxious reaction manifests itself when an individual’s sense of existence, being, or identity is threatened. Aptly summarised by Kierkegaard, the construct of anxiety ‘informs us of our choices, our self-awareness and personal responsibility, and brings us from a state of un-self-conscious immediacy to self-conscious reflection’.<sup>426</sup> Simply put, the psychological construct of anxiety takes us from a place of familiarity that gives us comfort and assurance, to place of unfamiliarity, which takes us out of our comfort zone and, thus, spurs feelings of uncertainty and doubt.

### **3.2 A Clinical Perspective: Psychological and Physiological Manifestations of Anxiety**

In order to extend our understanding of the psychological construct of anxiety, it is useful to briefly contemplate it from a clinical perspective, highlighting its neurobiological and neurophysiological underpinnings. It is within this context that we may gain a greater awareness of the psychological and physiological ‘response pattern’ or ‘indicators’ of an anxious reaction. Incorporating a short fictional vignette about Ciarán (See Figure 3.1), a French language learner, this section seeks to illustrate the internal processes involved in the anxiety response and, further, puts language anxiety under the magnifying glass by exploring the manner in which it may manifest itself in a language learning scenario.

It is Thursday morning, Ciarán wakes up at 8 a.m. and goes about his normal morning routine while he gets ready for a long day at university. While grabbing a quick breakfast, he thinks to himself, “Oh god! Is it Thursday already? Double French tutorial with Monsieur

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<sup>425</sup> David H. Barlow, *Anxiety and Its Disorders: The Nature and Treatment of Anxiety and Panic* (London: The Guilford Press, 2014), 64.

<sup>426</sup> Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Dread*, 155-156.

Leclerc this evening.” Ciarán remembers that the class will be revising material for the upcoming oral examination. Immediately, Ciarán recalls last semester’s oral revision session with Monsieur Leclerc when he said “Je suis vingt ans” (I have twenty years) instead of “J’ai vingt ans” (I am twenty years old).<sup>427</sup> He thinks to himself, “How could I have been so stupid! I knew that grammar rule. They all thought I was such a fool!” Ciarán’s future-orientated thought patterns begin to anticipate a repeat of this negative situation later that evening.

Ciarán arrives at university around 10 a.m. He goes about his day and attends his other lectures and tutorials. He glances at his watch and thinks to himself, “Oh no! It’s 4 p.m. already? Time to head to French.” As he strolls slowly towards the language laboratory with negative thoughts dancing around in his mind, he considers skipping class; however, it is too late, his friends come along, they beckon him over and they all make their way into the lab. Monsieur Leclerc enters a few minutes later and greets the class as usual, “Bonjour tout le monde, ça va bien?” (Hello everyone, how are you doing?). He is answered with murmured replies, “Ouais, ça va bien merci.” (Yeah, good thanks). He goes on to mention that, as promised, today they would revise for the oral examination. This simple utterance (i.e., stimulus) is all it takes to trigger Ciarán’s adaptive reaction to the language learning process. Anxiety has been defined as an adaptive reaction produced in response to a stimulus, referred to in such circumstances as a psychological stressor.<sup>428</sup> The term psychological stressor encompasses ‘ambiguously threatening stimuli or [...] internally generated thoughts of real or imagined prospective threats’.<sup>429</sup> For Ciarán, the thought of having to communicate in the target language gives rise to negative self-focused cognitions, “What if I make a mistake? What if they all laugh at me?” When Monsieur Leclerc asks Ciarán to describe what he did on holidays last summer, the negative impending situation becomes a reality. This activates Ciarán’s anxiety reaction by triggering the stress response in his brain and several internal processes get underway.

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<sup>427</sup> In the French language, the verb ‘avoir’ (to have) is used to express age. Many native English speakers, however, overgeneralise and use the verb ‘être’ (to be) and follow the same construction as in English (I am 18 years old). This is grammatically incorrect in the French language. The expression ‘je suis 18 ans’ may, therefore, sound to a French person like a non-native English speaker saying ‘I is/have 18 years’, or may even be interpreted as ‘I follow 20 years’ (The French verb ‘suivre’ means to follow; first person present indicative ‘Je suis’).

<sup>428</sup> Lindsay K. Knight and Brendan E. Depue, “New Frontiers in Anxiety Research: The Translational Potential of the Bed Nucleus of the Stria Terminalis,” *Frontiers in Psychiatry* 10, no. 510 (2019).

<sup>429</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

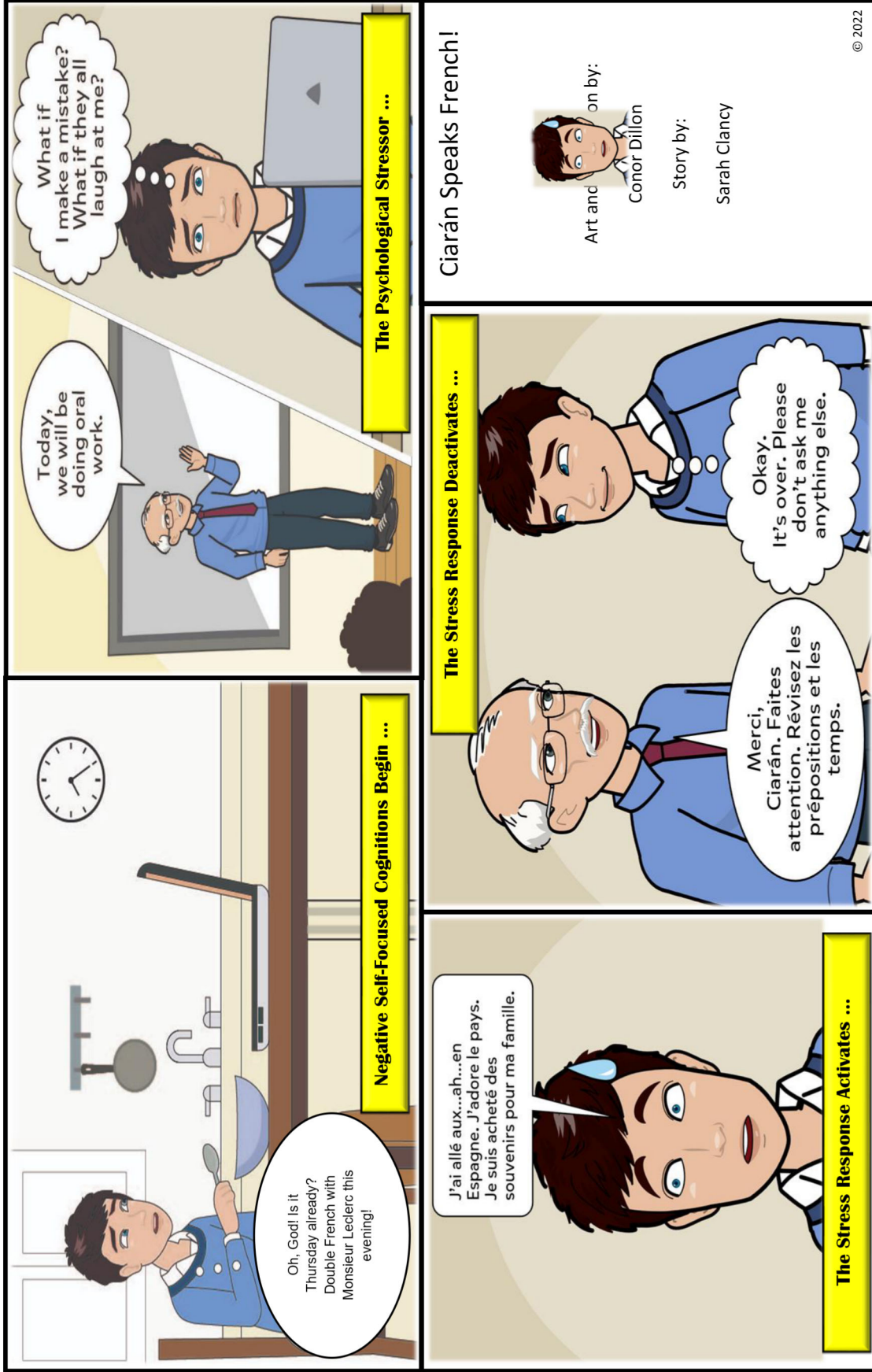
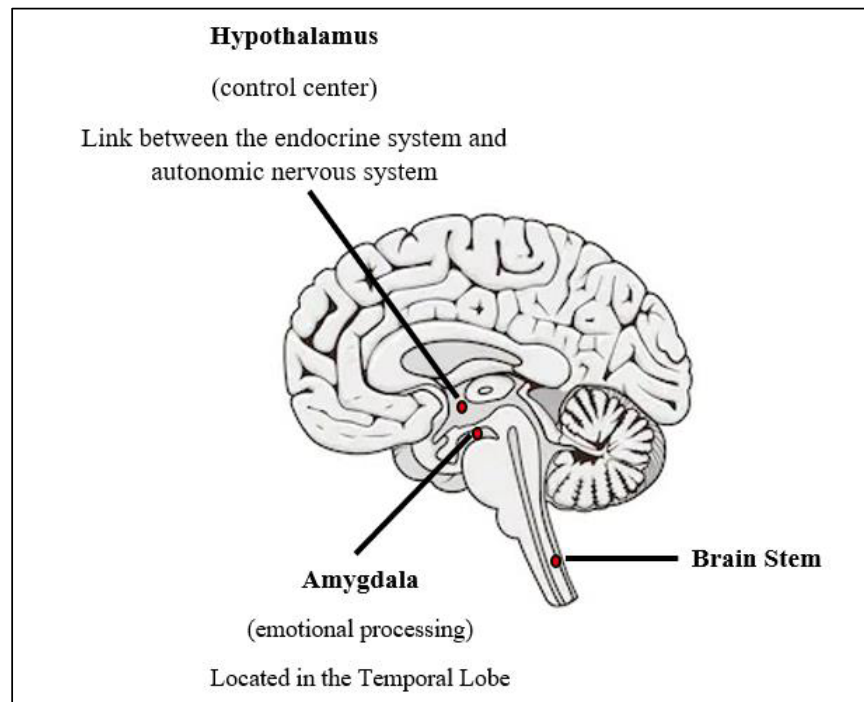


Figure 3.1 Vignette: Ciarán Speaks French!

When Ciarán is asked to tell his classmates about his summer holidays, the eyes and ears convey this information to the amygdala. The amygdala, a region of the brain situated in the medial temporal lobe, is primarily associated with emotional processing.<sup>430</sup> It deciphers the visual and aural information it receives. If it identifies a perceived danger, it will immediately send a warning signal to the hypothalamus (See Figure 3.2).<sup>431</sup> The hypothalamus, located above the brainstem, functions as a control centre. It is the bridge between the endocrine system and the autonomic nervous system.<sup>432</sup> It moderates many of the body’s key processes such as heart rate, blood pressure, and body temperature. The autonomic nervous system is composed of two sub-systems: (1) The sympathetic nervous system and (2) The parasympathetic nervous system.<sup>433</sup> While the sympathetic nervous system is involved in triggering the fight-or-flight response to respond to a perceived danger, the parasympathetic nervous system relaxes the body once a perceived danger has passed.



**Figure 3.2 Key Components of the Stress Response System in the Brain.**

<sup>430</sup> Livea Dorenla Godoy, “A Comprehensive Overview on Stress Neurobiology: Basic Concepts and Clinical Implications,” *Frontiers in Behavioural Neuroscience* 12, no. 127 (2018).

<sup>431</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>432</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>433</sup> *Ibid.*

When Ciarán’s hypothalamus receives the warning signal from the amygdala, it stimulates the sympathetic nervous system by transmitting signals via the autonomic nerve pathways to the adrenal glands.<sup>434</sup> The adrenal glands respond by secreting epinephrine through the body. Epinephrine, more widely known as adrenaline, prepares Ciarán’s body to react to the perceived danger (i.e., fight-or-flight). Ciarán chooses to fight. As adrenaline circulates through his body, it causes certain physiological changes to take place. Ciarán experiences a feeling of uneasiness, increased heart rate, and finds it difficult to concentrate as he responds. These are some of the most common physical indicators of anxiety as well as increased perspiration, dizziness, muscle aches (e.g., tension), trembling, rapid breathing, and a dry throat/mouth.

As Ciarán responds to his tutor’s question, he thinks to himself, “Will this ever end?” He begins to mumble in a low voice, “J’ai allé aux...ah...en Espagne. J’adore le pays. Je suis acheté des souvenirs pour ma famille” (I am went into...ah...to Spain. I love the country. I am bought some souvenirs for my family).<sup>435</sup> Ciarán is a strong language student. He realises that he has made several basic grammatical mistakes but cannot understand why. He thinks to himself, “I know that the verb ‘aller’ takes the auxiliary ‘être’ in the *passé composé*! Why did I make that silly error? Here we go again, everyone is going to think I’m useless at French.” As the initial rush of epinephrine eases, Ciarán’s hypothalamus then stimulates the second part of the stress response system called the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA axis).

The HPA axis ‘is regulated at the level of the hypothalamus by a diverse group of afferent projections from limbic, mid-brain, and brain stem nuclei,’ which moderate the sympathetic nervous system.<sup>436</sup> If the brain still considers a stimulus to be dangerous, the hypothalamus will secrete corticotropin-releasing hormone (CRH). When CRH reaches the pituitary gland, it ‘induces the release of adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH) into the

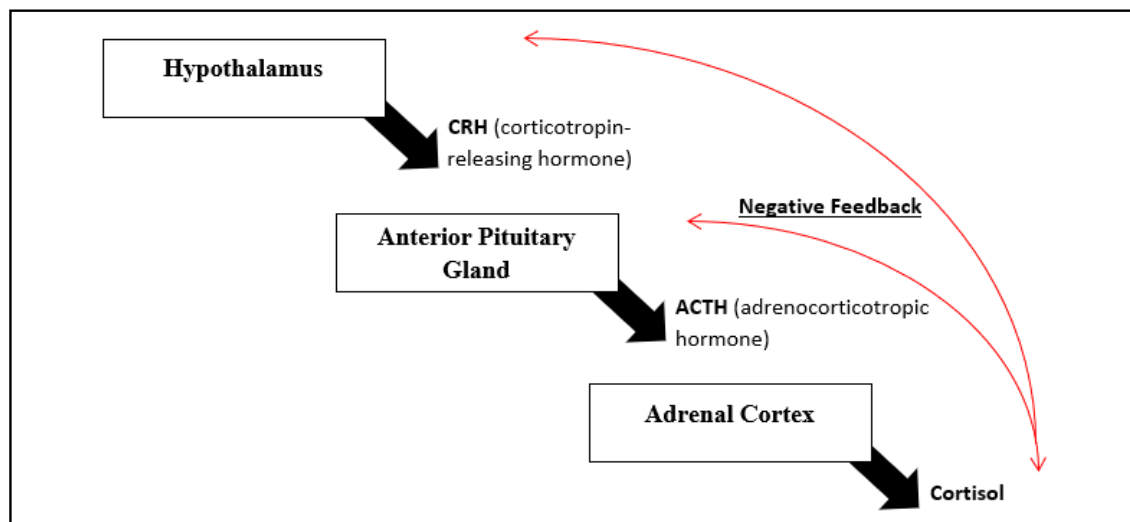
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<sup>434</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>435</sup> In the French language, verbs are conjugated in the past tense (*passé composé*) using either the auxiliary verb être (to be) or avoir (to have). Certain verbs of motion, including the verb ‘aller’ (to go), are conjugated in the past tense using the verb ‘être’. Since Ciarán’s cognitive resources were being monopolised due to his anxious reaction, he could not concentrate properly and used the verb ‘avoir’ instead of ‘être’ to express that he went to Spain on holidays. This resulted in an ungrammatical utterance. Similarly, he made a prepositional error, but corrected himself (Aux Espagne - incorrect / En Espagne - correct). Ciarán also made a similar error towards the end of his response, using the auxiliary verb être (to be) instead of avoir (to have) in order to conjugate the verb ‘acheter’ (to buy) in the past tense. As the verb ‘acheter’ is not a verb of motion, it follows a normal conjugation pattern and requires the auxiliary ‘avoir’ in the *passé composé*.

<sup>436</sup> Sean Smith and Wylie Vale, “The role of the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis in neuroendocrine responses to stress,” *Dialogues in Clinical Neuroscience* 8, no. 4 (2006): 383. Afferent neurons, also referred to as sensory neurons, are the nerve fibres that convey sensory information to the central nervous system (i.e., brain and spinal cord).

systemic circulation'.<sup>437</sup> ACTH will then travel to the adrenal glands, stimulating them to release cortisol, also known as the stress hormone. When the perceived danger has passed, cortisol levels will decrease, and the parasympathetic nervous system will suppress the stress response (See Figure 3.3). When Ciarán sees Monsieur Leclerc nod and eventually say, “Merci, Ciarán. Faites attention. Révisez les prépositions et les temps” (Thanks Ciarán. Be careful. Revise prepositions and tenses), his stress response comes to an end. He thinks to himself, “Okay. It’s over. Please don’t ask me anything else.”



*Figure 3.3 The Function of the HPA Axis in the Stress Response.*

The extent to which anxiety persists and, further, the impact that it has on an individual may be further elucidated by examining the two principal ways in which anxiety reactions have been classified: (1) by type and (2) by level. Anxiety reactions have mainly been categorised as either *trait*, *state*, or *situation-specific*. Early categorisations of anxiety (i.e., trait and state) were advanced in the 1960s by psychologists including Cattell and Scheier, Lazarus, and Spielberger. However, in the 1980s, Spielberger extended this classification by introducing another subcategory – situation-specific. Both trait and state anxiety are typified by an absence of control; however, they differ in terms of their persistence. Trait anxiety has been characterised as a trait of personality. Individuals who suffer from trait anxiety are typically apprehensive in a multitude of situations. Trait anxiety is a stable and constant personality trait,

<sup>437</sup> *Ibid.*

which does not oscillate in different situations; it is classified as a long-lasting and enduring anxious reaction to various stimuli.<sup>438</sup> Eysenck, MacLeod, and Matthews (1987) clarify that individuals who suffer from trait anxiety are generally prone to high levels of stress.<sup>439</sup> It has also been documented that trait anxiety has the potential to impair cognitive activity and interfere with memory.<sup>440</sup> In contrast, state anxiety is a transient anxious reaction, resulting in ‘temporary increased sympathetic nervous system activity’.<sup>441</sup> It is a transitory emotional state that fluctuates over time and changes in intensity. The anxious reaction will usually stop soon after the external provocation that evoked the response ceases. MacIntyre (1999) aptly describes this categorisation as the ‘moment to moment experience of anxiety’.<sup>442</sup> Contrary to both trait and state anxiety, situation-specific anxiety occurs in response to an explicit situation. Oteir and Al-Otaibi (2019) maintain that this type of anxiety is ‘closely related to specific situations in which one situation differs from another but is consistent over time’.<sup>443</sup>

Many education-related performance anxieties have been characterised as situation-specific (e.g., language learning, mathematics, computing etc.) in view of the fact that learning takes place in a distinct context. FLA has been categorised as a situation-specific anxiety as opposed to a manifestation of trait or state anxiety. In this regard, two central situation-specific approaches have emerged in the literature. The first approach, argued by researchers such as McIntyre and Gardner (1989), maintains that FLA is a situation-specific anxiety, but they suggest that it constitutes a form of trait anxiety as FLA becomes a stable trait of the learner overtime in response to language learning.<sup>444</sup> This is known as the *transfer approach*. It is, however, difficult to generalise this approach to all language learners given that their reactions (i.e., anxious response) to the language learning process may vary in different contexts and change over time (e.g., through intervention measures). In contrast, the second approach, adopted by researchers such as Horwitz et al. (1986), proposes that situation-specific anxiety is distinct from other types of anxiety and is an exceptional reaction to the language learning

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<sup>438</sup> Oteir and Al-Otaibi, “Foreign Language Anxiety: A Systematic Review.”

<sup>439</sup> Michael W. Eysenck, Colin MacLeod, and Andrew Matthews, “Cognitive functioning and anxiety,” *Psychological Research* 49, no. 2-3 (1987).

<sup>440</sup> Barbara Gawda and Ewa Szepietowska, “Trait Anxiety Modulates Brain Activity during Performance of Verbal Fluency Tasks,” *Frontiers in Behavioural Neuroscience* 10, no. 10 (2016).

<sup>441</sup> Francesca Saviola et al., “Trait and State Anxiety are Mapped Differently in the Human Brain,” *Scientific Reports* 10, no. 11112 (2020): 1.

<sup>442</sup> Peter MacIntyre, “Language Anxiety: A Review of the Research for Language Teachers,” in *Affect in Foreign Language and Second Language Learning: A Practical Guide to Creating a Low-Anxiety Classroom Atmosphere*, ed. D. J. Young (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 1999), 28.

<sup>443</sup> Oteir and Al-Otaibi, “Foreign Language Anxiety: A Systematic Review,” 311.

<sup>444</sup> Peter D. MacIntyre and Robert C. Gardner, “Anxiety and Second-Language Learning: Towards a Theoretical Clarification,” *Language Learning* 39, no. 2 (1989).



process in and of itself. This is known as the *unique approach*. This specialised perspective has influenced the approach adopted in the present investigation and will be discussed further in the next section. Although researchers may differ in their expositions of situation-specific anxiety, they do, however, agree that the most important knowledge lies in recognising its indicators to avoid anxiety producing contexts.<sup>445</sup>

Thus far, it may seem that anxiety is a rather unfavourable and adverse mental state that negatively impacts upon and interrupts daily functioning. However, this is not entirely true. As previously observed, the anxiety reaction is involved in triggering the physiological fight-or-flight response. This is a natural reaction which has evolved as a survival mechanism throughout history in order to protect individuals from perceived threat or danger.<sup>446</sup> The extent to which it impacts upon an individual, however, depends upon its intensity, frequency, duration and an individual's coping mechanism.<sup>447</sup> In any investigation of anxiety, it is therefore important to differentiate between what clinicians term normal and abnormal anxieties, which may be categorised as either mild, moderate, severe, or panic-level. While mild and moderate anxieties are considered to be normal, anxieties that deviate into the severe and panic-level categories are regarded as abnormal (e.g., generalised anxiety disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, panic disorder, and social anxiety disorder).<sup>448</sup> Abnormal anxieties usually require specialised clinical or medical interventions in order to relieve their symptoms.

Each level of anxiety encompasses different behavioural, psychological, and physiological responses depending on its severity (See Figure 3.4). In the context of the present investigation, it is important to note that language anxiety falls under the category of mild to moderate anxiety. While language anxiety is a debilitating form of anxiety, affecting one third to one half of language learners during their studies, it does not impact upon the language student to such an extent that they become incapacitated in the language learning process.<sup>449</sup> Classic psychological and physiological manifestations of FLA are consistent with that of mild to moderate anxiety. For example, Hashemi and Abbasi (2013) report that learners who

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<sup>445</sup> The situation-specific nature of language anxiety is further elaborated upon and elucidated in section three.

<sup>446</sup> Dean Mobbs et al., "The Ecology of Human Fear: Survival Optimization and the Nervous System," *Frontiers in Neuroscience* 9, no. 55 (2015).

<sup>447</sup> Andrew Wilkinson, Kevin Meares, and Mark Freeston, *CBT for Worry and Generalised Anxiety Disorder* (London: Sage Publications, 2011).

<sup>448</sup> Health Service Executive (HSE), "Anxiety in Young People," HSE, Last modified September 23, 2018, <https://www2.hse.ie/wellbeing/mental-health/anxiety-in-young-people.html>

<sup>449</sup> Renée von Wörde, "Students' Perspectives on Foreign Language Anxiety," *Inquiry* 8, no. 1 (2003).

demonstrate high levels of FLA usually avoid eye contact, perform poorly, fidget, mumble their words, have accelerated or delayed speech, feel overwhelmed, freeze when called upon, and suffer from delayed recall.<sup>450</sup> Further, Horwitz et al. (1986) document that anxious language students often commit frequent syntax, spelling, and morphology errors.<sup>451</sup> In reviewing the literature, common coping mechanisms in response to language anxiety include engaging in avoidance and procrastination behaviours such as hiding at the back of the classroom, playing truant, and avoiding studying. Research (e.g., Tobias, 1986; Krashen, 1985) has also revealed that language anxiety has a significant effect on cognitive functioning in the language learning process. Its specific impact on cognitive function and performance will be discussed in the next section, as we transition from a general overview of the anxiety construct to a more comprehensive specific examination of language anxiety.

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<sup>450</sup> Masoud Hashemi and Moghtada Abbasi, "The Role of the Teacher in Alleviating Anxiety in Language Classes," *International Research Journal of Applied and Basic Sciences* 4, no. 3 (2013).

<sup>451</sup> Horwitz et al., "Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety."

<u>Anxiety Level</u>	<u>Behavioural Response</u>	<u>Psychological Response</u>	<u>Physiological Response</u>
<b>MILD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coping Mechanisms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharpens the senses</li> <li>• Increases motivation for productivity</li> <li>• Increases perceptual field</li> <li>• Heightened awareness of environment</li> <li>• Learning enhanced</li> <li>• Individual can function on optimal level</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulty sleeping</li> <li>• Nervousness (e.g., butterflies)</li> <li>• Fidgeting</li> <li>• Restlessness</li> <li>• Hypersensitivity to environment</li> </ul>
<b>MODERATE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ego Defence Mechanisms</li> <li>• Psycho-Physiological Responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of perceptual field diminishes</li> <li>• Less alert to events in the environment</li> <li>• Attention span decreased</li> <li>• Ability to concentrate/problem solve decreased</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Muscle tension</li> <li>• Perspiration</li> <li>• Increased heart rate</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Dry throat/mouth</li> <li>• High pitched voice</li> <li>• Faster rate of speech</li> </ul>
<b>SEVERE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psycho-Neurotic Responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extent of perceptual field severely diminished</li> <li>• Attention span extremely limited</li> <li>• Difficulty completing simple tasks</li> <li>• Cannot learn effectively</li> <li>• Feels confused and in dread</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Palpitations</li> <li>• Migraine</li> <li>• Insomnia</li> <li>• Vertigo</li> <li>• Discomfort (e.g., tachycardia, chest pain, nausea, vomiting, trembling)</li> </ul>
<b>PANIC-LEVEL</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Psychotic Responses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unable to focus on even the smallest detail in the environment</li> <li>• Misperceptions common</li> <li>• Loss of contact with reality</li> <li>• Hallucinations/Delusions</li> <li>• Unable to communicate effectively</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wild, desperate behaviour</li> <li>• Dilated pupils</li> <li>• Increased heart rate, blood pressure, and pulse</li> <li>• Feeling of terror</li> <li>• Emotionally weak</li> <li>• In most severe cases, prolonged physical and emotional exhaustion can be life threatening.</li> </ul>

**Figure 3.4 Adaptation Responses on a Continuum of Anxiety.** Adapted from Mary C. Townsend, *Essentials of Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing: Concepts of Care in Evidence-Based Practice* (Philadelphia: F. A. Davis Company, 2013).

### 3.3 Foreign Language Anxiety: Delineating a Psychological Phenomenon

Today, FLA is recognised as a distinct psychological construct that acts as a barrier to the successful acquisition of an L2. However, this realisation was not a straightforward breakthrough in the field of SLA. Much research and theorisation were necessary before researchers understood how anxiety mapped onto the process of language learning. Preliminary investigations on emotion, in the 1970s, focused more generally on affect in the language learning process. These explorations were largely experimental in nature and detailed consideration was not given to ‘the meaning of the anxiety concept for language learners’.<sup>452</sup>

During this period, notions about anxiety and language learning were ‘adopted from a mixture of various sources’ and, thus, many problematic issues impacted upon the research of the period.<sup>453</sup> There was an absence of a reliable measurement tool intended to define and measure ‘both anxiety and the dimensions of language acquisition to which it might be related’.<sup>454</sup> Different psychological measures were implemented to assess anxiety in language learning through physiological response, however, these were general anxiety measures and had little to do with language itself. Further complicating matters was the fact that language anxiety was not distinguished as a situation-specific anxiety. In this context, the differentiation between facilitative anxiety (i.e., positive anxiety that contributes to effective functioning) and debilitating anxiety (i.e., negative anxiety that prevents effective performance) was not always maintained during data collection and analysis.<sup>455</sup> These early limitations led to many contradictory findings. For example, data interpretation often became circular, that is to say, the direction of the correlation between anxiety and language learning was inconsistent. Peter MacIntyre (2017) aptly calls this period of research on FLA ‘the confounded approach’. He

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<sup>452</sup> Peter D. MacIntyre, “An Overview of Language Anxiety Research and Trends in Its Development,” in *New Insights into Language Anxiety: Theory, Research and Educational Implications*, eds. Christina Gkonou, Mark Daubney, and Jean-Marc Dewaele (Bristol: Multilingual Matters, 2017), 11.

<sup>453</sup> *Ibid.* Although it is beyond the scope of this chapter to analyse all of the activities and contributions during this period, it is important to note that early perspectives of affect in language learning were informed by a number of influential scholars, researchers, and practitioners, including psychologists Alpert and Haber’s (1960) research on *Anxiety in Academic Achievement Situations*, clinical psychologist Dr. Charles A. Curran’s (1961) *counselling-learning theory*, cognitive psychologist Kenneth Chastain’s (1977) work on *Affective and Ability Factors in Second Language Acquisition*, well-known SLA scholar Howard H. Kleinmann’s (1977) research on *Avoidance Behavior in Adult Second Language Acquisition*, linguist Tom Scovel’s (1978) landmark article, *The Effect of Affect on Foreign Language Learning: A Review of the Anxiety Research*, and psychologist Robert Gardner’s (1979) influential *socio-educational model of language learning motivation*.

<sup>454</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>455</sup> *Ibid.*

highlights that the crux of the ‘confounding problem’ lay in the fact that not all classifications of anxiety which ‘can be defined and measured are likely to be related to language learning’.<sup>456</sup>

However, these shortcomings helped to forge a path forward for future research on language anxiety. In the 1980s and 1990s, researchers understood that they needed to develop a more refined understanding of the relationship between the psychological construct of anxiety and language learning. In this regard, notable scholars in the field sought to negotiate, measure, and unravel manifestations of anxiety in the language learning process and, thus, the ‘specialised approach’ to language anxiety research got underway. At the forefront of this new phase of FLA research was Horwitz et al. (1986), who made several noteworthy contributions towards enhancing our present understanding of the language anxiety construct. Firstly, and perhaps most importantly, they established that anxiety in language learning was not a manifestation of trait or state anxiety but was in fact a situation-specific anxiety unique to language learning. As noted earlier, situation-specific anxiety, as opposed to trait or state anxiety, manifests itself in response to a specific situation or event. A ‘predetermined archetype’ (i.e., language learning in the present study) triggers the anxiety response in the individual.<sup>457</sup> Early research did not make this important distinction, which led to conflicting and inconsistent findings. Since Horwitz et al. differentiated anxiety experienced during language learning from more general types of anxiety, they were able to establish the main components that characterised apprehension during the language learning process.

In their seminal article, *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety*, they proposed one of the first theories to delineate this debilitating situational anxiety. In their theory of foreign language classroom anxiety, language anxiety is described as ‘a distinct complex construct of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process’.<sup>458</sup> In order to establish the reasons why negative self-related cognition may occur in the language learning process, they explored learners’ personal accounts of the ‘specific aspects of their courses that were particularly anxiety-provoking’.<sup>459</sup> Their research highlighted three related performance anxieties that

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<sup>456</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>457</sup> John Paul White, “The Effects of Social and Language Anxiety on English Language Learners,” *New Directions in Teaching and Learning English Discussion 7*, (2019): 87.

<sup>458</sup> Horwitz et al., “Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety,” 128.

<sup>459</sup> Aida (1994) maintains that some researchers misinterpret communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation as secondary components of FLA, when Horwitz et al. (1986) consider them to be analogies of the construct. Yukie Aida, “Examination of Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope’s Construct of Foreign Language Anxiety: The Case of Students of Japanese,” *The Modern Language Journal* 78, no. 2 (1994).

produce the ‘conceptually distinct variable’ of FLA to manifest itself among learners: (1) Communication Apprehension, (2) Test Anxiety, and (3) Fear of Negative Evaluation.<sup>460</sup> As will be observed in chapters six and eight, these performance anxieties play a central role in the present case study investigation.

Communication apprehension encompasses both production apprehension (i.e., fear of speaking) and reception apprehension (i.e., fear of not being able to understand foreign language speech). It has been revealed that oral production in a foreign language is frequently perceived as the greatest ‘threat to people’s self-concept, self-identity, and ego, which they have formed in their first language as reasonable and intelligent individuals’.<sup>461</sup> In her study on L2 perception and production, Bilá (2010) validated Horwitz et al.’s findings and found that the majority of language learners document high levels of foreign language speaking anxiety and also established that their inability to fully and confidently converse in the foreign language was the greatest barrier to communication in the target language.<sup>462</sup>

Test anxiety occurs as a result of a learner’s fear of not being able to perform in the foreign language during evaluative conditions. It has been revealed that FLA manifests itself in its strongest form in evaluative or examination like settings.<sup>463</sup> Learners describe that when their foreign language performance is overseen and evaluated by individuals such as peers, teachers, or native speakers, their language anxiety is exacerbated (e.g., Shabani 2012; Liu and Jackson 2008). This apprehension stems from the fear of being negatively evaluated or assessed. In the learning environment, the student coexists with two other parties – the teacher who is often the only native speaker of the foreign language and their peers. A student’s anticipation of negative evaluation from their teacher or peers is adequate to stimulate an uneasy reaction. In her research on *Creating a Low-Anxiety Classroom Environment*, Young (1991) found that students who experience high levels of language anxiety in the classroom believe that their language competency is inadequate in comparison to their peers and imagine that their peers are judging them in a negative way.<sup>464</sup>

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<sup>460</sup> Horwitz et al., “Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety,” 125.

<sup>461</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>462</sup> Magdaléna Bilá, “Perception and production of a second language and the concept of a foreign accent,” in *Modernization of teaching foreign languages: CLIL, inclusive and intercultural education*, ed. S. Pokrivčáková (Brno: Masaryk University, 2010).

<sup>463</sup> Horwitz et al., “Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety.”

<sup>464</sup> Dolly J. Young, “Creating a Low-Anxiety Classroom Environment: What Does Language Anxiety Research Suggest,” *The Modern Language Journal* 75, no. 4 (1991).

Finally, fear of negative evaluation is associated with learners' real or imagined internally generated thoughts of others' negative evaluations of their performance in the target language (i.e., teacher and/or peers). Fear of negative evaluation is a complex performance anxiety and many variables have been identified in the FLA scholarship that contribute to its exacerbation, including learners' beliefs and perceptions, competitiveness, low self-confidence, and teacher perceptions. In order to gain insight into learner perceptions of the language learning process, many researchers (e.g., Fujiwara 2015; Yazıcı and Tan 2010; Altan 2006) have employed *The Beliefs about Language Learning Inventory*, developed by Elaine Horwitz in 1983. Findings have revealed that learner beliefs often stem from impractical notions about language learning. For example, some learners conclude that language learning is simply a case of translation, memorisation, or speaking with a native like accent. Researchers emphasise that these findings indicate an opposition between learner beliefs and the reality of language learning, which may conceivably be a cause of language anxiety. Many studies (e.g., De Bot, Jin, and Keijzer 2015; Zhang and Zhong 2012; Bailey 1983) have also revealed that the competitive aspect of language learning may result in learner anxiety, that is to say, learners bearing comparison between themselves and their idealised self-image. In this context, Çağatay (2015) discovered that language anxiety escalates at a higher rate when exchanging with a native speaker of the target language in comparison to a classmate. Pronunciation errors, inability to express thoughts, concern about grammatical errors, speed of conversation, intonation patterns and use of unknown words were found to be the main triggers that precipitated language anxiety.

In a similar vein, MacIntyre et al. (1998) found that there was a significant correlation between language anxiety and self-assessment, which they considered to be part of a single construct: self-confidence. This hypothesis has been corroborated by different studies (e.g., Bailey et al. 1999; Gardner and MacIntyre 1993), which have established that self-confidence is a variable that has a significant impact on foreign language performance. Anxious language learners frequently have defeatist perceptions of their academic ability and lower self-confidence. This negative attitude can be detrimental to a student's command of the foreign language. Given that language learning is a cyclical process, the more a learner experiences failure, the more language anxiety they may experience. It has also been established that teacher perceptions of the language learning process contribute significantly to students' language anxiety levels. It has been revealed that teaching methods, characterised by severity

and formality, are a source of pressure and anxiety for language students.<sup>465</sup> As the teacher and student interact on a constant basis, the emotion of one group cannot be contemplated without taking the other's into consideration in the language teaching and learning process.<sup>466</sup> The teacher can control and adjust the learning environment, look out for indicators of anxiety and, as will be observed in chapters seven and eight, can support students in managing and reducing it.<sup>467</sup>

Further, another important development that emerged from Horwitz et al.'s theory of foreign language classroom anxiety was the establishment of *The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale* (FLCAS; See Appendix F). As mentioned previously, early research employed general anxiety measures that were not directly related to experiences of anxiety during language learning and, therefore, research findings were inconsistent. Horwitz et al. insisted that methods of language anxiety measurement had to be reconceptualised in order to reflect its precise nature. The FLCAS remains the most well-known and widely used language anxiety measurement tool in the field of SLA. The scale is composed of thirty-three items and evaluates FLA levels based upon students' 'negative attitudes, subjective perceptions, beliefs, and feelings toward foreign language classes'.<sup>468</sup> The representative FLA criteria are scored on a 5-point Likert scale and are ordered from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

The FLCAS is an invaluable research tool in the context of the present investigation as it permits a comprehensive examination of the possible sources and consequences of language anxiety. Thus, it plays an instrumental role in expanding knowledge of students' language anxiety and perceptions of language learning in the Irish context. Since its establishment, the scale has been applied in several research contexts with various student populations and sample sizes and has shown consistent and reliable results. The FLCAS was employed in the present investigation because of its strong internal consistency and validity. The internal reliability of the scale, which assesses the consistency of results across its items, has remained constant in different research contexts and has displayed a significant reliability coefficient of  $\alpha = .93$ .<sup>469</sup> In this regard, it is important to note that the FLCAS has been translated and employed in

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<sup>465</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>466</sup> Zdena Krá'lovà and Gabriela Petrova, "Causes and Consequences of Foreign Language Anxiety," *XLinguae Journal* 10, no. 3 (2017).

<sup>467</sup> Kota Ohata, "Potential sources of anxiety for Japanese learners of English: Preliminary case interviews with five Japanese college students in the U.S.," *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language* 9, no. 3 (2005).

<sup>468</sup> Oteir and Al-Otaibi, "Foreign Language Anxiety: A Systematic Review," 312.

<sup>469</sup> Elaine K. Horwitz, "Preliminary Evidence for the Reliability and Validity of a Foreign Language Anxiety Scale," *TESOL Quarterly* 20, no. 3 (1986).



numerous research studies since its development to examine the psychological construct of language anxiety both in Europe and further afield. It has constantly displayed reliable and steady results across research contexts, highlighting its strong internal consistency and validity. While it is not possible to list all of the studies that have employed the FLCAS, a recent meta-analysis by Dewaele, Botes, and Greiff (2020) provides a comprehensive overview of the scale and the extent of its reach among the SLA community.<sup>470</sup> Furthermore, the scale's 'approach to conceptualizing and measuring anxiety has been labelled as situation specific'.<sup>471</sup> It, therefore, helps to draw a firm distinction between situation-specific anxiety and 'a generally anxious personality and/or moment-to-moment experience of feeling anxious'.<sup>472</sup>

Building upon Horwitz et al.'s theory of foreign language classroom anxiety, Tobias (1986) conducted a systematic investigation into the relationship between cognition and language anxiety and produced two models to illustrate the manner in which FLA may impact upon cognition during language learning: (1) The interference model of anxiety and (2) The interference retrieval model.<sup>473</sup> As noted in Chapter Two, Tobias also drew on Krashen's affective filter hypothesis in order to establish how language anxiety interferes with cognition in language learning. As previously described, if a language learner's affective filter is elevated, they may 'experience anxiety, tension, and lack of self-confidence' which prevents successful language learning.<sup>474</sup> Increased anxiety inhibits the stimulus (i.e., language input) from making contact with the LAD, located in the brain. In contrast, a low affective filter does not trigger anxiety. The learner is relaxed and can therefore understand input easily.<sup>475</sup> As a result, more target language input will be processed, encoded, and accessible at the output stage of language production.

Tobias' interference model of anxiety is concerned with barriers to learning at the input and processing stages of L2 acquisition. As noted previously, input refers to the stimulus (i.e., language instruction/utterance) that the learner receives. If the student is anxious at the input stage, their ability to concentrate may be impeded and, consequently, less information about the language will be encoded.<sup>476</sup> Tobias, therefore, suggests that frequent and recurrent

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<sup>470</sup> See Jean-Marc Dewaele, Elouise Botes, and Samuel Greiff, "The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale and Academic Achievement: An Overview of the Prevailing Literature and a Meta-Analysis," *Journal for the Psychology of Language Learning* 2, (2020): 26-56.

<sup>471</sup> MacIntyre, "An Overview of Language Anxiety Research," 14.

<sup>472</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>473</sup> Tobias, "Anxiety and Cognitive Processing of Instruction."

<sup>474</sup> Oteir and Al-Otaibi, "Foreign Language Anxiety: A Systematic Review," 312.

<sup>475</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>476</sup> *Ibid.*

exposure to the stimulus is necessary at this stage of language acquisition to counteract the negative consequences of FLA. The processing stage of language acquisition encompasses the stage at which the language learner deciphers and gives meaning to an incoming stimulus. At this stage, both learning and comprehension may be inhibited if students are unable to identify new input from their own learning experiences, or within the context of similar target language input.<sup>477</sup> The interference retrieval model focuses on the output stage of language acquisition. Language output refers to L2 productive skills such as oral and written production. If anxiety manifests itself at this stage of the language learning process, it can hinder the student's ability to recall material learned at an earlier stage. Subsequently, this will result in imperfect and inferior retrieval of vocabulary, improper use of grammar or, in a worst-case scenario, failure to reciprocate in the target language whatsoever.<sup>478</sup>

Tobias (1986) emphasises that the building blocks of the input, processing, and output stages of L2 acquisition have similar components. He argues, however, that it is important to differentiate between each stage in order to localise and identify the point at which anxiety first materialises, in other words, the origin of the language performance problem. The models that Tobias established to explicate language anxiety are well grounded in theoretical and empirical evidence. His models have been employed in and corroborated by several research studies including Steinberg and Horwitz's (1986) study on *The Impact of Induced Anxiety on the Denotative and Interpretive Content of Second Language Speech*<sup>479</sup> and MacIntyre and Gardner's (1991) study on the influence of language anxiety on native and L2 processing.<sup>480</sup>

More recent research, carried out by Khan and Zafar (2010), has usefully supplemented Tobias' models and provides additional evidence with respect to FLA and cognition. They reveal that when an individual experiences FLA, a process of negative self-related cognition begins.<sup>481</sup> Negative self-related cognition is typified by negative self-perceptions including undervaluing oneself as well as anticipation of failure and avoidance, as evidenced in the earlier vignette.<sup>482</sup> Negative self-related cognition preoccupies and monopolises the cognitive resources that are necessary for the input, processing, and output stages of language learning.

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<sup>477</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>478</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>479</sup> Faith S. Steinberg and Elaine K. Horwitz, "The Effect of Induced Anxiety on the Denotative and Interpretive Content of Second Language Speech," *TESOL Quarterly* 20, no. 1 (1986).

<sup>480</sup> MacIntyre and Gardner, "Language Anxiety: Its Relationship to Other Anxieties..."

<sup>481</sup> Zaved Ahmed Khan and Shahila Zafar, "The Effects of Anxiety on Cognitive Processing in English Language Learning," *English Language Teaching* 3, no. 2 (2010).

<sup>482</sup> *Ibid.*

Consequently, there are not as many cognitive resources at a language learner's disposal. It has been conclusively shown that language learners who engage in a process of negative self-related cognition are generally less successful in language learning because more cognitive resources are being exhausted. As language learning is a heightened cognitive task, language anxiety, therefore, poses a serious challenge to a language learner. Research has documented that FLA is highly correlated with students' inability to understand auditory input, produce output in the target language, and it has also been shown to undermine a student's capacity to learn vocabulary. Further, empirical evidence has corroborated that students who experience language anxiety perform below par in standardised tests and receive lower test scores.

In this context, another important development which occurred during this 'specialised approach' to language anxiety research was the publication of Richard Sparks and Leonore Ganschow's (1991) well-known article, *Foreign Language Learning Differences: Affective or Native Language Aptitude Differences?*<sup>483</sup> Since its publication, there has been considerable debate in the field of SLA as to whether a learner's poor command of a foreign language is a consequence of language anxiety or whether language anxiety is a result of the learner having a poor command of a foreign language. The causal relationship between FLA and language achievement remains a largely contentious issue. The two variables are often considered to be 'communicating vessels' as they both have the potential to provoke a chain reaction.<sup>484</sup>

While MacIntyre advances that FLA is a barrier to all language learning styles,<sup>485</sup> his contemporary, Elaine Horwitz, posits that language anxiety is a result of poor language learning among some students.<sup>486</sup> At present, there is no consensus about the poor language command debate. Krá'lovà and Petrova (2010), in their in-depth analysis of the causes and consequences of FLA, insist that more research on this topic needs to be undertaken before the association between negative affect and performance is more clearly understood.<sup>487</sup> This understanding is an important concern for a range of key stakeholders including government departments and language policy and planning makers. In order to resolve this debate over causality, MacIntyre contends that more experimental evidence is required to bring about causal interpretations:

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<sup>483</sup> Richard L. Sparks and Leonore Ganschow, "Foreign Language Learning Differences: Affective or Native Language Aptitude Differences?" *The Modern Language Journal* 75, no. 1 (1991).

<sup>484</sup> Krá'lovà and Petrova, "Causes and Consequences of Foreign Language Anxiety," 110.

<sup>485</sup> Peter D. MacIntyre, "How Does Anxiety Affect Second Language Learning? A Reply to Sparks and Ganschow," *The Modern Language Journal* 79, no. 1 (1995).

<sup>486</sup> Elaine Horwitz, "Language anxiety and achievement," *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics* 21, (2001).

<sup>487</sup> Krá'lovà and Petrova, "Causes and Consequences of Foreign Language Anxiety."

‘There is a pressing need for additional experiments to help clarify causal connections.’<sup>488</sup> It is hoped that some of the research findings from the present study may contribute to and extend knowledge of this grey area in FLA scholarship.

Since the mid-2000s, researchers have taken a ‘dynamic approach’ to language anxiety research, contemplating the construct from a multidimensional perspective and drawing attention its multi-layered and variable nature. The present study positions itself within this phase or tradition of language anxiety research. However, it is important to note that this evolution in research has only been possible thanks to the significant advancements that had occurred during the ‘specialised approach’. During this period, language anxiety had been established as a debilitating situation-specific anxiety. The FLCAS, a legitimate and reliable methodological tool, had been developed to exclusively explore the effects of FLA and, finally, the manner in which FLA interfered with cognition and performance had been highlighted. These developments have since permitted researchers to examine and position ‘anxiety among a range of interacting factors that affect acquisition of the foreign language and performance in the foreign language’.<sup>489</sup>

Although the ‘dynamic approach’ is a contemporary and growing tradition, it has already gone a long way in drawing attention to a ‘multitude of interacting factors that affect language learning and development’.<sup>490</sup> This approach has revealed that the ‘anxiety state reflects the coalescence of a number of dynamically changing processes’.<sup>491</sup> Some of the most crucial variables which have influenced its development include identity, culture, beliefs, and environmental factors such as the language learning setting (e.g., TML environments). As will be observed in chapters six and eight, these variables are central to the present case study investigation. By approaching the psychological construct of language anxiety from more than one dimension, this study seeks to perceive the language learning process and learner through a more holistic lens. Importantly, the multifaceted nature of this approach has also increased potential to establish effective pedagogic techniques or strategies in order to limit the negative effects of language anxiety.<sup>492</sup>

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<sup>488</sup> MacIntyre, “An Overview of Language Anxiety Research,” 19.

<sup>489</sup> Jean-Marc Dewaele and Mateb Alfawzan. “Does the Effect of Enjoyment Outweigh that of Anxiety in Foreign Language Performance?” *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching* 8, no. 1 (2018): 24.

<sup>490</sup> MacIntyre, “An overview of language anxiety research,” 20.

<sup>491</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>492</sup> Language anxiety reducing strategies and techniques are specifically discussed in Chapter Five.

The discussion that follows sheds light upon this contemporary direction in FLA research, in which ‘anxiety is studied in connection with a complex web of language experiences.’<sup>493</sup> It does this, firstly, by drawing upon the triunal model of anxiety, developed, in 2009, by Bigdeli and Bai. Since its establishment, the triunal model of anxiety has emerged as an influential theoretical framework that assumes an ‘interlayered and cross-dimensional approach to understanding and working with anxiety’.<sup>494</sup> Secondly, this investigation examines a key environmental factor that has impacted significantly upon the present case study: distance learning. More specifically, this analysis draws upon contemporary research conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to evaluate the potential effect of a distance learning environment on the alleviation and/or exacerbation of learners’ language anxiety levels.

Bigdeli and Bai’s triunal model of anxiety examines the construct of FLA from a multidimensional perspective, drawing upon three disparate fields of research which are nonetheless ‘interlinked in a nonlinear causal relationship’: (1) Physiology, (2) Psychology, and (3) Philosophy.<sup>495</sup> The aim of their model is twofold. Firstly, it seeks to advance knowledge of FLA by exploring it from a multifaceted perspective and, secondly, it endeavours to contribute to language anxiety reduction techniques based on this contemporary insight. The triunal model of anxiety is based on the premise that a language learner is a complex individual and cannot be reduced to a principally neurobiological, psychological, or conceptual being. They argue that:

There is no separation among [the heart, body, and mind], the relationship among them is conceptualised as mutually reflecting mirrors. Altogether, these domains make an interconnected and interactive system. Any pressure on one part of this interactive parallel processing system will be reflected (mirrored) in other parts.<sup>496</sup>

Thus, Bigdeli and Bai provide a more extensive definition of language anxiety, arguing that it ‘manifests itself inseparably and in all three dimensions (i.e., physiology, psychology, and philosophy) that are themselves further embedded in the larger sociocultural dimension’.<sup>497</sup>

Earlier in this chapter, a detailed overview of the neuro-biological and neuro-physiological mechanisms of the stress response was presented. Bigdeli and Bai assert that

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<sup>493</sup> MacIntyre, “An overview of language anxiety research,” 11.

<sup>494</sup> Bigdeli and Bai, “The Triunal Model of Anxiety and Its Application to Anxiety Reduction...,” 103.

<sup>495</sup> *Ibid.*, 112.

<sup>496</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>497</sup> *Ibid.*, 104.

language learners who comprehend the neuro-physiological and neuro-biological dimensions of the stress response, and who are able to acknowledge their physical response to stressors, will be more mindful and ‘ready to work with anxiety’.<sup>498</sup> They do, however, follow this proposition with a caveat highlighting that physiology does not produce anxiety. If the relationship between anxiety and physiology was interpreted in this way, it ‘would be to confuse the symptoms with the cause’.<sup>499</sup> They specify that anxiety has ‘psychological roots’ as it is an experientially learned response within the context of an individual’s psychology, which is further embedded in a distinct sociocultural environment.

Bigdeli and Bai support the Neo-Freudian position on psychoanalysis. Contrary to Freud’s approach to psychoanalysis, which was rooted in an individual’s biological and instinctual development, the Neo-Freudian believed that ‘human personality development was more sociocultural than biological’.<sup>500</sup> Thus, they insisted that ‘people, culture, and the environment were critically important in manifestations of anxiety’.<sup>501</sup> Bigdeli and Bai clarify that a language learner’s detachment or disconnection from various environments (e.g., ecological, intrapersonal, interpersonal, material, and structural) may provoke an anxious reaction. They assert that language learners who are disconnected from their environment do not possess ‘intuitive and embodied understanding and knowledge’ of the ‘object of disconnection’.<sup>502</sup> In this context, it can be observed that anxiety is in fact ‘signalling a need to connect’.<sup>503</sup>

Within the context of a learner’s interpersonal environment, detachment may precipitate anxiety when there is a ‘lack of empathic understanding with respect to others’ states of mind’.<sup>504</sup> As highlighted in Chapter Two, the concept of environment plays a central role in the acquisition of an L2. The next chapter specifically presents a holistic overview of the environment within in which the present study is located and, further, identifies the various organisms that inform and shape the language learner’s environment. If a language learner is disconnected from another person in their environment, such as their teacher or classmates, a dialogical relationship is absent. This notion echoes the importance placed upon the ‘dialogic’ highlighted in social interactionist theories of L2 acquisition. If dialogic relationships and

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<sup>498</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>499</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

<sup>500</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>501</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>502</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>503</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>504</sup> *Ibid.*

group relationships are absent in language learning, empathic resonance, the process through which ‘we come to know another’s actions and feelings’, does not function properly.<sup>505</sup> The concept of empathic resonance also involves meeting the ‘other’.<sup>506</sup> In her insightful analysis, *Empathic Resonance: An Autoethnography*, Gabriel (2018) further elaborates upon the relationship between empathic resonance and ‘the other’. She maintains that:

Seeing another human being is fundamental to [...] fostering deep understanding and facilitating self-understanding. To know ourselves fully via the other is often where aspects of self, lost parts of the self and dissociated memories are rediscovered [...] knowing the self via the other is vitally important to the reintegration and self-development.<sup>507</sup>

As noted earlier in this section, a learner’s fear of not being understood is a significant source of anxiety. The manner in which this psychological dimension of language anxiety is addressed in the learning environment can considerably influence how language learners experience anxiety. In this regard, Bigdeli and Bai accentuate the importance of understanding the impact of ‘recognition and connection in the interpersonal context of student-teacher and student-student relationships’.<sup>508</sup> A language learner’s interpersonal context is negotiated through their experience of world relationships, which are anchored to their world views and values. As highlighted in Chapter Two, the notion of ‘anchoring’ was also a key component that emerged from the analysis on social interactionist theories of L2 acquisition. In order to further elucidate the learner’s anchoring framework, Bigdeli and Bai place particular emphasis on the domain of philosophy wherein beliefs, values, and perceptions that are integral to determining a learner’s susceptibility to FLA are deep-rooted.

In the framework of the triunal model of anxiety, the term philosophy is employed to refer to ‘the practice of investigating and coming to a realization of how we conceptualize and understand the world and the self’.<sup>509</sup> As observed in section one, philosophers’ early notions of anxiety were ingrained in the beliefs that they held about the world, the ‘self’, and the ‘other’. Still today, there is a strong connection between anxiety, our values and beliefs, and how we view other human beings. Our personal beliefs and values ‘are philosophical objects through which we come to understand and value the world in particular ways’.<sup>510</sup> Thus, Bigdeli and Bai

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<sup>505</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>506</sup> Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (London: T & T Clarke, 1937).

<sup>507</sup> Tina Louise Gabriel, “Empathic Resonance: An Autoethnography,” (PhD Thesis, Bournemouth University, United Kingdom, 2018), 3.

<sup>508</sup> Bigdeli and Bai, “The Triunal Model of Anxiety and Its Application to Anxiety Reduction...,” 106.

<sup>509</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>510</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

advance that self-understanding is ‘the most effective locus of change’ in the language learning process, given that learners have the greatest awareness of and most control over their individual inclinations.<sup>511</sup> This proposition is illustrated and developed according to three philosophical perspectives: (1) Existentialist, (2) Phenomenological, and (3) Buddhist. These philosophies have been chosen as they, in particular, demonstrate how ‘anxiety is intimately connected with our views of what human beings are like and how we value and live our lives.’<sup>512</sup>

Existential philosophy encompasses ‘a theory of human development, a philosophy of being, philosophy of existence or life’.<sup>513</sup> From an existential perspective, the primary objective of education is ‘to inspire individuals to become themselves, to become more reflexive, self-aware, emphatic and more human’.<sup>514</sup> Given that human development occurs within the context of an individual’s relationship with the ‘self’, the ‘other’, and the world, it is particularly important to pay close attention to dialogic education. The key objective of dialogic education is to allow students to practise extended speaking. Extended speaking enables language learners to speak for longer periods of time and permits both the givers and receivers of information to develop their own ideas and consider those of others. In this context, Rumianowska (2020) emphasises that ‘students must be provided with opportunities and stimuli to philosophize, to discover meaning and to express their own personal questions, diverse experiences, beliefs and opinions.’<sup>515</sup>

From an existentialist perspective, education involves ‘finding one’s own voice, responding to oneself in terms of value and meaning and finding personal truth by assuming responsibility for oneself’.<sup>516</sup> In order to develop one’s self-concept, it is necessary for students to engage in reflexive communication and philosophical thinking. However, if mutual understanding is absent between the giver and receiver, there is a lack of reciprocation, or an individual’s remarks are misconstrued or judged, it can result in negative self-related cognition and, consequently, anxiety may manifest itself in the language learner. When a language student becomes cognisant or self-aware of their emotional experience, that is to say, begins to ponder, explore, describe, and assess their emotions, it will then become possible for them to reflect and

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<sup>511</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>512</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>513</sup> Agnieszka Rumianowska, “Existential perspectives on education,” *Educational Philosophy and Theory* 52, no. 3 (2020): 262.

<sup>514</sup> *Ibid.*, 263.

<sup>515</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>516</sup> *Ibid.*



regain control of their learning experience. In doing so, a learner's emotional experience transitions from being unreflective to reflective and, thus, emotional insecurity is transformed into emotional agency. Bigdeli and Bai emphasise that developing a heightened sense of self-awareness is a key tool with which anxiety may be confronted in the language learning process.

Expanding upon this assertion further, Bigdeli and Bai highlight that 'all that is accessible to our consciousness exists at the phenomenological level, that is, at the level where we feel our experiences and distinguish between them'.<sup>517</sup> Phenomenological approaches to philosophy investigate 'human experience and how things are perceived by consciousness'.<sup>518</sup> Thus, a primary concern of phenomenology is the study of an individual's experiences and observing how they view the world around them. A fundamental property of the phenomenological position is that every individual perceives and acknowledges the world in a different manner. Therefore, the starting point of phenomenology is 'a description of conscious experience from the subject's or agent's point of view'.<sup>519</sup> In their theoretical framework, Bigdeli and Bai notably draw upon the work of the father of phenomenology, German philosopher Edmund Husserl (1859-1938). The notion of the 'life world' is an integral component of Husserl's work. Irish philosopher Dermot Moran (2005) clarifies in his insightful analysis of Husserl's phenomenology that:

There is not one single lifeworld, rather there is a set of intersecting or overlapping worlds, beginning from the world which is closest to us, the home world, and extending to other worlds [that are] foreign or alien worlds [...] and so on.<sup>520</sup>

Many central variables highlighted in the discussion on the social interactionist approach to language acquisition, such as culture, identity, tradition, and history, are also critical considerations in establishing the everyday occurrences of a society and its life world.<sup>521</sup> In the context of foreign language education, language learners' 'life worlds' are characterised by dynamic and complex relationships and interactions in which they 'bring their life experiences, culture, traditions, and beliefs from their former home world to an alien host world'.<sup>522</sup> This poses a multifarious challenge to the language learner because they must acquaint themselves with 'the new sociocultural expectations of the host society', and are also obliged to 'equip

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<sup>517</sup> Bigdeli and Bai, "The Triunal Model of Anxiety and Its Application to Anxiety Reduction...", 109.

<sup>518</sup> *Ibid.*, 108-109.

<sup>519</sup> *Ibid.*, 109

<sup>520</sup> Dermot Moran, *Edmund Husserl: Founder of Phenomenology* (Cambridge: Polity, 2005), 9.

<sup>521</sup> David Bell, *Husserl* (London: Routledge, 1990).

<sup>522</sup> Bigdeli and Bai, "The Triunal Model of Anxiety and Its Application to Anxiety Reduction...", 109.

themselves with the necessary tools' to do so.<sup>523</sup> If the language learner does not equip themselves with these tools, acculturation, as observed in Chapter Two, will not occur. What complicates this matter further is that the learner's support system, which they have become accustomed to in their 'home world', is absent in the host society. This impacts significantly on how the learner experiences the process of language acquisition and also how they encounter the world around them. Thus, perceived distance from and an absence of awareness of a host society can precipitate FLA.

The phenomenological perspective presents a number of important implications for advancing knowledge on language anxiety. Firstly, it highlights that when a language learner becomes cognisant of their world views and beliefs, it assists them in understanding how they may impact upon their experience of language anxiety. As the language learner develops their sense of self-awareness, they become more mindful of their experience of anxiety and how it unfolds in their consciousness. Secondly, by investigating FLA in relation to the 'self', the 'other', and the world, it allows researchers to distinguish the features of anxiety and its 'diverse layers'.<sup>524</sup> Finally, the phenomenological perspective enables us to acknowledge 'our authoritative role in being able to change ourselves and others' points of view in order to effect change in how we understand and view ourselves and the world'.<sup>525</sup> If the language learner transforms their language anxiety into an 'object of investigation', it permits them to transition their 'purely personal experience of anxiety' into an elevated understanding of 'the underlying structures of consciousness'.<sup>526</sup>

The Buddhist position sheds further light upon the manner in which learners may better understand their sense of self in the language learning process. In the triunal model of anxiety, Buddhism is recognised as 'a psychological study and practice [...] that transforms one's understanding of the self and the world'.<sup>527</sup> The mind and body are regarded as interconnected entities which are constantly interacting. In Buddhist teachings, it is asserted that human suffering is caused by the self-centred belief that there is an 'unchanging self'. This is more commonly referred to as the 'ego-self'.<sup>528</sup> The unchanging self or being 'alienates itself from the world and brings about difficulty in being receptive and responsive to changes in life and

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<sup>523</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>524</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>525</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>526</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>527</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>528</sup> *Ibid.*

world'.<sup>529</sup> In this regard, the world cannot meet the demands of the 'self'. Instead of confronting this absence of fulfilment or lack of duality between the 'self' and the world, an individual's natural reaction is to 'remove it by reinforcing or fortifying the self and trying to conform the world to the self'.<sup>530</sup> From the Buddhist perspective, it is advanced that anxiety manifests itself when the individual cannot control this duality. The 'ego-self', which is 'the sense that makes individuals think and feel definite and fixed about who they are and what they are like', poses a significant challenge to personal development.<sup>531</sup> Ultimately, it causes a conflict between the 'self' and the external world which is constantly in a state of flux.

According to the Buddhist tradition, the 'self' is regarded as 'a dynamic, ever-changing process, not an independent, self-contained entity'.<sup>532</sup> In order to become an agent of personal change, it is important that an individual concentrates on their individual experience and comprehends 'the conditioned nature of experience'.<sup>533</sup> By doing so, it permits an individual to take control of reactive conditioning, which regulates experience. As noted earlier, language learning has the potential to engender a conflict or inconsistency between a learner's true self and limited self. Guiora (1983) attributes this conflict of the 'self' to the 'profoundly unsettling psychological proposition' that foreign language learning can impress on students.<sup>534</sup> At the outset of language learning, a learner only has a rudimentary knowledge of the foreign language they are studying. Thus, their ability to communicate and express themselves in the L2 is restricted. This represents a clear challenge for the learner as they are unable to appear or perform in keeping with the identity that they have constructed in their native language. Given that language and the 'self' are intimately bound, impaired self-expression poses a significant threat to the self-concept, identity, and ego that learners have 'formed in their first language as reasonable and intelligent individuals'.<sup>535</sup> When an individual's inner and constant beliefs are threatened by an external stimulus, the defence system is triggered in order to regulate cognitive dissonance.

The triunal model of anxiety provides a holistic overview and brings together a range of interesting perspectives on FLA. It highlights the complex and dynamic nature of the anxiety

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<sup>529</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>530</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>531</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>532</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>533</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>534</sup> Alexander Z. Guiora, "The dialectic of language acquisition," *Language Learning* 33, no. 5 (1983): 8.

<sup>535</sup> Zdena Králová, Anna Tirpakova, and Eva Skovagova, "Personality Factors and Foreign Language Pronunciation Anxiety: The Effect of Psycho-Social Training," *European Journal of Contemporary Education* 7, no. 4 (2018): 729.

construct and emphasises its interconnection with other psychological and philosophical variables including the ‘self’, the ‘other’, and the wider world. In the context of the present investigation, their model is particularly valuable for bridging the gap between theory and practice. Given that the performance-based pedagogical intervention, in the present study, requires the language learner to meet the ‘other’ and recontemplate notions of the ‘self’, this model offers a multi-layered lens through which the research findings may be interpreted.

The dynamic approach to FLA research also provides us with an important opportunity to explore the manner in which complex environmental factors may impact upon the language acquisition process. This has been another significant step forward in understanding how the anxiety response manifests itself in different learning contexts. As noted earlier, this was a key consideration in the present case study because of the transition to distance learning as a result of the global pandemic. Language anxiety has been primarily investigated within the context of the traditional face-to-face classroom setting.<sup>536</sup> In this respect, there is a considerable and rich knowledge base, as evidenced by the preceding discussion. However, not as much attention has been given to language anxiety within the context of distance learning and TML environments. This dearth of knowledge has recently been highlighted in the work of several researchers (e.g., Wang and Zhang, 2021; Liu, 2021; Alla et al., 2020). However, the abrupt transition to online learning as a result of the pandemic, in 2020, appears to have been an impetus for increased research in this area. While these studies provide some important insights into language anxiety, language learning, distance learning, and technology, it is important to note that this research is still in its infancy and, thus, has produced somewhat conflicting results.

Distance learning, also referred to in the literature as distance education, e-learning, and online learning, encompasses ‘a form of education where there is physical separation of teachers from students during the instruction and learning process’.<sup>537</sup> In this respect, technology has come to play a vital role. It has transformed distance learning from an isolated to an interactive experience. As noted in Chapter Two, innovations in CALL research have enhanced the language learning process. CALL has also been integrated into distance language learning programmes (e.g., through computer-based management programmes, computer

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<sup>536</sup> Xue Wang and Wei Zhang, “Psychological Anxiety of College Students’ Foreign Language Learning in Online Course,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 12, no. 598992 (2021).

<sup>537</sup> Elizabeth Armstrong-Mensah et al., “COVID-19 and Distance Learning: Effects on Georgia State University School of Public Health Students,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 8, no. 576227 (2020): 2. Distance education may be either synchronous or asynchronous.

conferencing, target language communication, community building, multimedia, computer-aided assessment etc.) in order to enrich the learning experience, provide increased opportunity for communication, and make the learning process more collaborative.<sup>538</sup>

In the past, distance learning may have seemed like a sanctuary for anxious language learners as there was a lack of social interaction with the course instructor and other students, in other words, students were not required to actively produce the target language in social settings.<sup>539</sup> Early models of distance learning involved little face-to-face communication. Students usually received course manuals and materials through postal services and would communicate with their tutor via correspondence (e.g., letter writing or fax), brief phone conversations, live educational radio, or telecommunication.<sup>540</sup> However, from the mid-2000s, the face of distance learning changed dramatically. As mentioned in Chapter Two, from the 1960s onwards, a new iteration of technology transformed the language learning landscape – the computer. This revolutionising and sophisticated piece of equipment not only transformed language learning within the bounds of the classroom, but also extended its functionalities to distance learning.

Presently, we are in the fifth generation of distance learning (See Figure 3.5), referred to as the intelligent flexible learning model by James C. Taylor (2001) in his informative report, entitled *Fifth Generation Distance Education*.<sup>541</sup> Taylor affirms that the fifth generation of distance learning is ‘inexorable’.<sup>542</sup> It builds upon the fourth generation, termed the flexible learning model, and seeks to ‘capitalize on the features of the Internet and the Web’.<sup>543</sup> Today, distance learning is cutting-edge and is characterised by the use of interactive multimedia, Internet-based access to resources on the World Wide Web, computer-mediated communication using automated response systems, and campus portal access to institutional processes and resources.<sup>544</sup> While TML environments cannot replicate or replace certain advantageous features of in-person, face-to-face instruction, distance learning has made great

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<sup>538</sup> Sanja Seljan et al., “CALL (Computer-Assisted Language Learning) and Distance Learning,” in *Proceedings of the 29<sup>th</sup> MIPRO International Convention on Information, Communication and Electronic Technology, Croatia, May 22-26, 2006* (Croatia: MIPRO, 2006).

<sup>539</sup> Francois Pichette, “Second Language Anxiety and Distance Language Learning,” *Foreign Language Annals* 42, no. 1 (2009).

<sup>540</sup> Tetiana Zatonatska, Tomasz Wołowiec, and Olga Anisimova, “Distance Learning: Models and Prospects,” *Освітня аналітика України* (Educational Analytics of Ukraine) 1, no. 8 (2020).

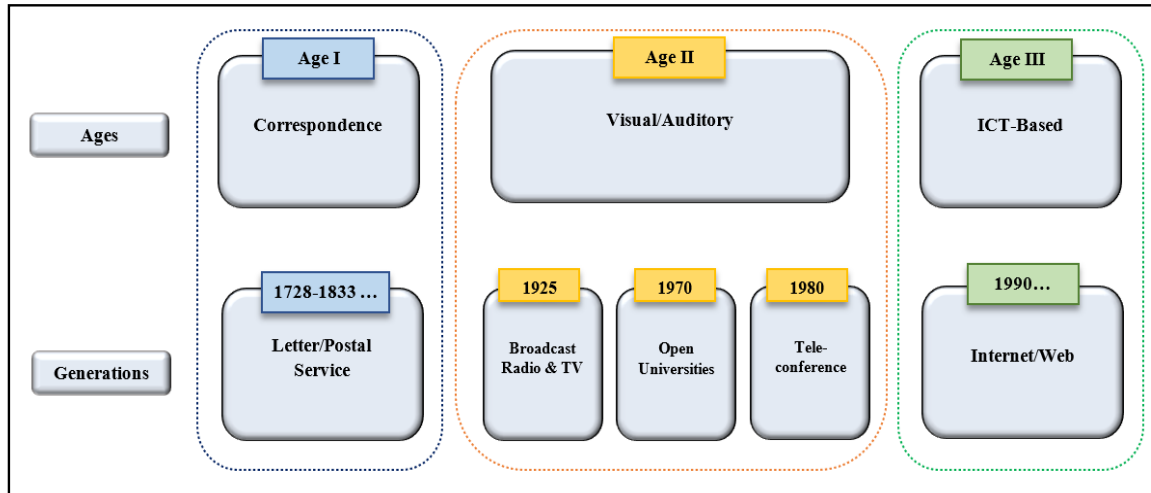
<sup>541</sup> James C. Taylor, *Fifth Generation Distance Education*, Report No. 40 (Queensland: Higher Education Division, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, 2001).

<sup>542</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>543</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>544</sup> *Ibid.*

strides in the last two decades, which has led to a transformed online learning dynamic that promotes communication, collaboration, and interaction. As a result of these advancements in technology, distance learning has become more representational of a real-life and authentic learning setting.



**Figure 3.5 Ages and Generations of Distance Learning.** Adapted from Denise Casey, “A Journey to Legitimacy: The Historical Development of Distance Education through Technology,” *TechTrends* 52, no. 2 (2008).

Generally speaking, students usually make an informed decision to learn at a distance, perhaps due to family or work commitments, or on account of factors such as distance, cost, or learning difficulties.<sup>545</sup> However, in the context of the present study, it is important to note that learners were not able to choose their medium of instruction. Remote learning was not a choice; it was a necessity. This is an important factor to consider when interpreting learners’ perceptions of ICT in language learning and also the potential impact this absence of choice may have had on their learning experience and, by extension, their FLA levels. Although students were familiar with online learning management systems such as Moodle, they were not, however, accustomed to attending lectures and tutorials in an online setting for an extended period of time. While a swift transition to online learning may appear to be uncomplicated and convenient on the surface, it too comes with its own challenges.

<sup>545</sup> Pichette, “Second Language Anxiety and Distance Language Learning.”

In her recent publication, *Language Anxiety and the Online Learner*, Russell (2020) contends that the abrupt change to the educational landscape may have, indeed, exacerbated learners' FLA because of the lack of control or agency they had over the manner in which they received course delivery.<sup>546</sup> For some learners, this transition may have thrust them into the 'unknown', creating an ambiguity or uncertainty around the educational space and learning process and, thus, impacting upon their language learning experience. In reviewing the literature, other studies highlighted that learners may experience language anxiety in TML environments based on the following hypotheses: (1) As learning is taking place remotely, learners' perceptions of and feelings about the language learning process will be associated with and mediated by the use of technology, (2) TML environments have developed into social environments, thus, communication apprehension and fear of negative judgement have the potential to arise, and (3) FLA may manifest itself during remote learning, particularly when carried out asynchronously, because of the additional anxiety-provoking components it presents such as lack of opportunity to practice the target language, difficulties in comparing and tracking progress, problems transitioning to more independent learning, isolation, and reduced confidence.<sup>547</sup>

Studies conducted during the pandemic (e.g., Wang and Zhang, 2021; Alla et al. 2020) accentuate that FLA may be exacerbated in an online setting due to the lack of a collaborative learning atmosphere. In their investigation of language anxiety among English language students in an online setting, Wang and Zhang (2021) overcame this limitation by implementing group learning and activities. They suggest that 'the establishment of a group learning mode is an excellent choice to create a good mutual learning atmosphere' and it also permits learners to develop familiarity and a sense of comradery with their peers.<sup>548</sup> Further, findings (e.g., Wang and Zhang, 2021; Russell, 2020) revealed that learners often believe that it is more difficult to track and gauge their performance and progress in an online setting and, thus, feel less successful. In this regard, recommendations include developing enriching resources throughout the teaching semester that enable learners to assess their knowledge and reinforce their learning. This will foreseeably help them to foster their self-confidence in the language and also promote a sense of achievement.

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<sup>546</sup> Victoria Russell, "Language Anxiety and The Online Learner," *Foreign Language Annals* 53, no. 2 (2020).

<sup>547</sup> Selami Aydın, "Technology and Foreign Language Anxiety: Implications for Practice and Future Research," *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies* 14, no. 2 (2018).

<sup>548</sup> Wang and Zhang, "Psychological Anxiety of College Students..." 8.

The issue of technical difficulties is also highlighted in the literature. While the majority of students are very comfortable using technology when learning, it is important to note that there still may be ‘practical functions that cannot be used or cannot be used well’ when engaging in an online environment.<sup>549</sup> In this context, FLA appears to increase when learners must use multiple interactive programmes synchronously due to their fear of technical issues such as poor network connection and technical glitches. While it is difficult to completely rectify these issues, recommendations put forward include providing students and teachers with good internet connectivity in order to avoid such problems and to ensure that the learning process runs smoothly.

Findings from Alla et al.’s (2020) study draw our attention to another potential anxiety inducing factor in a TML environment. They advance that language anxiety may be exacerbated in an online setting due to ‘the contradiction between the social character of language learning and a distance mode of this activity’.<sup>550</sup> Within this context, the English language university students who took part in their study, which focused upon differences in FLA in a traditional versus an online setting in the Ukraine, revealed that lack of immediate feedback, opportunities to speak in the target language, and lack of confidence when working autonomously, led to increased FLA. Specifically, students’ communication apprehension was exacerbated, as evidenced by learners’ reluctance to speak in front of their peers and worry about speaking without preparation.

While communication apprehension appears to be negatively impacted upon in TML environments, there is also evidence which suggests that distance learning may alleviate FLA to some extent. Findings from Alla et al.’s (2020) interesting study also revealed that students’ fear of committing errors reduced significantly in comparison to the traditional classroom setting. When students were required to work in pairs or small groups in breakout rooms, in the new online learning environment, their FLA was alleviated because of reduced ‘formal assessment from the teacher’ and ‘lack of evaluation on the part of the other more competent students’.<sup>551</sup> Further, findings highlighted a reduction in learners’ test anxiety. The researchers interpret this positive change based upon learners’ ability to ‘develop their test-taking strategies

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<sup>549</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>550</sup> Lisnychenko Alla et al., “Foreign Language Anxiety: Classroom vs. Distance Learning,” *Universal Journal of Educational Research* 8, no. 2 (2020): 6686.

<sup>551</sup> *Ibid.*, 6689.



and skills' during the confinement period, which gave them more confidence and made their preparation more focused for their other assessments.<sup>552</sup>

To date, the majority of studies conducted in the area of TML have focused upon communication apprehension and there has been little discussion about fear of negative evaluation and test anxiety.<sup>553</sup> Although the literature that has emerged offers some contradictory findings, which impacts upon the nature of its generalisability, it is still useful to this investigation as it serves as a reference to compare, interpret, and build upon the findings from the present study. It is hoped that the present investigation may build upon and shed further light upon this emergent area of FLA research.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

This chapter presented the reader with a comprehensive overview of the psychological construct of language anxiety. Firstly, it explored the construct of anxiety from a historical perspective and then moved on to examine its inner workings from a clinical perspective, drawing attention to contemporary narratives about the psychological and physiological dimensions of the construct. In doing so, it highlighted important terminology and concepts embedded within this discourse, such as psychological stressor, negative self-related cognition, and situation-specific anxiety. The chapter then went on to investigate the literature pertaining, more specifically, to language anxiety. In this context, three key approaches to language anxiety research emerged (i.e., confounded, specialised, and dynamic). Throughout this discussion, the work of important figures, such as Horwitz et al., Tobias, and Bigdeli and Bai, was drawn upon in order to elucidate the multifaceted dimensions of the construct and the impact it has on the L2 acquisition process. This exploration also highlighted the emerging and dynamic research that is being carried out in the field of SLA on the role of environmental factors in the language acquisition process. This provided an important opportunity to advance understanding of the impact that TML environments and distance learning have on language anxiety. This comprehensive review of the literature on the psychological construct of anxiety and, further, FLA, provided the researcher with key underlying assumptions necessary to understand the neuro-biological, neuro-physiological, and philosophical underpinnings of the construct, the reasons why it may transpire in the language learning process, and the impact it

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<sup>552</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>553</sup> *Ibid.*

has on language learning. Having holistically engaged with the construct of language anxiety, the discussion now transitions to provide the reader with important contextual knowledge about the 'case' under study in this investigation. In this regard, the linguistic and educational landscape in which the present investigation took place is elucidated. This background knowledge is imperative in order to make informed evidence-based judgements based upon the unique data gathered in this case study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

# **THE IRISH LINGUISTIC AND EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE**

## Chapter Four

### The Irish Linguistic and Educational Landscape

#### 4.0 Introduction

Thus far, this thesis has focused upon the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of the L2 acquisition process. This chapter seeks to transition the present investigation from theoretical discussion to concrete description by exploring the environmental factors that shape the dynamic interplay between the learning context and language learner. Learners' beliefs, values, and perceptions of language/s both influence and are influenced by the multi-dimensional environment in which their lives are embedded. By traversing important developments in the Irish linguistic and educational landscape, this chapter aims to delineate Ireland's present relationship with foreign language learning. A country's linguistic landscape evolves historically and highlights the role and function of language/s within that context, while a country's educational landscape encompasses a teaching and learning culture that is informed by changes, developments, and reform on both a national and international level. These distinctive features of a country's landscape may be natural (i.e., evolving organically in the environment) or manmade (i.e., imposed on the environment). They may also develop at different rates and occur on both an internal (e.g., national language policy) and external level (e.g., Brexit).

Presently, Ireland is undergoing a dynamic evolution in its linguistic and educational landscape. These developments have been shaped historically by key events such as Ireland's colonial history, the Gaelic Revival in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922, the drafting of the Constitution of Ireland in 1937, Ireland's membership of the EU in 1972 and, more recently, the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU in 2020. These notable national and international watershed moments have formed the backdrop of Ireland's linguistic and educational priorities. In order to navigate this complex terrain, an ecological approach has been adopted. From an ecological perspective, the activities and processes that occur within and throughout the learner's environmental structures or ecosystem are both a cause and consequence of language development, beliefs, values, and perceptions. This analysis is informed by the nested ecosystem model developed, in 1979, by American

developmental psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner.<sup>554</sup> The model, consisting of five interrelated ecosystems (i.e., chrono-system, macro-system, exo-system, meso-system, and micro-system), serves as a valuable lens through which we can form connections between past and present and, thus, better understand the different factors and variables that have informed the process of L2 acquisition in the Irish context.

#### **4.1 An Ecological Framework for Conceptualising the Irish Linguistic and Educational Landscape**

Historically a branch of biology, the scientific study of ecology was established by German biologist and evolutionist Ernest Haeckel in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Since the 1960s, the term ecology has been used to encompass the relationships that a being has with other organisms and variables in their biological environment.<sup>555</sup> Several research disciplines have shown a keen interest in ecology, including psychology, sociology, and linguistics, as it serves as a means through which ‘relations, interactions, endangerment, and diversity’ can be further investigated and better understood.<sup>556</sup> American psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner was one of the most prominent figures at the forefront of ecological theory in the field of psychology. In 1979, Bronfenbrenner postulated a formal ecological model, called the nested ecosystem model, to elucidate the ‘psychological, social, biological, cultural, and identity structures’ involved in human development.<sup>557</sup> Within the framework of his model, Bronfenbrenner examines the various ‘contextual interrelatedness of components’ involved in human development through the prism of interrelated environmental structures termed ecosystems.<sup>558</sup>

In recent years, researchers have shown an increased interest in thinking ecologically about educational matters because it accentuates notions of ‘interconnectedness, context, complexity, and scale’ in the educational sphere.<sup>559</sup> In her insightful article, *Thinking*

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<sup>554</sup> Urie Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979).

<sup>555</sup> Rachel J. Pinnow, “Ecological Approaches in Qualitative Research,” in *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics*, ed. Carol A. Chapelle (Oxford: John Wiley and Sons, 2013).

<sup>556</sup> Mohsen Nazari et al., “Ecological Understanding of Concept Blockage in Writing Anxiety Based on Bronfenbrenner’s Chronosystem,” *International Journal of English Language and Translation Studies* 5, no. 3 (2017): 176-177.

<sup>557</sup> *Ibid.*, 177.

<sup>558</sup> Saba Kasbi and Majid Elahi Shirvan, “Ecological Understanding of Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety: Emerging Patterns and Dynamic Systems,” *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education* 2, no. 2 (2017): 5.

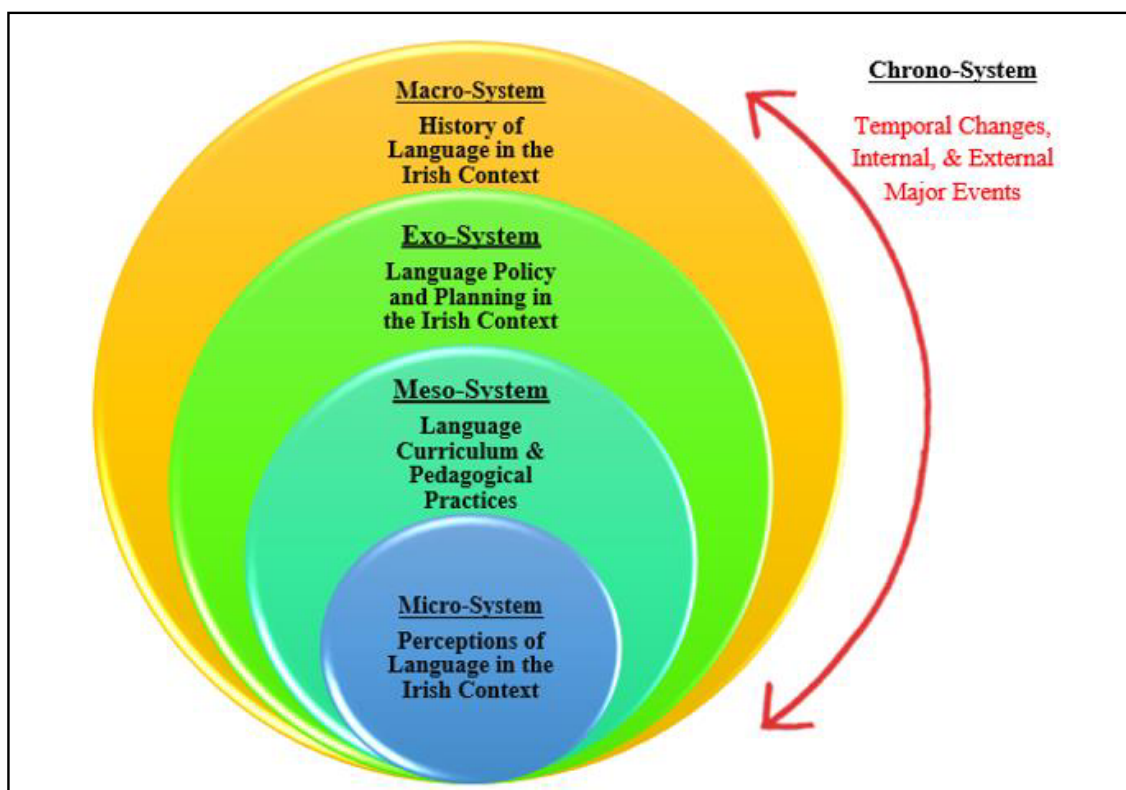
<sup>559</sup> Sarah Winchell Lenhoff, “Thinking Ecologically in Educational Policy and Research,” *Peabody Journal of Education* 97, no. 1 (2022): 1.

*Ecologically in Educational Policy and Research*, Sarah Winchell Lenhoff (2022) affirms that contemplating learners and learning systems relative to an educational ecosystem sheds significant light upon ‘student characteristics and experiences, family circumstances, school factors, and out-of-school conditions that shape both school organization and behavior and student outcomes’.<sup>560</sup> Thus, Bronfenbrenner’s model functions as a valuable lens through which the language learning context and, by extension, the language learner may be explored in a comprehensive and holistic manner. From an ecological perspective, learners are predisposed to different contextual forces in their environment ‘ranging from proximal influences to increasingly distal (and abstract) contextual factors’.<sup>561</sup> The model situates the language learning process within five interrelated systems or layered environments labelled the chrono-system, macro-system, exo-system, meso-system, and micro-system (see Figure 4.1). Although each layer or system of the model is presented in a rather linear format, it is important to note that their borders or confines are porous; thus, there is significant overlap between the different components of each system. A development or shift in one system has the potential to expand and cause a ripple effect in another part of the ecosystem. The present analysis elucidates the role and defining characteristics of each system and, in doing so, seeks to contextualise the present case study by exploring key turning points in the Irish linguistic and educational landscape.

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<sup>560</sup> *Ibid.*, 1-2.

<sup>561</sup> Susan M. McHale, Aryn Dotterer, and Ji-Yeon Kim, “An Ecological Perspective on the Media and Youth Development,” *American Behavioral Science* 52, no. 8 (2009): 1190.



**Figure 4.1** An Ecological Framework for Conceptualising the Irish Linguistic and Educational Landscape. Adapted from Bronfenbrenner’s nested ecosystems model (1979).

#### 4.1.1 The Macro-System: The History of Language in the Irish Context

The macro-system is the outmost layer of the ecosystem. As its name suggests, it is an exceptionally prominent component of the learner’s environment. When exploring any learning context, the macro-system is an important place to start as it is a significant building block in the learner’s environment that informs collective values, principles, standards, and identity development, which are grounded in the larger organisation of a society. The macro-system ‘influences development within and among all other systems and serves as a filter or lens through which an individual interprets future experiences.’<sup>562</sup> From an ecological perspective, environments are not regarded as independent entities. Rather, they are representations of multi-layered and constantly evolving processes of influence occurring on a number of levels.

<sup>562</sup> Lenhoff, “Thinking Ecologically in Educational Policy and Research,” 5.

Language is a significant constituent of the macrosystem on both a group and individual level.<sup>563</sup> A country's language trajectory, that is to say, language stability, change, and development, plays an important role in shaping language perceptions at all levels of society including the educational sphere. Importantly, decisions made and developments that occur in the macro-system (e.g., cultural, societal, economic) create constructs and conceptual attributes that exist in the learner's micro-system, such as language norms. Significantly, in Ireland's history, language has been distinguished as a rich social, cultural, and symbolic anchor point for identity construction and reconstruction because it informs elements of both non-material (e.g., values, beliefs, symbols of a society) and material culture (e.g., a society's physical objects – clothing, technology, transportation).<sup>564</sup> Thus, in order to gain a better understanding of current priorities in the Irish linguistic and educational landscape, it is important, firstly, to take a step back in time and explore the factors that have influenced language use in the Irish context.

The Irish language, originally called *Gaelic* or *Goidelic*, is one of the oldest living languages in Europe.<sup>565</sup> The first traces of primitive or Ancient Irish date back to Ogham inscriptions from the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Century AD.<sup>566</sup> Old Irish, penned using the Roman alphabet, was recorded before the start of the 7<sup>th</sup> Century. During the Middle Irish period (900 to 1200 AD), different invasions, such as the Viking invasions that took place between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries and the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, impacted on the language and culture of the Irish people.<sup>567</sup> However, it was from the 15<sup>th</sup> Century onwards that the Irish language experienced the most turbulent period of its history when it nearly declined to the point of extinction (i.e., linguicide).<sup>568</sup>

It was during the Elizabethan era that 'the foundations of Ireland's modern history were laid'.<sup>569</sup> Prior to the Tudor conquest of Ireland (1593-1603), Ireland was not subject to the control of the English government. However, colonial invasion under the Tudor dynasty saw the prohibition of Gaelic cultural legal systems. Queen Elizabeth I, pursuant to the policy (i.e.,

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<sup>563</sup> Pierre R. Dasen and Ramesh C. Mishra, *Development of Geocentric Spatial Language and Cognition: An Eco-Cultural Perspective* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

<sup>564</sup> Dan Hicks and Mary C. Beaudry, *The Oxford Handbook of Material Culture Studies*, eds. D. Hicks and M. C. Beaudry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

<sup>565</sup> Tom O'Donoghue and Teresa O'Doherty, *Irish Speakers and Schooling in the Gaeltacht, 1900 to the Present* (New York: Springer, 2019).

<sup>566</sup> Elmar Ternes, "Some Characteristics of the Celtic Languages - in Relation to Other Languages of the World and among Each Other," *The Canadian Journal of Irish Studies* 6, no. 1 (1980).

<sup>567</sup> O'Donoghue and O'Doherty, *Irish Speakers and Schooling in the Gaeltacht...*

<sup>568</sup> Linguicide refers to the extinction of a language as a result of natural or political causes.

<sup>569</sup> John Dorney, *The Story of The Tudor Conquest of Ireland: 1541-1603* (Online: Irish Story Publications, 2014).



surrender and regnant) enforced by her father Henry the VIII of England, strived to expand and establish control over the island of Ireland by persuading Gaelic chiefs to yield to the English. Gaelic warlords were promised secure titles to their land and positions in government in exchange for renouncing Gaelic law, language, and traditions and upholding English practices.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the British founded a national system of education in Ireland. Walsh (2016) accentuates that the establishment of a national system of education was principally ‘a political response to the difficulties of the British Empire in controlling its closest colony and was envisaged as a means to socialise the Irish populace and strengthen Ireland’s link with the Empire’.<sup>570</sup> One of the chief aims of the *National Education Act of 1831* was to disseminate the English language through the education system already in place. The Irish language was removed from the curriculum and instruction was through the English language. There was little mention of Irish culture, history, or tradition and, instead, considerable focus was placed upon ‘English reading, writing, and spelling, as well as Arithmetic’.<sup>571</sup> In this context, Coleman (1998) affirms that the abolition of the Irish language from the school curriculum also involved repressing Irish identity to a degree.<sup>572</sup>

The Great Famine of 1845 was also regarded as a serious disruption to and turning point in the linguistic and cultural landscape of the country. This was mainly a result of depopulation in regions where the Irish language remained the language of the majority. Before the Famine, there were approximately 3 to 3.5 million Irish speakers out of a population of 8.5 million.<sup>573</sup> As a result of the Famine, however, approximately two million people emigrated and one million people died, the majority of whom were native Irish speakers.<sup>574</sup> This figure continued to decline in the years following the Famine. Over twenty years later, in 1871, only 15% of the

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<sup>570</sup> Thomas Walsh, “The National System of Education, 1831-2000,” in *Essays in the History of Irish Education*, ed. B. Walsh (London: Springer, 2016), 16.

<sup>571</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>572</sup> Michael C. Coleman, “Eyes Big as Bowls with Fear and Wonder: Children’s Responses to the Irish National Schools, 1850-1922,” *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy: Archaeology, Culture, History, Literature* 98, no. 5 (1998). It is also interesting to note that in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century, both the French and German languages were introduced in the English school curriculum. This also appears to have influenced the integration of foreign languages in the Irish curriculum. In 1878, Ó Buachalla (1984) affirms that the Irish language (i.e., Celtic) was a marginal extracurricular subject in contrast to English, Greek, Latin, French, and German. Further, the establishment of universities, in the Irish context, occurred when England was consolidating their power over the Island and also when the county of Dublin was starting to serve as a capital city. Perhaps the most well-known exemplar of this development is Trinity College Dublin, established in 1592, which was modelled on institutions such as Oxford and Cambridge University.

<sup>573</sup> Erick Falc’Her-Poyroux, “The Great Famine in Ireland: A Linguistic and Cultural Disruption,” in *La Grande Famine en Irlande 1845-1850 - Histoire et représentations d’un désastre humanitaire*, ed. Yann Bévant (Brittany: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2014).

<sup>574</sup> *Ibid.*

population could speak Irish. From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> Century, the Irish language, which was once a rich and vivacious language, was now associated with poverty and hardship.<sup>575</sup> In 1879, geographer cartographer Ernst Georg Ravenstein remarked that Ireland was in fact observing ‘the lingering death of a language retreating before a more powerful neighbour’.<sup>576</sup> Gaelic-speaking regions, which remained after the Famine period, were considered to be destitute and poverty-stricken areas. This belief notably impacted on perceptions of the language. The Irish language was deemed to be of no purpose outside of Ireland, nor attune to contemporary and urban life. These attitudes promoted the English agenda of the period that the Irish language ‘belonged to the age of the foot-plough and the sailing ship’ and ‘would butter no bread’.<sup>577</sup> This era of Irish history, ultimately, resulted in rural areas of the island experiencing a ‘dislocation of their traditional communities [and] a fragmentation of their identities [...] from a sense of loss of their grounding’.<sup>578</sup>

As a result of these political, educational, and historical developments in the macro-system, Irish identity was in a fragmented state at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In an effort to reground and consolidate a sense of Irishness, the Gaelic revival (*Athbheochan na Gaeilge*), an Irish language revival movement, was established in the 1930s. This movement became symbolic of ‘nation building in a post-colonial context’ and was associated with questions of ‘patriotism, nationalism and the Irish language revival within the school system’.<sup>579</sup> During the revival period, the Irish and English languages were juxtaposed, the latter symbolising ‘a reminder of colonial legacy’ and the former ‘an idealised, pure past’.<sup>580</sup> Indeed, the Irish language was one of the most powerful vehicles for embodying the uniqueness of the Irish nation.<sup>581</sup> The revival of Ireland’s ancestral language, which was denied official status until the country was declared an independent state in 1922, did not merely signal its cultural independence, but a reawakening of a national consciousness, distinct from the English language and its traditions, beliefs, and regimes.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, also referred to as the linguistic relativity hypothesis, developed by American linguists Edward Sapir and Benjamin Lee Whorf, proposes that

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<sup>575</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>576</sup> Ernst Georg Ravenstein, “Gaelic Languages in the British Isles,” *Journal of the Statistical Society of London* 42, no. 3 (1879): 581-582.

<sup>577</sup> Reg Hindley, *The Death of the Irish Language* (London: Routledge, 1990), 179.

<sup>578</sup> Falc’Her-Poyroux, “The Great Famine in Ireland...,” 12.

<sup>579</sup> Walsh, “The National System of Education, 1831-2000,” 21.

<sup>580</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>581</sup> Joesph Moffatt, *Paradigms of Irishness for Young People in Dublin: Irish Identity* (California: LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing, 2011).

‘language and culture are cognitively inextricable’.<sup>582</sup> This means that an individual’s MT influences their thoughts and how they perceive reality. This implies that if a language is lost so too is the culture and, further, ‘the world-view tailored to the centuries of experience shared by those who spoke the language’.<sup>583</sup> The chief aim of the Gaelic revival movement, championed by organisations including The Gaelic League, The Gaelic Athletic Association, and The Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language, was to get the nation speaking Irish again. It could, therefore, be advanced that by re-establishing the Irish language in social, cultural, political, and educational life, the movement was indeed re-establishing the Irish mind or mentality. This view is supported by Irish cultural philosopher and linguist Desmond Fennell, who argues that the revival of the Irish language played a key role in the ‘restoration of the distinctive Irish mind in the form of an indigenous Irish world-image and discourse about life’.<sup>584</sup> The Gaelic revival movement served as both a cultural and symbolic anchor and ‘pointed towards developing a collective identification of Gaelicism’.<sup>585</sup>

Upon the foundation of the Irish Free State, in 1922, there was a perceptible shift in the position of the Irish language in the education system. One of the central objectives of the Irish government was to ‘re-Gaelicise the country through the education system’.<sup>586</sup> In an effort to realise this objective, immersion education was foregrounded in the education system in order to ‘give first place to the Irish language’.<sup>587</sup> Since the establishment of the Irish Free State, the restoration of the Irish language has remained an important educational concern and policy priority of consecutive governments. Notwithstanding initiatives undertaken for the restoration of the Irish language, the government faces similar challenges today due to the ‘the slow but constant decline of the use and transmission of the national language, including in the Gaeltacht (i.e., Irish-speaking regions) areas, where there is an ever-increasing number of non-native speakers of Irish’.<sup>588</sup>

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<sup>582</sup> Patricia Kwachka, “Language Shift and Cultural Loss,” in *Languages of the World* (Issues 6-10) (Germany: Lincom Europa, 1993), 19.

<sup>583</sup> Seaghan Mac an tSionnaigh, “Cultural genocide: The Broken Harp, Identity and Language in Modern Ireland, by Tomás Mac Síomóin,” *The Irish Times*, July 31, 2015, accessed April 30, 2021, <https://www.irishtimes.com/culture/books/cultural-genocide-the-broken-harp-identity-and-language-in-modern-ireland-by-tom%C3%A1s-mac-s%C3%ADom%C3%B3in-1.2299891>.

<sup>584</sup> Desmond Fennell, *The State of The Nation: Ireland Since the Sixties* (Dublin: Ward River Press Ltd, 1983), 122.

<sup>585</sup> Moffatt, *Paradigms of Irishness for Young People in Dublin: Irish Identity*, 12.

<sup>586</sup> *Ibid.*, 182.

<sup>587</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>588</sup> *Ibid.*, 183.

In 1937, the renewed status of the Irish language was notably addressed in the Constitution of Ireland (*Bunreacht na hÉireann*). As per Article VIII in the Constitution, the Irish language was declared as the first official language of the nation, while the English language was proclaimed as a second official language: ‘The Irish language as the national language is the first official language; The English language is recognised as a second official language.’<sup>589</sup> A clear distinction is made between the status of the Irish and English languages and, in a broader sense, Irish and English identity. The use of the descriptors ‘first’ and ‘national’ signified the symbolic status of the Irish language, both historically and culturally speaking, and proclaimed a sense national unity. The use of the descriptor ‘second’ to refer to the English language objectified and differentiated its status on the island of Ireland. In this respect, Ireland was reaffirming its distinctiveness as an independent nation.

The national and official status of the Irish language, as the country’s vernacular, is still proclaimed in the Irish Constitution today. Notwithstanding its official status, constitutional protection, and State efforts for its revival and use in Irish society, the language shift away from the Irish language still remains, predominantly due to social dynamics. Within this context, Bronfenbrenner draws our attention to the concept of proximal processes, which refer to persistent forms of interaction between the learner and objects in their immediate environment (e.g., language). Proximal processes are informed simultaneously by characteristics of the person, context, and time. Factors in the macro-system, such as language stability, change, and development, influence many areas of development through proximal processes, including language development. The extent to which the learner’s development is impacted upon, depends on the form, power, content, and direction of the proximal processes. In this respect, the greatest challenge Ireland faces at present is Anglocentric globalisation<sup>590</sup> – the increasing expansion of the English language worldwide – which brings many opportunities but also poses a significant threat to the contamination or elimination of local languages and cultures.<sup>591</sup> Today, the English language is the most widely spoken language in the world. In 2021, there were approximately 1.35 billion English speakers worldwide.<sup>592</sup> English language proficiency is viewed globally as an asset that ‘not only secures survival, but economic

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<sup>589</sup> The Constitution of Ireland, *The State, Article 8 (1937)* (Dublin: Government of Ireland, 2022).

<sup>590</sup> Tomas Mac Síomóin, *The Broken Harp: Identity and Language in Modern Ireland* (California: CreateSpace, 2014).

<sup>591</sup> Claus Gnutzmann, *The Globalization of English and the English Language Classroom*, eds. Claus Gnutzmann and Frauke Intemann (Germany: Narr, 2008).

<sup>592</sup> Yvette D. Hyter and Marlene B. Salas-Provence, *Culturally Responsive Practices in Speech, Language, and Hearing Sciences*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (California: Plural Publishing, 2021).

wellbeing and sociocultural standing’.<sup>593</sup> Nevertheless, Anglocentric globalisation has also given rise to ‘the erosion of the relatively fixed forms of social solidarities and cohesive identities framed around the nation state and nationalism that characterised earlier stages of modernity’.<sup>594</sup>

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) *Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger* has classified the Irish language as ‘definitely endangered’ (See Figure 4.2).<sup>595</sup> In an attempt to reverse this language shift, national language policy has undergone many developments in recent years. Notably, in 2010, the Irish government established the *20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language (2010-2030)*.<sup>596</sup> This document ‘addresses the challenges facing the language from a national perspective while highlighting the special situation of the Gaeltacht’.<sup>597</sup> The document also draws attention to the way in which English/Irish bilingualism has become typical in the Gaeltacht, which is also contributing to ‘a steady and swift erosion in the capacity of the community to transmit Irish to the next generation’.<sup>598</sup>

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<sup>593</sup> Jung, *The impact and experience of foreign languages in the context of Erasmus+ ...*, 19.

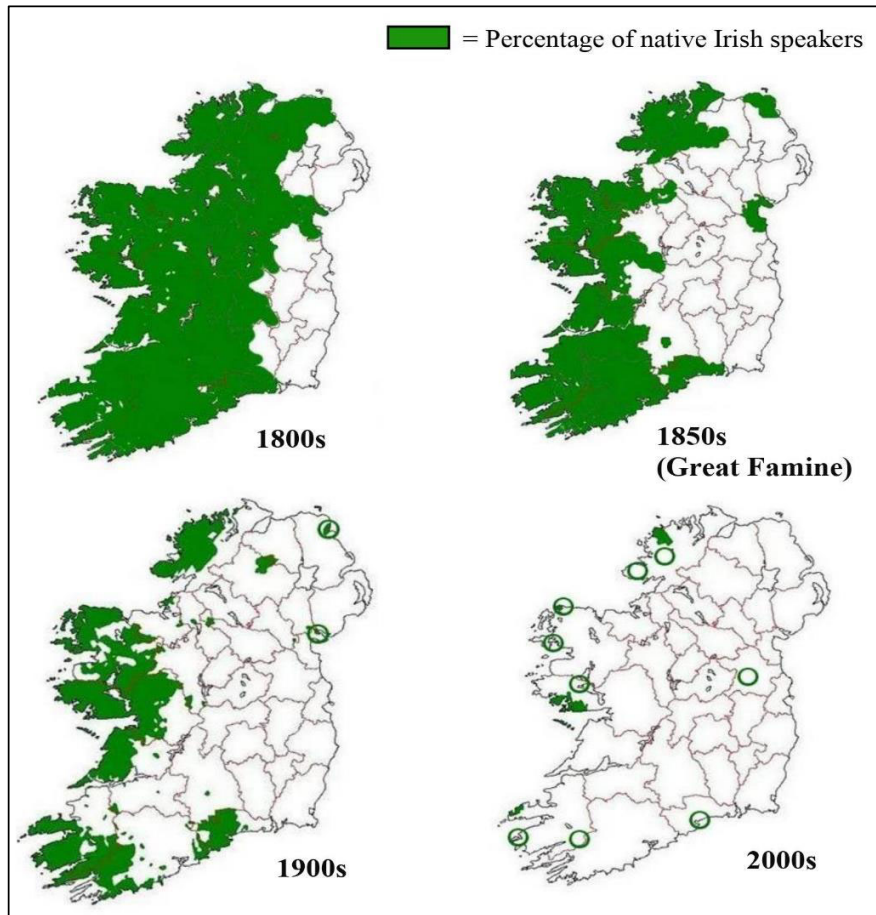
<sup>594</sup> Paschal Preston, “The Cultural Turn versus Economic Returns: The Production of Culture in an Information Age,” in *The Republic*, eds. Finbar Cullen and Aengus Ó Snodaigh (Dublin: Ireland Institute, 2005).

<sup>595</sup> UNESCO Atlas of the World’s Languages in Danger, *Interactive Atlas*. Accessed April 27, 2021. <http://www.unesco.org/languages-atlas/index.php>.

<sup>596</sup> Government of Ireland, *20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010-2030* (Dublin: Government Publications Office, 2010).

<sup>597</sup> Houses of the Oireachtas, *The Irish Language – A linguistic crisis?* Library and Research Service Note. (Dublin: Houses of the Oireachtas, 2016).

<sup>598</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.



**Figure 4.2 The Decline of Ireland’s Native Irish Speakers 1800s-2000s.**  
Adapted from Vivid Maps (2016).

In recent years, there has been a perceptible shift in language policy and language planning in the Irish context. It is important to note that Ireland’s EU membership has also played a prominent role in the way languages are perceived in the Irish context. While it is still a long-standing ambition of the Irish Government to safeguard and restore the Irish language, focus has now shifted to fostering and expanding foreign language capabilities. This is reflective of broader external developments occurring in the learner’s bi-directional chronosystem. For example, it is the long-term objective of the EU that every EU citizen should be proficient in their MT and at least two other languages (i.e., MT+2). Since the 1990s, Ireland has evolved into a multi-racial and multi-cultural society.<sup>599</sup> Today, approximately 13% (612,018 people) of the Irish population is multilingual and speak a language other than Irish

<sup>599</sup> Dore Fischer, “Balancing Diversities: Multiculturalism and Cultural Identity in a Selected Number of Works of Modern Irish Fiction,” *Irish Journal for Culture, Arts, Literature and Language* 1, no. 14 (2016).

or English at home.<sup>600</sup> According to the 2016 Census, there are 72 different languages used in the Irish linguistic landscape, with at least 500 speakers of each language.<sup>601</sup> Furthermore, recent political developments in the European sphere, namely the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the EU (i.e., Brexit), have led to a transformed European dynamic and a changing status for the English language in the Irish context. Anne O' Connor (2018) insists that Ireland will face many challenges in a post-Brexit Europe: 'If we cannot communicate in the different languages of Europe, the risk of marginalisation is very real.'<sup>602</sup> However, she also accentuates that the impact of Brexit gives Ireland the opportunity to foreground its linguistic diversity and shine on the world stage.<sup>603</sup>

Presently, Ireland is in a phase of linguistic transition, which has impacted on broader changes occurring in the educational sphere. The Irish Government's deep-rooted aspiration to restore the Irish language, in addition to contemporary linguistic diversity on the island and a shifting status of the English language in Europe, has led to some reform in language policy and language planning. These developments call for and insist upon systemic and attitudinal change toward the national language and, more recently, foreign languages. In this context, Ireland has published its first national strategy for foreign languages in education, *Languages Connect: Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026*, which seeks to model the education system in such a way that the Irish and European citizen may also grow into a global citizen, that is to say, someone who understands other cultures and societies and is able to 'develop the skills to function and thrive in our modern global economy.'<sup>604</sup> These developments in the macro-system have notably influenced linguistic priorities at the exo-system level, as evidenced by changes in language policy and planning in the Irish education system.

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<sup>600</sup> Anne O' Connor, "Speaking your language: Ireland's 72 different languages," *RTÉ*, January 16, 2018, accessed April 27, 2021, <https://www.rte.ie/brainstorm/2018/0111/932477-speaking-your-language-irelands-72-different-languages/>

<sup>601</sup> Central Statistics Office (CSO), *Census of Population 2016 - Profile 10 Education, Skills and the Irish Language: Frequency of speaking Irish* (Dublin: CSO, 2016). Ireland contains a large population of Polish (135,895), French (54,948), and Romanian (35,362) speakers, followed closely by Lithuanian, Spanish, German, Russian, Portuguese, Achinese, Arabic, and Italian speakers.

<sup>602</sup> O' Connor, "Speaking your language: Ireland's 72 different languages."

<sup>603</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>604</sup> Department of Education and Skills, *Languages Connect: Ireland's Strategy for foreign languages...*, 7.

#### 4.1.2 The Exo-System: Language Policy and Planning

The next outermost level of the learner's ecosystem is labelled the exo-system. The exo-system is comprised of the different micro-systems 'in which individuals are involved but not directly embedded'.<sup>605</sup> More specifically, it investigates the 'between-setting processes' that indirectly impact on a language learner's immediate environment.<sup>606</sup> In this context, language policy and planning, on both an internal (i.e., national language policy) and external level (i.e., European language policy), are significant components of 'a process which is part of, and is closely related with, a large range of natural and cultural ecological factors' that impact on a language learner's immediate environment.<sup>607</sup> Language policy and planning is a particularly important constituent of the exo-system as it has the potential to afford both opportunities and set constraints on learners' experiences within the education system.

In his well-known work, *Language Planning and Social Change*, linguist Robert L. Cooper (1989) defines language policy and planning as 'deliberate efforts to influence the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of their language codes'.<sup>608</sup> Language policy and planning plays a key role in language perceptions, use, and development, and mainly functions on three levels: (1) Status Planning, (2) Corpus Planning and, central to the educational realm, (3) Acquisition Planning. Acquisition planning encompasses 'language planning in which a national, state or local government system aims to influence aspects of language, such as language status, distribution and literacy through education'.<sup>609</sup> By examining the alignment of language policy and planning in the Irish context, it presents an important opportunity to establish how specific languages are perceived, the manner in which they ought to be used, and the authority and precedence accorded to different languages.

Thus far, it has been observed that the omnipresence of the English language in Irish society today may be attributed historically to an identity imposed on the nation. Its continued use has reflected Ireland's ambition to be a contemporary nation, prepared to respond to increasing globalisation. In this regard, the English language has been supported officially in education

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<sup>605</sup> Andrea Vest Ettekal and Joseph L. Mahoney, "Ecological Systems Theory," in *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Out-of-School Learning*, ed. Kylie Pepler (California: Sage Publications, 2017), 4.

<sup>606</sup> Kasbi and Shirvan, "Ecological Understanding of Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety..." 5.

<sup>607</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>608</sup> Robert L. Cooper, *Language Planning and Social Change* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 45.

<sup>609</sup> R. Ramlan, "The Correlation between Language Acquisition and Language Planning," *Budapest International Research and Critics Institute-Journal (BIRCI-Journal)* 1, (2018): 24.



and used extensively among the Irish population in all spheres of social life and global activity, such as business and diplomacy. However, in recent years, the predominance of the English language has been regarded as somewhat of a linguistic problem in that it has put the first official language at risk and, further, has given rise to an island mentality:

The global dominance of English and its status as *lingua franca* (i.e., a language that is adopted as a common language between speakers whose native languages are different), particularly as a language of business, science and technology, have further cemented this gap between linguistic aspiration and reality by conveying the impression that learning other languages, including Irish, is unnecessary.<sup>610</sup>

Through language acquisition policy and planning, the Irish Government has taken steps to address these challenges. In this context, it is important to note that developments in the learner's exo-system can be temporary (e.g., the introduction of a language initiative on a trial basis) or long-term (e.g., an extended language policy or strategy to reach government objectives). At present, the Irish Government has outlined three central aims to encourage and foster the development of language abilities in the Irish educational context. These aims may be more broadly separated into two categories: (1) National language policy and planning and (2) Foreign language policy and planning. Firstly, the government seeks to develop Irish language proficiency and safeguard the national language. Secondly, current language policy positions the improvement of foreign language competency as another building block essential for achieving the goals of national development. Since the Irish language is regarded as a minority language, with approximately 73,803 speakers out of a population of 4.75 million, it is becoming increasingly important for Irish citizens to acquire another language in addition to their MT, which for the vast majority is English, in order for the country to compete on the international stage.<sup>611</sup> Finally, as an EU member state, language policy in the Irish context also endeavours to translate the long-term objective of EU language policy, MT+2, into practice.

This analysis focuses, specifically, on developments in and the implementation of foreign language policy and planning in the Irish educational context. It pays particular attention to *Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026* and related documentation in order to highlight both advancements and setbacks that have impacted upon the realisation of the government's plan to foster foreign language proficiency. Some of the

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<sup>610</sup> Jung, *The impact and experience of foreign languages in the context of Erasmus+...*, 8.

<sup>611</sup> Central Statistics Office (CSO), *Census of Population 2016 - Profile 10 Education, Skills and the Irish Language: Frequency of speaking Irish*.

key factors that have framed the implementation of foreign language policy and planning in the Irish educational context, and which have informed the decision-making process regarding the future of languages in the Irish context include: (1) Irish/English bilingualism, (2) The compartmentalisation of languages, (3) Policy coherence, and (4) The European context. These mechanisms of influence on the exo-system will be elaborated upon throughout the discussion.

*Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026* was devised subsequent to a large-scale consultative process comprising a number of important stakeholders including 'primary schools, post-primary schools, third-level institutions, cultural institutes, business enterprises and individuals'.<sup>612</sup> It was informed by a number of government publications, such as *Language Education Policy Profile Ireland* (2008), *The National Language Strategy* (2011), *Ireland's Action Plan for Education* (2019), and *The National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*. The strategy strives to 'build awareness of the many advantages of foreign language skills and to make foreign language learning more appealing to everyone'.<sup>613</sup> In this regard, the strategy outlines four interrelated goals it seeks to address:

- (i) Improve language proficiency by creating a more engaging environment.
- (ii) Diversify and increase the uptake of languages learned and cultivate the languages of the new Irish.
- (iii) Increase awareness of the importance of language learning to encourage the wider use of foreign languages.
- (iv) Enhance employer engagement in the development and use of trade languages.<sup>614</sup>

The strategy has also informed a number of other important developments in education policy in the Irish context. For example, in 2019, the government published *Ireland's Action Plan for Education*, wherein the strategy is specified as an important pillar for nurturing 'a society where the ability to learn and use at least one foreign language is taken for granted, because of its inherent value for individuals, society and the economy'.<sup>615</sup> *Ireland's Action Plan for Education* (2019) was enacted with the aim of providing an education and training

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<sup>612</sup> Marta Gasiorowska, "Foreign language education policy in Ireland: A discourse-historical analysis," *Teanga, The Journal of the Irish Association for Applied Linguistics* 27, (2017): 132. In cooperation with the Department of Skills and Education, Languages Connect was involved in the inception of *Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026* and its *Implementation Plan 2017-2022*. The Languages Connect initiative was established in 2018. Governed by Post Primary Languages Ireland (PPLI), Languages Connect, in association with other partners, seeks to raise levels of awareness of the importance of foreign language learning in the Irish context.

<sup>613</sup> Languages Connect, "Origins of Languages Connect," *Languages Connect*, 2020, accessed April 27, 2021, <https://languagesconnect.ie/about/>

<sup>614</sup> Department of Education and Skills, *Languages Connect: Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages...*

<sup>615</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

system, characterised by ‘evidence-informed policies’, in order to address ‘the changing needs of learners, society and the economy’.<sup>616</sup> In the framework of the action plan, a variety of strategies and initiatives were identified in order to target spheres that cultivate the skills needs of students, society and economy. From an ecological perspective, the exo-system is a key layer of the learner’s environment where opportunities are provided ‘for the acquisition of skills necessary for making a living in a particular culture or society’, including cognitive/intellectual, perceptual/motor, and social/emotional competencies.<sup>617</sup> The acquisition of foreign language skills was notably addressed in the action plan through the establishment of *Languages Connect: Ireland’s Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026*.

Within this context, the strategy highlights several integral areas of foreign language learning and teaching that need to be revised or refined in order to increase language student retention rates and strengthen Ireland’s standing in the global arena with respect to language learning. These include: (1) Foreign language uptake, (2) Language learning environment, (3) Teacher education, and (4) Foreign language learning at third-level. While the strategy has an important role to play in developing foreign language proficiency in Ireland, it is also a problematic document in some respects and, thus, a number of caveats must be considered. As will be observed in the subsequent discussion, the linkage between document (exo-system), initiative (meso-system), and application (micro-system), in other words, enforcing change and meeting targets, has not been a straightforward process.

#### - *Foreign Language Uptake in the Irish Context*

Highlighting the need for diversification and increased provision of foreign languages in the Irish context, the strategy brings to our attention that ‘very few schools offer more than one or two foreign languages and many students are not given a choice of languages to study.’<sup>618</sup> Data relating to the languages presented by 730 schools, at leaving cert level, called attention to the worrying number of students who did not study any language for their state examination. In 2016, 13% (8077 students) at junior cert level did not study a foreign language, and alarmingly 30% (17947 students) at leaving cert level.<sup>619</sup> This may be a result of some schools

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<sup>616</sup> Department of Education and Skills, *Action Plan for Education 2019* (Dublin: Department of Education and Skills, 2019), 6.

<sup>617</sup> McHale, Dotterer, and Kim, “An Ecological Perspective on the Media and Youth Development,” 1188.

<sup>618</sup> Department of Education and Skills, *Languages Connect: Ireland’s Strategy for Foreign Languages...*, 26.

<sup>619</sup> *Ibid.*

that, over the past few years, have not required students to participate in studying a foreign language.

In response to this decrease in foreign language sits, the strategy makes a point of outreaching and promoting ‘awareness among school principals, students and their parents of the benefits of foreign language learning’.<sup>620</sup> It also intends to encourage the development and retention of the language skills of the new Irish because, as of 2016, 13% of the population in Ireland speak a language other than Irish or English at home. Students who undertake the Leaving Certificate Applied or the Leaving Certificate Vocational Programme must study a foreign language. However, studying a foreign language is optional as part of the Leaving Certificate (established) programme. Notwithstanding, approximately 70% of students sit a foreign language examination at Leaving Certificate level. This high level of foreign language sits has, in part, been attributed to prerequisites required by certain higher education institutions. It is asserted that these prerequisites are beneficial in the medium-term to encourage students to opt to study foreign languages.

As regards the third-level context, there has been a significant decrease in foreign language uptake. Statistics from research carried out by the Higher Education Authority (2012/2013) reveal that approximately 4% of students (i.e., 9,000 students) in higher education were studying a foreign language as a sole core subject or as a certified component of another undergraduate discipline.<sup>621</sup> These figures bring attention to and highlight ‘a weakness in the education system as regards the provision and uptake of foreign languages at third-level’.<sup>622</sup> In response to these worrying figures, the strategy contends that by 2026 it aims to increase this figure to 20% in order to ensure that both the education and industry sectors have adequate resources in the future. Notwithstanding this commendable aim, a recent report from the Oireachtas Library and Research Service (2020), entitled *Education in Ireland*, revealed that:

The numbers and proportion of students (full-time and part-time undergraduates and postgraduates) studying languages / language acquisition at third level has remained relatively unchanged since 2014. The proportion has remained remarkably constant (between 1.2% and 1.3% of all third-level students).<sup>623</sup>

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<sup>620</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>621</sup> *Ibid.*, 31.

<sup>622</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>623</sup> Houses of the Oireachtas, *Education in Ireland: Statistical Snapshot*, authors Darren Lawlor, Senior Parliamentary Researcher (Economics) and Shane Burke, Senior Parliamentary Researcher (Public Administration) (Dublin: Houses of the Oireachtas, 2016).

Thus, it appears that the mid-term objective of the strategy's implementation plan, which sought to increase the percentage of students studying courses with a language component in higher education from 4% to 10% has not met its target, despite significant strides in its awareness-raising campaign to 'highlight the importance of foreign languages – both for cultural and social awareness and for career opportunities' (See Figure 4.3).<sup>624</sup> In order for the implementation plan to reach its long-term target, which endeavours to increase the percentage of students studying courses with a language component in higher education to 20%, the government realistically needs to introduce a series of concrete policy measures and initiatives that tackle the 'complex interdependencies that exist between the different elements of the education system'.<sup>625</sup>

The strategy exposed the prevalence and dominance of the French language as a choice in post-primary education, which was offered at 634 schools in contrast to Japanese, which was only available at 15 schools. Interestingly, the document problematises the popularity of the French language in the Irish educational context, accentuating that it is another challenge 'to developing a truly multilingual society'.<sup>626</sup> It could, however, be argued that this is an important oversight in light of significant political developments and changes taking place in the learner's wider chrono-system, which, indeed, foreground the value of the French language to Irish society. As noted in the introduction to this thesis, the United Kingdom's exit from the EU has opened up a new space for Ireland in the global arena, where France is our closest neighbour. Going forward, it would thus be a profitable measure to recentre or realign attitudes towards the French language in the realisation of the strategy's aims.

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<sup>624</sup> Department of Education and Skills, *Languages Connect: Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages...*, 19. On September 17, 2018, the campaign was launched by Minister for Education and Skills Richard Bruton TD (served from May 2016 to October 2018). As part of the campaign, the Languages Connect website was developed (<https://languagesconnect.ie/>) in order to build awareness of the many advantages of having foreign language skills, funding was allocated to schools in order to accommodate language exchanges and promote language upskilling for teachers, and practical events and open-days in tertiary institutions as well as competitions were organised for post-primary students, such as ThinkLanguages, Dublin City University Language Week, and the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology Language Competition, in order to heighten enthusiasm for and enjoyment of foreign language learning.

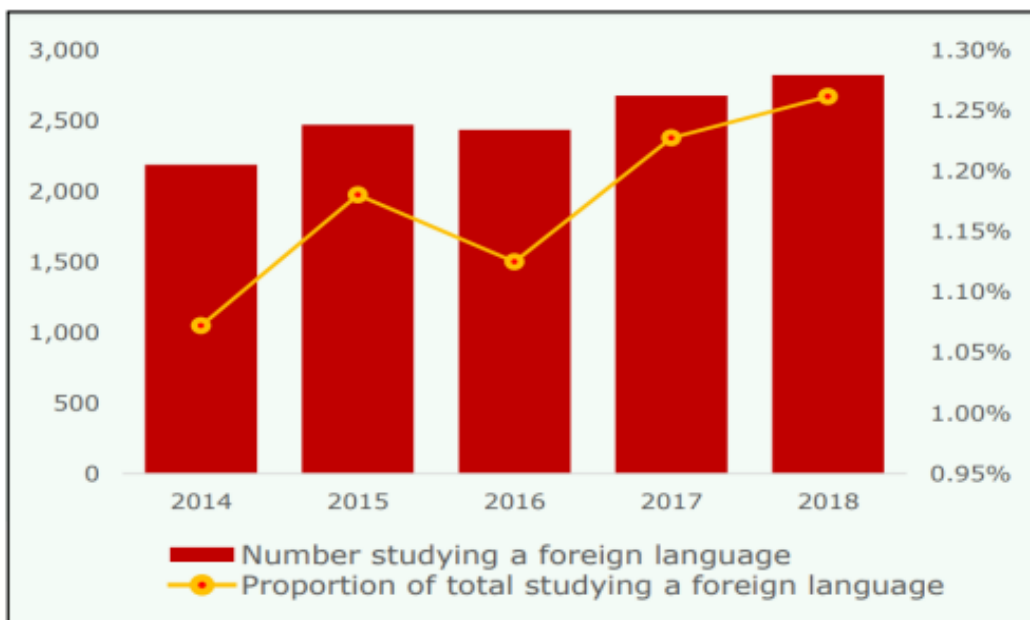
<sup>625</sup> Jennifer Bruen, "Languages Connect: What does Ireland's first government strategy for foreign-languages-in-education mean for Irish universities?" in *Foreign Language Learning and Ireland's Languages Connect Strategy: Reflections following a symposium organised by the National University of Ireland with University College Cork*, ed. Patricia Maguire (Dublin: National University of Ireland, 2020), 8.

<sup>626</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

**Targets: *Languages Connect Implementation Plan (2017-2022)* - Percentage of Students Studying Courses with a Language Component in Higher Education.**

MEASURE	BASELINE (2016)	MID TERM TARGET (2022)	END TARGET (2026)
Percentage Of Students Studying Courses With A Language Component In Higher Education	4% [2012/13]	10%	20%

**Students Studying Foreign Languages in Third Level.** Adapted from *Education in Ireland: Statistical Snapshot*, a report prepared by the Oireachtas Library & Research Service (2020).



**Figure 4.3 Current Foreign Language Uptake in the Irish Third-Level Context.**

It is also important to acknowledge that the Irish language is largely compartmentalised in the strategy. Although the Irish language, for the majority of students, marks their ‘first formal experience with language learning’, it is not regarded as an L2 or foreign language in policy and, instead, is compartmentalised from other languages.<sup>627</sup> This has been a well-established trend in language policy in Ireland. In 2008, the *Language Education Policy Profile* highlighted those languages, in the Irish context, are dealt with as separate entities in policy.

<sup>627</sup> Jung, *The impact and experience of foreign languages in the context of Erasmus+...*, 19.

Britta Jung (2020) aptly captures the nature of this division, describing it as an “either-or”, as opposed to an “as-well-as” mentality.<sup>628</sup> In this context, considerable focus has been placed on the Irish language in policy while, up until recently, foreign languages have not been met with the same degree of recognition:

Compulsory Irish is in the forefront and elicits considerable attention and concern. Modern foreign languages try to attract attention on their behalf but suffer from a limitation of space in the “crowded” curriculum, as well as from a certain lack of recognition and diversification. English is everywhere and nowhere, omnipresent and unnoticed.<sup>629</sup>

As will be observed in the next section, Irish language education is a core and compulsory component of the primary and post-primary curriculum and syllabus. In contrast, foreign language education in Ireland is introduced relatively late in the education system. At present, Ireland does not have an official modern language programme at primary level. Although the primary school curriculum is currently under review to address this, the teaching and learning of foreign languages, in the Irish context, continues to be the focus of the post-primary curriculum and tertiary education.<sup>630</sup> Within this context, the *Language Education Policy Profile* (2008) draws attention to the importance of decompartmentalising current views on language and language learning and contemplating the ‘language scene as a whole’ in ‘one sphere of policy planning’ as opposed to adversaries competing for limited financial and educational resources.<sup>631</sup>

#### - *Language Learning Environment*

The strategy also accentuates the need to develop and increase language competence through the creation of more stimulating language learning environments. Foreign language teaching and learning standards are prioritised as considerable components of productive and successful language learning experiences at all levels of the education system. In furtherance of authentic language learning experiences, the strategy supports the Foreign Language

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<sup>628</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>629</sup> Department of Education and Science and Council of Europe, *Language Education Policy Profile: Ireland* (Dublin: Department of Education and Science / Strasbourg: Language Policy Division, 2008), 32-33.

<sup>630</sup> At present, the Languages Connect Primary School Sampler Module “Say Yes to Languages” is being rolled out across the country (Academic Year 2021-2022). On April 19, 2022, Minister for Education, Norma Foley, announced that the initiative will continue into the academic year 2022-2023 and will be extended from a six to eight-week programme.

<sup>631</sup> Department of Education and Science and Council of Europe, *Language Education Policy Profile Ireland*, 33.

Assistants Scheme, which makes it possible for native speakers of curriculum languages (French, German, Spanish, Italian) to come to Ireland to teach in secondary schools for one academic year (October to May) by way of cultural agreements with France, Spain, Italy, and Austria. In order to broaden the scope of languages available to students in schools, the strategy also aspires to develop other cultural agreements with countries such as China, Romania, and Lithuania to promote the expansion of new curricular languages and introduce language assistants for existing languages including Japanese and Russian, which presently do not have any assistance. Further, the scheme is also beneficial to language graduates in the Irish context who, as part of the exchange scheme, may teach in different countries. This is an invaluable ‘tool for developing the language and intercultural competence of future language teachers’.<sup>632</sup>

Furthermore, in the third-level context, study abroad programmes, work placements, and internships abroad, as part of the Erasmus+ programme, are considered as indispensable constituents of the language learning process for learners in higher education. Erasmus+ was established as part of the EU’s mobility programme and has been in effect since 1987. Since its inception, over 65,000 students and staff in Ireland have availed of the programme. Significantly, in 2021, despite the global COVID-19 crisis, there was a significant 66% increase in the demand for places on the Erasmus+ programme.<sup>633</sup> As of 2015, students taking part in Erasmus+ have had to complete a language proficiency test before leaving and on return in order to observe the impact of the mobility period on language ability. The language test is measured in accordance with the CEFR scale. Data collected in 2015 revealed that prior to taking part in the Erasmus+ mobility programme overseas, 78% of students ranked at the B1 level or at a lower level, however, on their return 86% increased to the B1 level or to a higher level, while 63% ranked at the B2 level or above.<sup>634</sup> In this regard, the strategy insists upon the role of Erasmus+ in ‘the context of language competence and development, but also as a potential tool for encouraging teacher education’.<sup>635</sup>

Erasmus+ is just one of the many components of the EU’s language policy framework that has played an important role in informing, drafting, and revising Ireland’s vision for

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<sup>632</sup> Department of Education and Skills, *Languages Connect: Ireland’s Strategy for foreign languages...*, 23.

<sup>633</sup> Gerry O’Sullivan, “Surge in demand for Erasmus places among Irish students is welcome news,” *The Irish Times*, February 15, 2022, accessed March 19, 2022, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/surge-in-demand-for-erasmus-places-among-irish-students-is-welcome-news-1.4796992>. As part of the new Erasmus+ Programme 2021-2027, Ireland has been awarded a budget of €27,435,408 toward financing overseas exchanges over this period.

<sup>634</sup> Department of Education and Skills, *Languages Connect: Ireland’s Strategy for foreign languages...*, 22.

<sup>635</sup> *Ibid.*, 23. Erasmus+ may now also be used to replace internships in the UK and one can also avail of Erasmus+ without using language skills.



languages in policy. Other examples of the EU's contribution to Ireland's language policy include MT+2, fostering linguistic diversity, supporting minority languages, the EU's work on communicative language teaching, and their support for content and language integrated learning (CLIL). By harnessing these tools, the Irish Government aspires to cultivate an awareness of different cultures and societies, while also providing every Irish citizen with the opportunity to foster the skills required to prosper in the expanding international economy. In the EU's language policy framework, it is asserted that 'linguistic diversity is a reality, observance of which is a fundamental value of the European Union.'<sup>636</sup> Further, in the *Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union*, it is stated that the 'Union action shall be aimed at developing the European dimension in education, particularly through the teaching and dissemination of the languages of the Member States', while safeguarding and recognising both cultural and linguistic diversity.<sup>637</sup> Proficiency in foreign languages is considered to be one of the most fundamental skills that all EU citizens need to develop for reasons of cultural identity and social integration, and also because 'multilingual citizens are better placed to take advantage of the economic, educational and professional opportunities created by an integrated Europe.'<sup>638</sup> Against this backdrop, a key aim of the strategy is to support increased levels of participation and competence in foreign language learning such that Irish citizens may 'excel on the global stage'.<sup>639</sup>

#### - ***Teacher Education***

The central role of teacher education, training, and continued professional development, across the different sectors, is emphasised in the strategy in order to ensure and validate the language proficiency of potential entrants to the teaching profession. In accordance with the CEFR and the Teaching Council of Ireland's curriculum, any candidate who is registering to teach modern foreign languages (i.e., French, German, Spanish, Italian) must provide evidence of their language ability from the higher education institution they attended. Language competency will ideally be at the proficient level. At the minimum, the B2.2 level is accepted, which is at the upper end of the independent user scale. This level of language attainment is required to ensure effective communicative language teaching across the

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<sup>636</sup> Pierre Hériard, "European Parliament Fact Sheet on Language Policy," *European Journal of Language Policy* 13, no. 1 (2021).

<sup>637</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>638</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>639</sup> Department of Education and Skills, *Languages Connect: Ireland's Strategy for foreign languages...*, 5.

following four language skills (i.e., listening, reading, writing, speaking). They must also spend a period of time in the country where the language is spoken.

Against this backdrop, it is important to note that the *Languages Connect Strategy* highlights the concern expressed by schools regarding the problems they are having locating ‘qualified language teachers to fill posts they wish to allocate to languages’.<sup>640</sup> While the strategy aims to expand the numbers of students studying languages in schools, it also makes a point of teacher supply and the requirements of the education system, which is determined by the accessibility of an adequate number of modern foreign language graduates. Jennifer Bruen (2019), a leading scholar in the domain of language policy and planning in the Irish context, affirms that at third-level ‘deficiencies within the Irish education system in relation to foreign languages become particularly apparent’.<sup>641</sup> As noted previously, there has been a worrying decrease in foreign language uptake at third-level. It is within this sector, however, that students have perhaps the greatest opportunity to study a diverse variety of foreign languages as core modules which may be combined with a broad ‘range of other disciplines across business, the arts, the humanities and the sciences’.<sup>642</sup> Certain higher education institutions also provide part-time and evening classes in a variety of languages, which supplement lifelong learning. Thus, it is particularly important to capitalise upon its potential in order to facilitate the expansion of language learning in the Irish context.

#### - *Foreign Language Learning at Third-Level*

Consonant with the *Languages Connect Strategy*, the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* maintains that a ‘high proportion of the skills that we need now in the workforce are high-order knowledge-based skills, many of which can be acquired only in higher education institutions’.<sup>643</sup> In this regard, focus is placed upon the arts, humanities, and social sciences as these academic disciplines in particular permit the development of important skills required for the 21<sup>st</sup>-century graduate including quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, communication skills, teamworking skills, and the effective use of information technology.<sup>644</sup> Significantly, the *Languages Connect Strategy* is a key constituent of *The Higher Education*

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<sup>640</sup> Department of Education and Skills, *Languages Connect: Ireland’s Strategy for foreign languages...*, 21.

<sup>641</sup> Bruen, “Languages Connect: What does Ireland’s first government strategy...,” 7.

<sup>642</sup> Department of Education and Skills, *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* (Dublin: Department of Education and Skills, 2011), 13.

<sup>643</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>644</sup> *Ibid.*, 35.

*Authority Systems Performance Framework* (2018-2020). Bruen (2020) accentuates that the strategy may, therefore, result in ‘a greater impact than previous, more aspirational strategies and reports’ produced by the Department of Education and Skills, such as the *Language Education Policy Profile* (2008) and *The National Languages Strategy* (2011).<sup>645</sup> The strategy is a timely response to the challenge posed in *The Language Education Policy Profile* (2008), which argued that the greatest contemporary engagement for Ireland is:

To shift progressively from an official but lame bilingualism and become a truly multilingual society, where the ability to learn and use two and more languages is taken for granted and fostered at every stage of the education system and throughout lifelong education.<sup>646</sup>

That said, in order to facilitate the smooth transition and crossover of foreign language learning in the different stages of the Irish education system, it is necessary to encourage communication between the different sectors of the Irish education system regarding cross-sectoral foreign language strategy, which is currently lacking.<sup>647</sup> In this context, it is important to consider students’ language learning experiences as they transition through the education system and the dispositions and skills they bring with them at each stage in order to support continuity of experience throughout the various layers of their environment. In this regard, the learner’s meso-system sheds significant light upon the various processes that are impacted upon by the learner’s exo-system, including language curriculum and pedagogical practices, which by extension filter down to their micro-system, where perceptions of language are foregrounded.

#### **4.1.3 The Meso-System: Language Curriculum and Pedagogical Practices**

The meso-system is a significant layer of a language learner’s environment as it ‘surveys the developing person dealing with the situations outside the frame of [their] immediate setting’, that is to say, the micro-system.<sup>648</sup> Bower et al. (2020) accentuate that the language learner’s classroom-based experience in the mesosystem is one of the most important sources of insight and understanding into their relationship with language learning and transition. In this context, the language curriculum framework together with foreign language

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<sup>645</sup> Bruen, “Languages Connect: What does Ireland’s first government strategy...,” 18.

<sup>646</sup> Department of Education and Science and Council of Europe, *Language Education Policy Profile*, 51.

<sup>647</sup> Some provision has been made to encourage cross-sectoral communication in the strategy, as highlighted in the preceding discussion and also through the establishment of the Languages Connect Primary School Sampler Module initiative; however, there is still much progress to be made in this regard.

<sup>648</sup> Kasbi and Shirvan, “Ecological Understanding of Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety,” 5.

teaching practices and methodologies play a significant role in shaping learners' experiences and perceptions of the language learning process.<sup>649</sup> More specifically, the molar activities that take place within the learner's meso-system function as both a cause and consequence of learner development. As defined by Bronfenbrenner, a molar activity 'is an ongoing behavior possessing a momentum of its own and perceived as having meaning or intent by the participants in the setting'.<sup>650</sup> In contrast to an act, a molar activity engages the learner over a prolonged period, whereby they interact with organisms and different variables in their environment. For example, a smile or a knock on the door is regarded as an act, while a molar activity may be using the French language to communicate or complete a quiz. Tong and Tsung (2022) explain that through molar activities, language learners 'develop skills overtime and adapt to the environment more easily'.<sup>651</sup> In the context of language development, use, and perceptions, molar activities are significantly shaped by language curriculum and pedagogical practices.

Every country makes an informed choice about curriculum design and instruction practices. These decisions, characterised by policy, 'reflect national priorities and preferences for the education received by students at different ages as well as general priorities placed on different subject areas'.<sup>652</sup> The Irish education system can be described as a two-language context. The majority of school children speak English as their first language and the Irish language is introduced to them around the age of four or five in English-medium primary/national schools. School children who grow up in Irish speaking areas known as the *Gaeltacht* usually attend Irish-medium schools where they study the curriculum through the Irish language and are, therefore, immersed in the language from a very young age.<sup>653</sup> Children who reside outside Irish speaking areas may also attend Irish-medium schools known as *gaelscoil* (primary school) and *gaelcholáiste* (secondary school), where the school curriculum is also presented through the Irish language. It has commonly been assumed that Irish-medium schools, in contrast to English-medium schools, produce more proficient and fluent speakers

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<sup>649</sup> Kim Bower et al., *Curriculum Integrated Language Teaching: CLIL in Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

<sup>650</sup> Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development*, 45.

<sup>651</sup> Peiru Tong and Linda Tsung, *Learning Chinese in a Multilingual Space: An Ecological Perspective on Studying Abroad* (London: Springer Nature, 2022), 63.

<sup>652</sup> Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators 2006* (Paris: OECD Publishing, 2006), 350.

<sup>653</sup> The Gaeltacht covers areas of counties Donegal, Mayo, Galway and Kerry as well as sections of counties Cork, Meath and Waterford in Ireland.

of the Irish language, although the Irish language is a compulsory subject that must be studied in English-medium primary and secondary schools from the ages of five to eighteen.<sup>654</sup>

In 2012, only 4% of primary school students in Ireland were learning a foreign language. However, in English-medium primary schools, junior infants (ages 4-5/5-6) and senior infants (ages 5-6/6-7) spend approximately 6.5 hours a week on Irish and English literacy, while senior classes (i.e., first class to sixth class) are required to spend at least 8.5 hours on these subjects.<sup>655</sup> Foreign language education was additionally curtailed in Irish primary schools due to the abolition of the *Modern Languages in Primary Schools Initiative* on account of financial cutbacks. At post-primary level, within the Junior Cycle framework, students are required to study a minimum of 240 hours of Irish and English, while optional subjects (e.g., modern foreign languages) are allocated 200 hours of instruction over the school term.<sup>656</sup> At Senior Cycle, all core and optional subjects are designed as 180-hour courses of study.<sup>657</sup> In 2017, the European Commission published a report entitled *Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe*, wherein it was revealed that on average 98.6% of lower secondary school students in the EU learn at least one foreign language. Ireland, however, is the exception as ‘the proportion of students not learning any foreign language in lower secondary education exceeds 10%.’<sup>658</sup>

While the majority of school children learn Irish as an L2 from the age of four or five in English-medium primary schools, foreign language education is introduced around the age of 12 or 13 in post-primary education. Several studies have argued that the sooner an individual begins to learn a language, the more proficient they will become (e.g., Nikolov and Djigunović 2008; Birdsong 2006). Dryden and Vos (1997) propose that if an individual does not have the opportunity to learn a language from birth, then the prime cut-off point to learn a foreign language to a highly proficient level is between the ages of ten and thirteen.<sup>659</sup> In this regard, anecdotal evidence, in the Irish context, has revealed that second-level students are finding it

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<sup>654</sup> Éanna Ó Caollaí, “Report reveals student support for compulsory Irish,” *The Irish Times*, March 15, 2021, accessed August 3, 2021, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/report-reveals-student-support-for-compulsory-irish-1.4510604>.

<sup>655</sup> National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), *Proposals for structure and time allocation in a redeveloped primary curriculum: For consultation* (Dublin: NCCA, 2016).

<sup>656</sup> Department of Education, “Minister announces arrangements for schools to apply new special core status of History at Junior Cycle,” *Education.ie*, February 18, 2020, accessed April 27, 2020, <https://www.education.ie/en/Press-Events/Press-Releases/2020-press-releases/PR20-02-18.html>.

<sup>657</sup> National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), *Towards learning an overview of Senior Cycle education* (Dublin: NCCA, 2009).

<sup>658</sup> European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, *Key Data on Teaching Languages at School in Europe – 2017* (Luxembourg: Publications of the European Union, 2017).

<sup>659</sup> Gordon Dryden and Jeanette Vos, *The Learning Revolution* (New Zealand: The Learning Web, 1997).

increasingly difficult to transfer the foreign language from their textbook into an articulate conversation.<sup>660</sup>

Presently, there is no language policy that informs a foreign language curriculum in the Irish third-level context. In this context, *Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026* highlights the importance of collaboration between third-level institutions and employers in order to inform curriculum and programme design. In this regard, it also emphasises that the development and implementation of language strategy should be monitored through the Higher Education Authority's *Strategic Dialogue* process and *Systems Performance Framework* for third-level institutions in order to 'ensure relevant indicators are developed and included to support the provision of a diversity of language learning opportunities as a national priority'.<sup>661</sup>

In the Irish context, the communicative approach to language teaching is extensively supported and advocated in post-primary education. As observed in Chapter Two, the communicative approach to language teaching is largely associated with the underpinnings of Krashen's monitor model (i.e., natural approach) and social-interactionist approaches to language acquisition. While many traditional foreign language teaching methodologies focus upon developing linguistic knowledge (e.g., grammar translation method), communicative approaches place emphasis on the manner in which pragmatic knowledge is consolidated, in other words, learning to use language successfully in communicative contexts.

The communicative approach to foreign language learning is reflective of the broader objectives of the Junior Certificate (i.e., Junior Cycle) and Leaving Certificate (i.e., Senior Cycle) Modern Foreign Language Curriculum. As reported by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), the *Junior Cycle Modern Foreign Languages Specification* endeavours to:

Develop communicative language skills broadly aligned with the A band (A1 to A2, basic user) of the CEFR and its descriptors. It also aims to enable students to explore the interdependence between language and culture, to develop their appreciation of the relevance of languages to their lives for personal, social, educational, vocational and leisure purposes, and to derive enjoyment from language learning.<sup>662</sup>

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<sup>660</sup> Aine Kerr, "Irish students lost in translation," *The Irish Times*, November 8, 2011, accessed March 22, 2020, <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/education/irish-students-lost-in-translation-1.9020>.

<sup>661</sup> Department of Education and Skills, *Languages Connect: Ireland's Strategy for foreign languages...*, 17.

<sup>662</sup> National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), *Modern Foreign Languages (Junior Cycle)* (Dublin: NCCA, 2021).

In a comparable manner, the NCCA affirms that the study of modern foreign languages at Senior Cycle seeks to develop students' communicative language skills broadly aligned with the B band (B1 to B1.1, intermediate) of the Global CEFR scale and its descriptors in order to:

Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes and ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.<sup>663</sup>

Key findings from the Department of Education and Skills' *Modern Foreign Languages: A Report on the Quality of Practice in Post-Primary Schools* (2020), compiled from ninety-four foreign language inspections that took place between October 2016 and September 2019 across Ireland, highlight the manner in which the vast majority of post-primary educators have successfully implemented core elements of communicative language teaching in practice.<sup>664</sup> Globally, inspectors observed that students benefited from a satisfactory or better learning environment in 98% of the modern foreign language lessons surveyed. The report also draws attention to student-teacher rapport and the manner in which educators were able to successfully foster respectful learning environments that encouraged student learning. Learner engagement was also promoted through the creation of 'attractive and stimulating' print-rich environments and a shift away from a non-traditional classroom layout.<sup>665</sup> Findings relating to learner engagement in language lessons were also largely positive. Inspectors rated the quality of student engagement as either satisfactory or better in 95% of the lessons assessed. Inspectors noted the following constructive practices or molar activities employed by educators in order to encourage learner engagement in the language learning classroom, which are closely associated with CEFR principles:

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<sup>663</sup> Council of Europe, "Global scale - Table 1 (CEFR 3.3): Common Reference levels," *Council of Europe, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*, 2022, accessed October 30, 2022, <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/table-1-cefr-3.3-common-reference-levels-global-scale>

<sup>664</sup> Department of Education and Skills, *Modern Foreign Languages: A Report on the Quality of Practice in Post-Primary Schools* (Dublin: Department of Education and Skills, 2020).

<sup>665</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

1. Using wide-ranging questioning strategies.
2. Ensuring regular review of material in order to consolidate learning.
3. The provision of meaningfully differentiated content and activities to ensure that all students were challenged by the learning activities and that they experienced success in line with their potential.
4. Active use of the target language.

The active role of the language learner in the language learning process was also highlighted in the report. Inspections revealed that students were given significant opportunities to actively use the target language and, thus, expand upon their oral proficiency in such a manner that ‘fostered their confidence and enthusiasm’ for language learning.<sup>666</sup>

Notwithstanding these developments, the Department of Education and Skills also provides constructive feedback on how this vision of modern foreign language education may be further cemented in practice. Inspection reports on the provision of modern foreign languages in the post-primary sector have noted that, in some cases, there was ‘a lack of opportunities for students to engage actively in their language learning’ as there was ‘an over-emphasis on teacher talk’.<sup>667</sup> Recommendations from the inspection, therefore, draw attention to the need to establish ‘a better balance between teacher talk and student talk’ in order to provide students with ample possibilities for discussion in the target language with their teacher and peers: ‘Learners need opportunities to speak in the target language in every lesson, and should be afforded regular opportunities to practise newly acquired target language in different contexts.’<sup>668</sup>

In just over 15% of the language lessons surveyed as part of the inspection, it was noted that learner engagement was only satisfactory, and in a small number of cases either fair or weak, which impacted negatively on students’ concentration. Recommendations, therefore, accentuate that improvement is still required in this regard. Significantly, inspectors only rated target language use among students as good or very good in only 28% of group work lessons. In order to encourage student engagement in the target language, report recommendations emphasis the need for teachers to participate in continuing professional development in order

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<sup>666</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>667</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>668</sup> *Ibid.*



to increase their confidence and proficiency in the target language to facilitate enhanced instruction and communication: ‘The importance of target language use, by both teacher and students, should also be emphasised through initial teacher education as good levels of linguistic competency support greater ease in use of the target language within the classroom.’<sup>669</sup> Finally, it is worth noting that findings revealed a discrepancy between student engagement and student enjoyment during language lessons. In this respect, recommendations underscore the need to develop further opportunities to increase active student participation and engagement in language lessons in order to promote ‘their enjoyment and motivation, as well as developing crucial language and communication skills’.<sup>670</sup>

Although no official report or research study explicitly details the manner in which the Irish language is taught in primary or post-primary education, anecdotal evidence suggests that the Irish language is largely taught through traditional teacher-centred approaches as opposed to a communicative approach. The NCCA affirms that the study of the Irish language at Senior Cycle seeks to develop the knowledge students’ have gained during Junior Cycle. The Leaving Certificate Examination is comprised of seven key parts:

1. **The Oral Exam** (An Bhéaltriall) – assessed in terms of Beannú (Reception), Léamh Filíochta (Poetry Reading), Sraithpictiúirí (Describing a Picture Series) and Comhrá (Conversation).
2. **The Aural Exam** (An Chluastuisicint)
3. **The Composition** (Ceapadóireacht)
4. **The Comprehensions** (Léamhthuisicint)
5. **Prose** (Prós)
6. **Poetry** (Filíocht)
7. **Additional Literature** (Litríocht Bhreise)

In this context, Irish language instructional practices appear to be structurally oriented, focusing on developing knowledge about language forms and literary texts, often through repetition and memorising, with an increased reliance on ministry assigned textbooks:

Patrick Pearse once referred to the Irish educational system under the British as “the murder machine.” It retained that title for the Irish language. The teaching of the [Irish]

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<sup>669</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>670</sup> *Ibid.*

language became fixated on grammatical construction and declensions. The natural beauty of the language was squeezed out of the process.<sup>671</sup>

As observed in Chapter Two, the behaviourist approach to language learning impacts negatively on building competency and fluency in language use and, further, reduces student enjoyment and enthusiasm for language learning. In recent years, however, there have been calls for reform in order to change the way the Irish language is taught at primary, secondary, and third-level. At The Union of Students in Ireland's annual congress (2016), it was asserted that 'many students believe that the Irish language is not "taught as a language" and that too much focus is put on literature instead of the oral practice.'<sup>672</sup> The Congress argued that Irish should be taught as a living language in order to increase students' enjoyment of the language learning experience and promote greater fluency in the language. In this regard, the potential of CLIL in encouraging Irish language learning was highlighted following many successful pilot projects in the Irish context. CLIL is an immersive approach to language learning. It permits learners to engage with language in context and use it for authentic communication. The target language is employed to teach both content and language and, thus, 'enables the attainment of both content objectives and language objectives in the same lesson'.<sup>673</sup> Implementation of this practice throughout the education system would, foreseeably, foster greater fluency in and promote more positive attitudes towards the Irish language among students in Ireland because of the immersive, holistic, and integrated nature of the approach.

The methodological approaches employed to teach foreign languages in the Irish third-level context are vast and varied and are largely dependent upon the nature and the objectives of the programme undertaken. For example, a master's degree in translation studies may place greater emphasis on the grammar-translation method of language teaching in comparison to a language degree in advanced languages and global communication, which may place more emphasis on ICT and the communicative approach. Further, in contrast to foreign language acquisition in post-primary education, in the university context, learners will undertake a

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<sup>671</sup> Kevin O' Brien, "Why it is too late now to save the Irish language Efforts to revive it have come far too late," *IrishCentral.com*, February 17, 2014, accessed March 19, 2022, <https://www.irishcentral.com/opinion/others/why-it-is-too-late-now-to-save-the-irish-language>

<sup>672</sup> Union of Students in Ireland (USI) Publications, "The Union of Students in Ireland is calling for a change in the way Irish is Taught in School," *USI*, April 4, 2016, accessed March 20, 2022, <https://usi.ie/gaeilge/the-union-of-students-in-ireland-is-calling-for-a-change-in-the-way-irish-is-taught-in-school/>

<sup>673</sup> John Harris and Pádraig Ó Duibhir, *Effective Language Teaching: A Synthesis of Research* (Dublin: NCCA, 2011), 44.

number of content-based lectures related to their area of study. At present, twelve universities in Ireland offer approximately 200 language programmes (See Appendix T).

While methodological approaches may vary in the context of language teaching and learning in the Irish third-level context, technology has become a key component of the learning process throughout the years.<sup>674</sup> As outlined in Chapter Two, CALL may be used in two principal ways in order to facilitate the language acquisition process: (1) Students may learn with technology and/or (2) Students may learn from technology. In the context of French language learning, Berthaud (2020) highlights the innovative ways in which digital learning and foreign language education may be combined through the use of CALL at third-level.<sup>675</sup> For example, music videos and film may be integrated into CALL activities as a tool to inspire students to produce dialogues in the French language. CALL functions such as recording software may be used by students to document their speaking ability, and lecturers or tutors may use these recordings to provide students with feedback. Further, this type of activity permits students to assess and comment on their own speaking ability. Berthaud emphasises that technology has ‘come in leaps and bounds’ in recent years and, thus, its applications have expanded significantly in that it permits adaptability, creativity, and inclusivity in the language learning process. In today’s technologically advanced society, language educators now have the tools at their disposal to access countless authentic materials, produce podcasts, capture video to explain technical concepts associated with the French language (e.g., in the case of an interpreting course), and are presented with new and innovate means to tackle traditional language learning activities (e.g., using subtitle programmes in translation courses).

In this regard, it is equally important for students to develop discipline-specific digital literacy skills in order to appreciate and understand the use of technology and its applications in language learning.<sup>676</sup> In the Irish context, one of the greatest campaigns, to date, for the development of discipline-specific digital literacy skills in language learning at third-level has been the large-scale national project funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of

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<sup>674</sup> There have also been significant advances at primary and post-primary level in this regard. For example, several reports have been published in order to encourage the implementation and expansion of ICT in the education system such as *Blueprint for the future of ICT in Irish Education* (2002), *Framework for ICT in the Curriculum* (2007), *ICT in Schools* (2008), *Smart Schools=Smart Economy* (2009), and policies including *The Digital Strategy for Schools to 2027*. At present, the Professional Development Service for Teachers (PDST) Technology in Education promotes and supports the integration of ICT in teaching and learning in first and second level schools.

<sup>675</sup> Sarah Berthaud, “Digital Learning and Foreign Languages,” *DigitalEd* video, March 4, 2020, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8hr8g\\_mWA8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8hr8g_mWA8)

<sup>676</sup> Margarida M. Pinheiro and Dora Simões, *Handbook of Research on Engaging Digital Natives in Higher Education Settings* (Pennsylvania: IG Global, 2016).

Teaching and Learning, led by the University of Limerick, Ireland, on *Enhancing Digital Literacies for Language Learning and Teaching*.<sup>677</sup> The project was developed in 2015 to acknowledge ‘calls in national, European, and international policy documents and guidelines in relation to the pedagogically focussed uses of technology to enhance higher education’.<sup>678</sup> Preliminary research findings and analysis uncovered that learners face difficulties in five chief areas with regard to digital literacy skills: (1) The transition from face-to-face to online environments, (2) The progression from teacher-led pedagogies at second-level to self-directed learning at third-level, (3) The transition from digital vernaculars to formal learning settings, (4) The transition from virtual learning environment to personal learning and, finally, (5) The progression from independent to computer supported collaborative language learning. Thus, the project leaders highlighted the importance of developing:

New language pedagogies appropriate for deployment in technology rich learning environments and Computer Supported Collaborative (Language) Learning environments, which focus on new strategies and competencies for consolidating and practising written and spoken skills online.<sup>679</sup>

The resultant product of this inquiry was the establishment of the first national framework for digital literacies for language learning and teaching in the Irish third-level context – *DigiLanguages: Language Learning in a Digital World*. The DigiLanguages framework offers support to language students and also to teachers looking to further their continuing professional development. The DigiLanguages digital literacy platform for language learning offers various activities such as in-depth self-assessment tasks using the DIALANG online diagnostic system, mind-map programmes, a Massive Open Online Courses directory, and resources for listening and viewing, which are available to engage with in a number of languages including English, French, German, Irish, Italian, and Spanish. Presently, the DigiLanguages project is supplemented by other projects being carried out on a national and international level including the All Aboard Project,<sup>680</sup> Digital literacy for the teaching and

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<sup>677</sup> Partners of this project include Dublin City University, Dublin Institute of Technology, Limerick Institute of Technology, Mary Immaculate College, and The National University of Ireland, Galway.

<sup>678</sup> Fiona Farr and Liam Murray, “Digital Literacies for Language Learning and Teaching: Developing a national framework,” in *Proceedings of the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference on Higher Education Advances (HEAd’16), Valencia, 21-23 June, 2016* (Valencia: HEAd’16, 2016).

<sup>679</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>680</sup> All Aboard is a national project, funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, that ‘aims to empower learners, teachers, and anyone who uses technology to support their work, their study, or other aspects of living in a digital age’(All Aboard 2022).

learning of languages,<sup>681</sup> CALL-SLT,<sup>682</sup> and the Cambridge English Digital Framework for Teachers. The project sets out to ‘ensure that Ireland leads and participates fully in the growing international focus on the development of digital literacies specifically for language learners and teachers.’<sup>683</sup>

In today’s global society, the development and amelioration of digital literacy skills are key components of transformative learning experiences. In the Irish context, the future of technology in education looks very bright.<sup>684</sup> Today, the vast majority of Irish learners have access to technology. This resource has become a significant variable and contextual influence on learners’ development both within and outside the educational context. Thus, it is a mechanism that has the potential to influence developments in all layers of the learner’s ecosystem. This was a key consideration in the context of the present investigation due to the significant shift that occurred in the learner’s chrono-system during the study (i.e., the global pandemic). Learners’ attitudes towards ICT in the language learning process will, therefore, be explored further in chapters six and eight in order to gain further insight into the role technology plays in shaping perceptions of language in the micro-system.

#### **4.1.4 The Micro-System: Perceptions of Language**

Having traversed the various interrelated components that connect the learning context and language learner across the broader layers of the ecosystem, the present discussion concludes by exploring the inner-most layer of the learner’s environment called the micro-system. The micro-system contemplates the language learner’s relationship with their immediate environment. It is concerned with the language learner on a ‘functional, physical, cognitive, and affective’ level and is informed by the dynamic interplay between the internal and external factors embedded in their ecosystem, such as family, peers, and social dynamics.<sup>685</sup>

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<sup>681</sup> This project is funded by the European Centre for Modern Languages, an institution of the Council of Europe located in Graz, Austria.

<sup>682</sup> CALL-SLT is a speech-enabled Computer-Assisted Language Learning application.

<sup>683</sup> Farr and Murray, “Digital Literacies for Language Learning and Teaching: Developing a national framework.”

<sup>684</sup> While it is beyond the scope of the present study to analyse all of the activities and contributions of various projects and campaigns for the promotion of digital literacy in Ireland, it is important to highlight the contributions and initiatives of some key facilitators in this regard including *The National Digital Skills Framework*, *The 10-year Adult Literacy, Numeracy and Digital Literacy Strategy for Ireland (2020-2030)*, *The National Strategy to Improve Literacy and Numeracy among Children and Young people 2011-2020*, DigitalEd.ie - a Digital Teaching and Learning Education platform, *The Teaching and Learning in Irish Higher Education: A Roadmap for Enhancement in a Digital World (2015-2017)*, and *The European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens*.

<sup>685</sup> Nazari et al., “Ecological Understanding of Concept Blockage,” 177.

The micro-system focuses on how an individual develops relative to the organisms and objects they come in contact within their immediate surroundings, which influence their beliefs, values, perceptions, and personal interests.

Jung (2020) affirms that ‘the use of a language does not refer just to a general ability to speak it, but it involves a combination of ability, opportunity, and positive attitude.’<sup>686</sup> As mentioned earlier, the Irish language, for the majority of students, marks their first formal experience with language learning and, thus, it is important to consider the role this plays in students’ enthusiasm for and enjoyment of subsequent language learning experiences. All students in primary and post-primary level are required to learn and study both English and Irish; however, figures reveal that on average ‘an Irish teenager spends 2.6% [167 hours per year] of their time engaging with Irish, and well over 90% [6,038 hours per year] of their time operating through English.’<sup>687</sup> Jung (2020) draws our attention to the fact that students’ ‘perceived lack of progress, combined with the compulsory nature of Irish language education [...] has – at times – had the detrimental effect of increasing not only a disinterest in the subject at hand, but also other languages’, which could potentially explain the decrease in foreign language uptake at post-primary and tertiary level.<sup>688</sup>

Findings from a longitudinal study (2006-2017) carried out by *Growing Up in Ireland* (GUI) support that some children at primary level have demonstrated negative attitudes towards the Irish language.<sup>689</sup> These attitudes aligned with findings from the *Post-Primary Longitudinal Study*, also included in the GUI report, which revealed that only 36% of first-year students considered Irish to be interesting in comparison to English (54%), Mathematics (49%), and another language (57%). Irish (49%) was also regarded as more difficult by first-year students relative to English (12%), Mathematics (35%), and another language (47%). Further, Irish (50%) was considered less useful than other curricular subjects such as English (81%), Mathematics (91%), and another language (74%). Data from the *Irish Language Survey* (2013) further corroborates these findings. Irish language attitudes amongst primary and post-primary

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<sup>686</sup> Jung, *The impact and experience of foreign languages in the context of Erasmus+...*

<sup>687</sup> Caoimhín De Barra, “Opinion: ‘You often hear that the Irish language is badly taught in our schools but that is not true.’” *TheJournal.ie*, March 1, 2019, accessed April 27, 2021, <https://www.thejournal.ie/readme/opinion-it-is-a-truth-universally-acknowledged-in-ireland-that-the-irish-language-is-taught-badly-in-our-schools-believe-it-or-not-this-isnt-true-4514137-Mar2019/>

<sup>688</sup> Jung, *The impact and experience of foreign languages in the context of Erasmus+...*

<sup>689</sup> Department of Children and Youth Affairs, *Growing up in Ireland (GUI): National Longitudinal Study of Children* (2006-2017) (Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) and Trinity College).

students in the Republic of Ireland were largely negative.<sup>690</sup> Three of the principal factors that influenced students' language perceptions were the types of schools available in the education system, outlooks and language use at home, and opportunity to speak the language beyond the limits of the educational context. In this context, Jung (2020) emphasises that 'the precarious situation of Ireland's national language highlights that appropriate curricula and teaching conditions alone do not guarantee good results.'<sup>691</sup> These negative attitudes towards the Irish language also appear to have had a significant impact on and reflect broader societal views on the value attributed to learning foreign languages in the Irish context.

As part of a Eurobarometer survey carried out, in 2012, on *Europeans and their Languages*, the 26 Member States were asked whether 'everyone in the EU should be able to speak more than one language in addition to their mother tongue?'<sup>692</sup> It is noteworthy to mention that the overwhelming majority of EU states agreed with this statement, while only 56% of Irish EU citizens agreed with it.<sup>693</sup> These findings are comparable to those from a Eurobarometer survey carried out, in 2010, on *Employers' Perceptions of Graduate Employability*, whereby employers were asked to report on the skills and capabilities they believed higher education graduates should have within the next five to ten years.<sup>694</sup> For the overwhelming majority, 'foreign language capabilities were ranked as a higher requirement.'<sup>695</sup> Yet, Ireland was one of the countries that ranked foreign language skills as a rather unimportant future skill for graduates, with only 9% of employers considering it as important.<sup>696</sup>

Views expressed in the *Irish National Employer Survey* (2015) revealed a lack of contentment with language graduates in the Irish context.<sup>697</sup> Between 28% to 46% of language graduate employers were dissatisfied with Irish graduates' language skills, while Eurobarometer (2010) figures show that on average 67% of European enterprises were satisfied with other EU state graduates' language skills.<sup>698</sup> Contrary to other European countries, only

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<sup>690</sup> Merike Darmody and Tania Daly, *Attitudes towards the Irish Language on the Island of Ireland* (Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), 2015).

<sup>691</sup> Jung, *The impact and experience of foreign languages in the context of Erasmus+...*

<sup>692</sup> European Commission, *Europeans and their Languages*. Eurobarometer Survey (Brussels: European Commission, 2012).

<sup>693</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>694</sup> European Commission and Gallup Organisation, *Employers' perception of graduate employability: Analytical report* (Hungary: Gallup Organisation, 2010).

<sup>695</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>696</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>697</sup> Department of Education and Skills, *National Employer Survey: Employers' Views on Irish Further and Higher Education and Training Outcomes* (Dublin: Department of Education and Skills, 2015).

<sup>698</sup> *Ibid.*

32% of industries in Ireland rated foreign language skills as an important aptitude.<sup>699</sup> Data from the *National Employer Survey* (2019) had comparable findings. It was stated that ‘the performance of both higher education and further education graduates on a range of workplace attributes is rated very positively, with the only perceived weaknesses relating to commercial awareness, entrepreneurial skills and language capability (25% - 36% dissatisfied).’<sup>700</sup> When employers were asked to record their satisfaction level on several of their employees’ workplace attributes, it was found that ‘in general, satisfaction levels for most of the workplace attributes cited are above 80%. Exceptions to this, however, apply to satisfaction with graduates’ commercial awareness (71%), entrepreneurial skills (66%) and foreign language capabilities (64%).’<sup>701</sup>

At present, evidence suggests that student attitudes towards language learning in the Irish context are quite indifferent or negative. However, due to a dearth of research, it is not currently possible to confirm whether a causal relationship exists between Irish language learning experiences and subsequent attitudes towards foreign language learning. That said, preliminary research in this regard, such as Jung’s (2020) report, indicates that there may be a strong correlation between these two variables. Yet, more research on this topic needs to be undertaken before the implications of this potential relationship are more clearly understood. As noted in Chapter Three, language learner beliefs and values play an important role in shaping their self-perceptions during the language learning process. In the context of this investigation, it appears that language learner beliefs and expectations about their language proficiency in both the Irish language and subsequent foreign languages could potentially engender negative affect and impair their performance. This assertion will be explored further in Chapter Six.

## 4.2 Conclusion

This chapter, informed by Bronfenbrenner’s nested ecosystem model, highlighted the context-bound nature of language learning by exploring the different environments that shape the development of the language learner in the Irish context. The Irish linguistic and educational

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<sup>699</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>700</sup> Fitzpatrick Associates, *Irish National Employer Survey: Final Report*. Higher Education Authority (Dublin: Fitzpatrick Associates, 2019).

<sup>701</sup> *Ibid.*



landscape was foregrounded throughout the discussion in order to paint a unique portrait of the learning context within which the present case study is located. The analysis took important steps towards bridging the gap between theoretical discussion and concrete description by exploring the various layers of the social environment that shape the dynamic interplay between the learning context and language learner.

The learner's macro-, exo-, meso-, and micro-systems were examined, while highlighting important developments that also occurred in the broader chrono-system, in order to interrogate Ireland's present relationship with foreign language learning. Several important factors were considered including the history of language in Ireland, language policy and planning in the Irish educational context, the language curriculum framework and pedagogical practices and, finally, language perceptions in the Irish context. While more scientific research is needed in order to fully understand Ireland's relationship with languages and language learning, the current evidence suggests that student attitudes towards language learning in the Irish context are quite indifferent or negative. This contextual knowledge has important implications for this investigation. The evidence base outlined in this chapter will be particularly valuable when interpreting findings from the present case study. However, before the methodological underpinnings of this study are presented, it is important firstly to interrogate performance-based language instruction – the second key independent variable of interest in this exploration.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

# **PERFORMANCE-BASED LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION**

## Chapter Five

### Performance-Based Language Instruction

#### 5.0 Introduction

Thus far, the reviewed literature has revealed that students' FLA primarily arises from their communication apprehension and fear of negative judgement. Students' real and anticipated fear of communication in the target language, together with their imagined fear of negative judgement from their teachers and peers, has the potential to result in negative self-focused cognitions. Students' negative self-focused cognitions, consequently, lower their self-confidence and lead them to believe that their proficiency in the target language is inadequate. Ultimately, this results in students anticipating failure as a likely outcome of the language learning process. Consequently, they begin to detach or distance themselves from the language and, by extension, the culture they are studying.

In Horwitz et al.'s (1986) seminal article, *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety*, they insist upon the need for and usefulness of interventional strategies to support students so they may 'learn to cope with the existing anxiety-provoking situation' or 'make the learning context less stressful'.<sup>702</sup> In this regard, Horwitz et al. highlight that changing the learning context is perhaps one of the most effective means to reduce the stress that may accompany language learning. Nonetheless, this is a challenging undertaking as the language learning process is usually grounded in a formal learning environment where evaluation is strongly associated with performance.

The second stage of this investigation seeks to take on this challenge by exploring the extent to which performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, may lower or alleviate students' FLA levels. As highlighted by Piccardo and North (2019), in their informative article *Broadening the Scope of Language Education: Mediation, Plurilingualism, and Collaborative Learning: the CEFR Companion Volume*, 'language education does not happen in a vacuum, it is dependent on the particular context and the contextual societal vision of what characterizes language and language learning/teaching.'<sup>703</sup> In this regard, it is

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<sup>702</sup> Horwitz et al., "Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety," 131.

<sup>703</sup> Enrica Piccardo, Brian North, and Tom Goodier, "Broadening the Scope of Language Education: Mediation, Plurilingualism, and Collaborative Learning: the CEFR Companion Volume," *Journal of e-Learning and Knowledge Society* 15, no. 1 (2019): 19.

important to note that ‘different phases of pedagogic intervention contribute in an iterative, spiral pattern to awareness raising, enhancement of proficiency, and eventually autonomy.’<sup>704</sup> Theatre, as a performance praxis, has set the stage for a novel teaching and learning culture in the field of language education. It emphasises physical presence and is anchored in the performative experience. It serves as both a ‘form of and forum for knowledge production’.<sup>705</sup> Performative competence, which constitutes ‘both communicative and intercultural competences and is an extension of symbolic competence’, is a gateway to effectuate a pedagogical shift away from the dominant ‘cognitive, instrumental orientation in education’ towards a more holistic multisensorial, multimodal, and dialogic means of learning.<sup>706</sup>

This chapter contextualises the manner in which theatre may serve as a vehicle through which language anxiety may be alleviated by creating a communicative, dialogic, and transformative space in the language classroom. It begins by providing the reader with a brief historical overview of the use of drama/theatre in education.<sup>707</sup> The British approach to drama/theatre has had the most significant influence on the field of education both in Europe and further afield. The work of several notable British education theorists, such as Brian Way, Gavin Bolton, and Dorothy Heathcote, is drawn upon to exemplify how drama/theatre may be employed in the pedagogical process. This is an important first step in the present discussion for two key reasons. Firstly, the British tradition has provided both theoretical and practical contributions to pedagogical practice in the Irish context and, secondly, it has influenced the integration of performance practices in language education on an international scale.

The second section then briefly outlines the current position of the arts in the Irish educational context, focusing on the place of drama in the education system. Subsequently, it explores the possible innovative role of the arts in the third-level context, by drawing attention to the unique cross-disciplinary dialogue that is emerging between the performing arts and language education. The third and final section concludes by delineating the manner in which theatre may be employed in a university context in order to counteract the negative consequences of FLA, which emerged from the present investigation. This exploration is

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<sup>704</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>705</sup> Kathleen Gallagher, “Theatre Pedagogy and Performed Research: Respectful Forgeries and Faithful Betrayals,” *TRiC/RTaC* 28, no. 2 (2007): 114.

<sup>706</sup> Annamaria Bellezza, “Developing Performative Competence and Teacher Artistry: A Pedagogical Imperative in the Multicultural Classroom,” *L2 Journal* 20, no. 20 (2020): 23.

<sup>707</sup> Throughout section 7.1, the terms drama and theatre are presented as interchangeable. Debates surrounding definitions of these key terms and, more specifically, the manner in which they are understood and applied in the present case study will be discussed in greater detail later in the section.

organised around three key themes that have been accentuated in the literature on FLA intervention: (1) Learning Environment, (2) Pedagogical Practices and Skill Development, and (3) Self-Perceptions.

### **5.1 Forgotten Figures and Familiar Faces: A Brief History of the British Tradition of Drama/Theatre in the Field of Education**

The use of drama/theatre in the educational context has been a long-standing and widely accepted tradition in Britain. Several notable British education theorists have informed the manner in which drama/theatre may be employed in the pedagogical process, from early but often overlooked pioneers of drama/theatre in education such as Harriet Finlay-Johnson and Henry Caldwell Cook, to household names including Peter Slade, Brian Way, Gavin Bolton, and Dorothy Heathcote (See Figure 7.1). Aside from the fact that Britain is Ireland's closest neighbour, the British tradition is foregrounded because of the significant impact it has made upon performance-based theory building and pedagogical practices in educational research. The history of drama/theatre in the field of education is extensive and characterised by its own distinctive theoretical orientations, debates, and tensions. Given the scope of this investigation, it does not fall within the remit of this chapter to detail the work of each education theorist. Instead, the subsequent analysis seeks to highlight important linchpins of drama/theatre education and identify key trends, concepts, and methods that have characterised its evolution.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the progressive education movement gathered momentum in the United States and further afield. The movement was but one of a series of reform movements that took place within the broader social and political reform movement known as progressivism.<sup>708</sup> Principally led by American philosopher, psychologist, and educational reformer John Dewey, the progressive education movement called for pedagogical reform in response to the formal and didactic nature of traditional teaching practices of the period.<sup>709</sup> Dewey, adopting a pragmatic stance, regarded education as a socially and experientially shaped process. Progressive education was, therefore, built upon a philosophical foundation that insisted on the education of the whole child. Within this context, educators in Britain began to recognise that performance-centered activities could inspire learning and also

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<sup>708</sup> Jane Roland Martin, *School Was Our Life: Remembering Progressive Education* (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2018).

<sup>709</sup> *Ibid.*

be employed across a range of different subject areas, as evidenced by the rise in number of drama and theatre projects in British schools at that time. Although somewhat forgotten in the tide of history, this early pioneering work of British educationalist and schoolteacher Harriet Finlay-Johnson and British educator Henry Caldwell Cook laid the foundation for many important developments in the realm of drama/theatre in education in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Finlay-Johnson, perhaps best known for her book *The Dramatic Method of Teaching* (1911), was among the first educators to practice drama in the educational setting and theorise based on her findings.<sup>710</sup> She applied drama throughout the curriculum in order to foster and promote students' knowledge and understanding of science, literature, and the arts. The cornerstone of Finlay-Johnson's perception of drama in the classroom was the construction of a virtual world.<sup>711</sup> She often facilitated learning through drama outside of the classroom walls (e.g., through the use of games/play) in order to encourage imaginative experimentation.<sup>712</sup> Against this backdrop, the 'audience' was peripheral to improvising and performing text. Finlay-Johnson's pioneering work was a significant steppingstone for ongoing conversation about the use of drama in education as her research revealed that it was 'possible to create a fictional but authentic sense of the real' in and through dramatic processes.<sup>713</sup> This approach allowed students to engage in creative experimentation and exploration, which was not possible in the bounds of the traditional classroom setting. In this context, students gained hands-on experience as opposed to 'second-hand accounts of experience and knowing'.<sup>714</sup>

Caldwell Cook, a contemporary of Finlay-Johnson, demonstrated a similar penchant for the use of drama in educational settings. Praised for his work *The Play Way: An Essay in Educational Method* (1917), Caldwell Cook argued that children learn best by doing: 'It would not be wise to send a child innocent into the big world [...] But, it is possible to hold rehearsals...And that is play.'<sup>715</sup> He focused upon stage performance of texts in the English language. Fusing the notion of 'play' with 'the player on stage', Caldwell Cook drew attention to the importance of several important concepts of dramatisation that continue to inform the

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<sup>710</sup> For further information, see Harriet Finlay-Johnson's *The Dramatic Method of Teaching* (London: James Nisbet and Co., 1911).

<sup>711</sup> Michael Anderson, *Masterclass in Drama Education: Transforming Teaching and Learning* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2012).

<sup>712</sup> Albeit in a different context, the present study was conducted outside the traditional classroom environment and, as a result, there was no audience present during the final performance. The implications of this will be explored in Chapter Eight.

<sup>713</sup> Susan Davis, *Learning That Matters: Revitalising Heathcote's Rolling Role for the Digital Age* (Netherlands: Sense Publishers, 2016), 32.

<sup>714</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>715</sup> Henry Caldwell Cook, *The Play Way: An Essay in Educational Method* (London: Heinemann, 1917), 1.

field of education today, including facilitation, collaboration, free play, and structured play building. While the significance and value of Cook's work is not disputed by scholars, some debate has arisen regarding the extent to which his approach falls under the category of drama in education. Contrary to Finlay-Johnson, Caldwell Cook's methods did not exclusively rely on improvisation to shape the performative experience. Instead, he focused upon scripted work that was performed in front of an audience. This approach accentuated the notion of 'a final product'. Thus, it has been argued that Caldwell Cook's 'play way' is more closely aligned with theatre practices rather than drama. Although this debate on definition began over a century ago, it remains controversial and continues to occupy an important place in discussions on performance praxes. While it lies beyond the scope of the present study to resolve such definitional debate, a brief aside is necessary in order to shed light on the thought processes underlying the terminological choices made for the present case study.

In his comprehensive article *Poltergeist, problem or possibility? Curriculum drama in the Republic of Ireland*, Michael Finneran (2016) clearly highlights the 'comfortable binaries' that have come to exist between drama and theatre:

For many, drama represents the practice and theatre the building. For others, drama is the amateur practice of the art, and theatre the professional execution. For more, drama refers to the literary dramatic text, and theatre the lived representation of those words.<sup>716</sup>

Etymologically speaking, this distinction is also evident. The root of the term *drama* finds its origins in the Greek word, *dran*, which means to do or to accomplish, while *theatre*, also derived from a Greek word, *theatron*, stems from the verb *theasthai* meaning to behold.<sup>717</sup> This conceptualisation of drama/theatre is consistent with an early dichotomous view of performance praxes supported by educationalists and practitioners such as Brian Way (1967), who stated that 'drama is largely concerned with experience by the participants, irrespective of any function of communication to an audience', while 'theatre is largely concerned with communication between actors and audience.'<sup>718</sup> From this perspective, theatre is traditionally associated with the notion of production, customarily the production of a play – a physical entity, while drama focuses more upon the notion of process, which may be analogised as a

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<sup>716</sup> Michael Finneran, "Poltergeist, problem or possibility? Curriculum drama in the Republic of Ireland," *Research in Drama Education: The Journal of Applied Theatre and Performance* 21, no. 1 (2016): 110.

<sup>717</sup> Lesley Ferris, *The Art of the Now: Introduction to Theatre and Performance* (Ohio: Ohio State University, 2017).

<sup>718</sup> Brian Way, *Development Through Drama* (Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University, 1968), 2.

path of self-discovery – an abstract entity. This understanding essentially forms the basis for early definitions of and distinctions between *Drama in Education* (DiE) and *Theatre in Education* (TiE):

The crux of *drama-in-education* is the creation of opportunities for the learners to exercise their creativity within given scenarios in the classroom situation [while] the term *theatre-in-education* unlike creative drama implies the development of a product, a script that is rehearsed and performed to an audience. The essential ingredients are actors, script and audience. The mission of theatre-in-education is to effect change or to illuminate subject matter through the medium of the theatre.<sup>719</sup>

Notwithstanding this dichotomous view, it is important to acknowledge that the significance and, indeed, the accepted definition of terminology in the educational literature on drama and theatre continues to evolve and transform over time as theoretical standpoints shift, properties are refined, and fine distinctions are made. In more recent years, the terms theatre and drama have come to be used interchangeably in some educational contexts and distinctions have become blurred as both drama and theatre are associated with performance and the performing arts. Elliot, Fleming, and Frimberger (2019) clarify that performance concepts, such as drama and theatre, have been re-envisioned based upon the context in which they are used.<sup>720</sup> For example, Shier (2002), whose research interrogates the use of performance in language education, calls attention to the holistic nature of theatre, maintaining that it embraces a ‘built-in commitment to both processes and product’.<sup>721</sup> Shier’s understanding of theatre indicates that the ‘dramatic component’ of process is already an existing and integral component of a theatre praxis, thus, highlighting the symbiotic relationship between the two praxes.

In the context of the present investigation, the performance praxis employed as part of the French Production and Performance Module was unique given that it fell between the traditional boundaries of drama and theatre. In a manner consistent with theatre, it afforded students the opportunity to read, analyse, and perform a play. However, the students were non-professional actors and staged the play themselves under the guidance of their instructor. Since

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<sup>719</sup> Logamurthie Athimoolam, “Drama-in-education and Its Effectiveness in English Second/Foreign Language Classes,” in *Proceedings of The First International Language Learning Conference (ILLC), 16-18 December, 2004* (Malaysia: ILLC, 2004).

<sup>720</sup> Meretta Elliott, Mike Fleming, and Katja Frimberger, “Performative arts and pedagogy: A British perspective,” *Scenario* 13, no. 2 (2019).

<sup>721</sup> Janet Hegman Shier, “The arts and the foreign/second-language curriculum: An interdisciplinary approach to actively engage students in their own learning,” in *Body and language: Intercultural learning through drama*, ed. Gerd Bräuer (Connecticut: Ablex, 2002), 184.



the students performed on a virtual stage, there was no official public audience present. These conditions are comparable to process drama, where the external audience is substituted for an internal audience. The participants perform the dual role of both ‘theatrical ensemble’ and ‘audience’. They are both creators and recipients of the theatrical performance. In this context, *Bowell and Heap (2017)* highlight that process drama is:

Recognised by practitioners as a form of theatre applied within a range of learning contexts, in which the members of a learning community, in collaboration with the teacher or facilitator, create dramas for exploration, expression and learning. As such, process drama can be found in classrooms and other learning situations across the world, largely because it has been found to be a potent means by which both perception and expression may be heightened, as well as providing a framework for the exploration of ideas and feelings.<sup>722</sup>

In this context, it is also important to acknowledge that online interaction has been identified as a new and significant ‘dimension in the linguistic competence and repertoire of a learner’ as emphasised in the Companion Volume to the CEFR.<sup>723</sup> As noted by *Rushkoff (2006)*, we are in the generation of the ‘screenagers’, thus, for 21st century learners the use of technology and online interaction and communication is a natural component of the learning process.<sup>724</sup> Indeed, it has been advanced in linguistic research (e.g., *Baron 2000*) that ‘the language of the new media as a variety of pidgin [...] may evolve into an electronic creole in the future.’<sup>725</sup>

Further, due to limitations of bodily presence, the instructor accentuated the role and importance of voice in the pedagogical process, which is consistent with speech and drama practices. The performance praxis permitted students to generate and participate in a performing experience that emphasised self-discovery not only through content analysis but also through voice (e.g., tone, register, pitch, pace). Thus, students were able to partake in different manifestations of performance over the course of the module. The terminology applied in the present investigation seeks to capture and acknowledge the holism of the process- and product-orientated performance praxis employed. In keeping with the course description provided by the module designer and coordinator (See Appendix I) and, in the interest of

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<sup>722</sup> Pamela *Bowell* and Brian S. *Heap*, *Putting Process Drama into Action: The Dynamics of Practice* (London: Routledge, 2017), 39.

<sup>723</sup> *Letizia Cinganotto*, “Online Interaction in Teaching and Learning a Foreign Language: An Italian Pilot Project on the Companion Volume to the CEFR,” *Journal of e-Learning and Knowledge Society* 15, no. 1 (2019): 136.

<sup>724</sup> *Douglas Rushkoff*, *Screenagers: Lessons in Chaos from Digital Kids* (New York: Hampton Press 2006).

<sup>725</sup> *Cinganotto*, “Online Interaction in Teaching and Learning a Foreign Language ...,” 137.

clarity, a contemporary conceptualisation of the term theatre is used exclusively to encompass the comprehensive performative experience that characterised this case study investigation. Theatre is employed as an all-embracing term that refers to ‘a group-effort that is both process- and product-oriented [...] in which every single participant is invited to negotiate and overcome personal, linguistic, social, cultural, and psychological differences and hurdles.’<sup>726</sup>

Having clarified the manner in which important terminology has been applied in the present investigation, let us now return to the discussion on the evolution of drama/theatre practices in the field of education. From the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century onwards, there was significant curriculum development and reform in Britain. At the core of this reform was drama, which reflected the child-centered pedagogical shift of the period. In 1948, Peter Slade, a trailblazer of educational drama, dramatherapy, and theatre for children, remarked in a radio interview that ‘these days it seems that drama is almost in the air.’<sup>727</sup> Slade’s significant contribution to drama education cannot be understated. Building upon the nascent work of Cook, Slade inspired and informed a new generation of drama educators.<sup>728</sup> Celebrated for his groundbreaking book *Child Drama* (1954), Slade did not regard drama as an academic subject or a method. On the contrary, he viewed it as ‘the art of living’ – as a channel through which children may engage in self-exploration and self-expression to reach their full potential.<sup>729</sup> *Sladian technique* laid emphasis on the notion of ‘play’ in the dramatic process. The concepts of personal play and projected play were central to Slade’s theory of ‘dramatic growth’.<sup>730</sup> Upholding the dichotomy between drama and theatre, he believed that theatre was a natural transition from child drama for secondary school students.<sup>731</sup> However, he was opposed to the use of theatre with younger learners:

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<sup>726</sup> Bettina Matthias, “Acting is the Recovery of a Lost Physical Reading. Or: Why we should consider Theatre-Based Literature Courses,” in *Dramatic Interactions: Teaching Languages, Literatures, and Cultures through Theater – Theoretical Approaches and Classroom Practices*, eds. Colleen Ryan and Nicoletta Marini-Maio (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011), 65.

<sup>727</sup> Gavin Bolton, *Acting in Classroom Drama: A Critical Analysis* (Maine: Calendar Islands Publishers, 1998), 120.

<sup>728</sup> Peter Slade, *Child Drama* (London: University of London Press, 1954).

<sup>729</sup> Anderson, *Masterclass in Drama Education*...

<sup>730</sup> See Anthony Jackson, “Archives of an Educational Drama Pioneer: A Survey of the Peter Slade Collection in the John Rylands University Library of Manchester,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library of Manchester* 72, (1990): 155-156. ‘*Personal play* is physically active, involving the whole body and occurring when children’s energies lead them to express themselves openly, outwardly and physically, throwing themselves bodily into the activity, becoming the thing or character they wish to represent [...] *Projected play* on the other hand is more indirect, the body is generally still, the imaginative energies being transferred from the physical self into things, occurring when individuals express themselves through other objects outside themselves.’

<sup>731</sup> Slade, *Child Drama*.

They [younger learners] need space, and don't need to be embroiled in the complicated technique of an artificial theatre form. It makes them conscious of the audience, spoils their sincerity and teaches them to show off.<sup>732</sup>

Slade's approach drew attention to the importance of spontaneity and creativity of expression. From Slade's perspective, the content of expression was regarded as secondary to the freedom that students enjoyed in expressing it. Yet, this philosophy of drama became a bone of contention among educators because of its informal nature. They felt that there was an absence of specific objectives, instruction, and a gauge to measure students' progress. However, in the 1960s, Brian Way, a contemporary of Slade, developed an approach to drama in education that 'gave teachers greater security' in educational practice.<sup>733</sup>

Way's philosophy of drama in education is fittingly captured in the opening lines of his classic work, *Development through drama* (1967), in which he stated:

The answer to many simple questions might take one of two forms – either that of information or else that of direct experience; the former answer belongs to the category of academic education, the latter to drama.<sup>734</sup>

Way affirmed that drama has a vital role to play in education and insisted that it should serve as a 'method of, or an aid to teaching' which promotes learners' 'genuine emotional training' in the pedagogical process, thus, accentuating the social and psychological practicalities of drama in the development of children's life skills.<sup>735</sup> Furthermore, in the context of the present study, Fonio and Genicot (2011) emphasise that artistic practice has the potential to promote valuable criteria for teachers, learners, and examiners to address the aims and goals of the CEFR, thus, emphasising a synergy between the two.<sup>736</sup> Thus, it is argued that the CEFR could 'represent a powerful ally for the legitimisation of drama practice amongst other traditional methods in foreign language teaching.'<sup>737</sup>

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<sup>732</sup> *Ibid.*, 351.

<sup>733</sup> Gavin Bolton, "Changes in Thinking about Drama in Education," *Theory into Practice* 24, no. 3 (1985): 154.

<sup>734</sup> Way, *Development Through Drama*, 1.

<sup>735</sup> Rodger Wooster, *Contemporary Theatre in Education* (Bristol: Intellect Books, 2007), 10.

<sup>736</sup> Filippo Fonio and Geneviève Genicot, "The compatibility of drama language teaching and CEFR objectives – observations on a rationale for an artistic approach to foreign language teaching at an academic level," *Scenario* 5, no. 2 (2011).

<sup>737</sup> *Ibid.*, 75.

Way put forward more formal approaches to dramatic education in order to foster the ‘individuality of the individual’ in the dramatic process.<sup>738</sup> Such exercises included relaxation, warm-up, pair work, self-control, imagination, consciousness of self, and speaking. However, as drama in education transitioned to the 1970s, Way’s perception of drama was challenged, perhaps most notably by drama educationalist Gavin Bolton.

Bolton, who has been a central figure in the realm of drama in education for over 50 years, argued that Way’s conceptualisation of drama, which called attention to the ‘individuality of the individual’, was indeed a fallacy because ‘of all the arts, drama is a collective experiencing, celebrating, or commenting, not on how we are different from each other, but on what we share, on what ways we are alike’.<sup>739</sup> Thus, Bolton and other drama educators, such as his contemporary and close friend Dorothy Heathcote, placed significant influence on whole-class learning scenarios as opposed to individual or pair work in the dramatic process.

In his well-known book, *Towards a Theory of Drama in Education* (1979), Bolton sheds light upon the manner in which drama was being enacted in schools and colleges in the 1970s. Three principal approaches were noted: (1) Individual exercises, (2) Dramatic playing, and (3) Theatre.<sup>740</sup> However, when Bolton started to work collaboratively with Heathcote, he added another approach to this list – drama for understanding. Heathcote along with Bolton drew attention to the potentiality of theatre in developing the imaginative, cognitive, affective, social, and sensory-motor aspects of learning. These developments transcended approaches that were previously used to employ drama in an educational context. Bolton, inspired by Heathcote’s practice and methodology, gave it ‘intellectual form’.<sup>741</sup> Their partnership, throughout this endeavour, has aptly been defined as the practitioner and the theoretician: ‘While Heathcote reshapes the terrain, Bolton soars over it.’<sup>742</sup>

Heathcote’s influence on drama and theatre in education can only be described as extraordinary. The *Heathconian approach* to drama in education accentuated the importance of learning by doing. Heathcote developed two important concepts that continue to inform contemporary practice: (1) Teacher in role (TiR), which is associated with developing a power balance between teacher and student and (2) Mantle of the expert (MoE), whereby students

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<sup>738</sup> Wooster, *Contemporary Theatre in Education*, 10.

<sup>739</sup> Bolton, “Changes in Thinking about Drama in Education,” 154.

<sup>740</sup> Gavin Bolton, *Towards a Theory of Drama in Education* (London: Longman, 1979).

<sup>741</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>742</sup> Anderson, *Masterclass in Drama Education...*, 38.

assume the role of an expert in a fictional world. In order to ‘live through drama’, she drew on both the theatrical and the social, which earlier pioneers of drama in education, such as Slade and Way, had opposed.<sup>743</sup> Heathcote asserted that syllabi, at that time, were devised in a manner such that prominence was given to ‘thinking’ instead of ‘affective thinking’. She accentuated, however, that drama embraces both ‘affective thinking and cognitive thinking – it is not just about behaviour’.<sup>744</sup> Heathcote’s methodological approach to drama constructs ‘worlds that are social, although virtual, that depend on the constructs of reality for their form’.<sup>745</sup> In this context, she laid emphasis on social interaction, that is to say, the ‘we’ or collective experience.

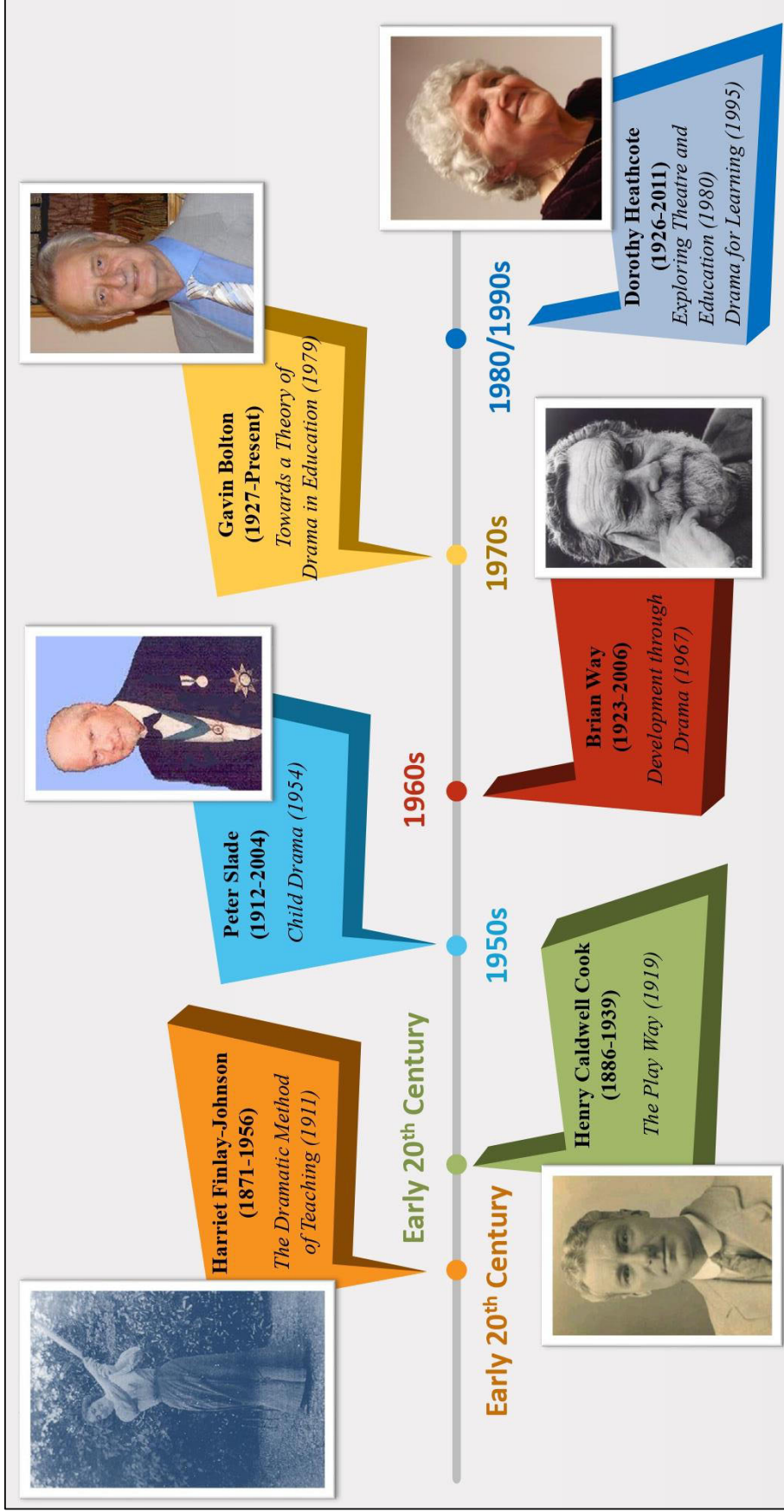
The influence of these trailblazing figures on drama and theatre in education can still be felt today. In the Irish context, this has been particularly evident in the establishment of drama as a component of the Arts Education curriculum as part of the revised national primary school curriculum, in 1999. The work of Slade, Bolton, and Heathcote has most notably contributed to and been cited in the guidelines informing the Drama curriculum. Although not accredited directly, several of the earlier approaches, methods, and concepts introduced and developed by lesser-known scholars are also featured and integrated into the curriculum guidelines, including make-believe play, collaboration, self-exploration, pair work, context-building, cognitive and affective development, improvisation, and structured play. In order to shed further light on the role of the arts in the Irish educational context, the next section moves on to briefly outline and discuss the current position of the arts in the education system, drawing attention to the place of drama in the curriculum. Subsequently, it examines the potential innovative role of the arts in the third-level context by highlighting the unique cross-disciplinary dialogue that is emerging between performative pedagogy - a pedagogical reorientation that approaches pedagogy from a performative point of view and, in doing so, fostering a learning culture centered on learner engagement, ownership, and active participation - and language education.

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<sup>743</sup> Dorothy Heathcote, *Dorothy Heathcote on Education and Drama: Essential writings*, ed. Cecily O’Neill (London: Routledge, 2015), 31.

<sup>744</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>745</sup> Anderson, *Masterclass in Drama Education...*, 34.



**Figure 5.1. Forgotten Figures and Familiar Faces in the Development of Drama/Theatre in Education.** This figure illustrates some the major pioneers of drama/theatre practices in education. From lesser-known supporters to household names, this figure chronologically tracks the key developments each of them made to this innovative practice in teaching as we know it today.

## 5.2 Arts in the Irish Educational Context

Since the publication of the revised primary school curriculum in 1999 several notable developments have taken place which have signalled a growing alliance between the Irish education system and the arts. For example, in 2008, the Special Committee on Arts and Education published a report entitled *Points of Alignment*, which foregrounded the importance of the provision of arts in Ireland. At the time of the report, the Committee affirmed that the future prospects for arts education was at a ‘crossroads position’. The report emphasised the need for ‘a coherent vision or cohesive national plan’ going forward in order to harness the full potential of the arts in the educational sphere.<sup>746</sup> Subsequent to this report, the Department of Education and Skills established the *Arts in Education Charter* (2012) to address the role of arts at primary and secondary level in Ireland. The *Charter* emphasised that the arts are ‘our first encounter with that rich world of creativity’ and sought to ensure that innovation and ingenuity remained at the core of Irish society for years to come by establishing the arts as a significant component of the Irish education system.<sup>747</sup> In this context, it is worthy to note that the third-level context is absent from the *Charter*, further highlighting the importance and value of the present investigation. The unique contribution of the arts to education was also underscored by the Council of National Cultural Institutions as part of preparations for Ireland’s *National Development Plan* (2007-2013): ‘Art, broadly defined, is a fundamental human enterprise: the making of meaning, individual and collective, through representation. In making art we make ourselves. In understanding art, we understand ourselves.’<sup>748</sup> The new Framework for Junior Cycle, published in 2012 and, more recently, the establishment of the *Creative Ireland Programme/Clár Éire Ildánach* (2017-2022), in 2016, have also set out to boost widespread engagement with the arts in the education system.

Notwithstanding the significant progress that has been made in order to further the provision of arts in the Irish education system, it is important to note that ‘traditionally, Irish education has had a standoff relationship with the arts. The two were never completely comfortable, intellectually or organisationally.’<sup>749</sup> Although there has been increased curiosity and interest surrounding the arts in the Irish education system, its status in the broader

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<sup>746</sup> The Arts Council, *Points of Alignment* (Dublin: The Arts Council, 2008), 45.

<sup>747</sup> *Ibid.*, 4. At the outset, a distinction is made between arts education and arts-in-education, the latter referring to ‘interventions from the realm of the arts into the education’ and the former referring to ‘mainstream teaching and learning of the arts as part of general education.’

<sup>748</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>749</sup> Martin Drury, talk delivered as part of ‘Tenderfoot Moving Forward: Bridging the gap between arts and education,’ (Talk, The Civic Theatre: Dublin, Ireland, September 28, 2019).

curriculum is inferior to STEM subjects (i.e., science, technology, engineering and mathematics). In this regard, drama notably ‘stands educationally and artistically apart’ in the curriculum.<sup>750</sup> It is given no recognition in the Senior Cycle curriculum.<sup>751</sup> This contrasts with its sister art disciplines music and visual art, both of which are established Senior Cycle examination subjects.

As noted in Chapter Four, every country makes an informed choice about curriculum design and instruction practices. These decisions indicate national priorities by highlighting the precedence given to different subject areas. In the Irish context, Finneran (2016) underscores that ‘only those things of greatest worth are worthy of representation in such a high-value school system.’<sup>752</sup> The Leaving Certificate Examination, in particular, has engendered somewhat of a competition culture among students. In a recent report carried out by McGrath (2021), she found that ‘students placed considerable weight on the Leaving Certificate examinations and saw them as a one-off opportunity to achieve their academic goals.’<sup>753</sup> The Leaving Certificate points scale is an established system that stipulates students’ admission to third-level programmes. It has evolved into a system that is ‘high-stakes, cautious and epistemically resistant to change’.<sup>754</sup>

Drama holds a tenuous place in such a system that contemplates education in terms of dichotomies that contrast ‘the cognitive versus the affective and the academic versus the vocational’.<sup>755</sup> Finneran (2016), however, argues that a constructive curricular space for drama education may be established in the education system, but it is necessary firstly to move past an intra-aesthetic pedagogical position of drama education, which foregrounds developing artistic competency, and instead adopt a para-aesthetic approach that would challenge ‘fixed ideas of Irish aesthetic traditions and identity, and [open] a dialectical invitation between the curriculum and the aesthetic’.<sup>756</sup> While it lies beyond the scope of this chapter to provide a detailed account of all the work taking place in furtherance of this pedagogical shift, it is important to note that critical performative pedagogy, which combines performance praxes and

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<sup>750</sup> Finneran, “Poltergeist, problem or possibility? Curriculum drama in the Republic of Ireland,” 117.

<sup>751</sup> Aside from informal plays/dramatic literature in the English language curriculum.

<sup>752</sup> Finneran, “Poltergeist, problem or possibility? Curriculum drama in the Republic of Ireland,” 110.

<sup>753</sup> Patricia McGrath, “The Leaving Certificate Examination - A Target for Unfair Criticism?,” *The Irish Journal of Education* 44, no. 5 (2021): 7.

<sup>754</sup> Finneran, “Poltergeist, problem or possibility? Curriculum drama in the Republic of Ireland,” 113.

<sup>755</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>756</sup> *Ibid.*, 122.



theory with critical pedagogy, is emerging as a significant pedagogical reorientation that executes the dual purpose of social commentary and transformation.<sup>757</sup>

The present investigation contemplates the potential innovative role of the arts in the Irish third-level context. More specifically, it explores a pedagogical reorientation in language education, which integrates language teaching and learning with performative pedagogy. Performative pedagogy is grounded in the concepts of performativity and performative inquiry. From a pedagogical perspective, Schewe (2020) suggests that performativity should be employed as a hypernym to ‘describe forms of foreign language teaching that derive from the performative arts and their corresponding culturally-specific pedagogical practices’.<sup>758</sup> Unlike many traditional approaches to language education, curriculum frameworks centered upon performativity use performative inquiry in order to promote embodied learning, critical reflection, self-discovery, and an elevated sense of self-awareness. This, indeed, reflects the CEFR’s revised perspective of language education, which emphasises ‘the need to overcome a vision of language as stable, pure objects existing outside their speakers/users.’<sup>759</sup>

Performative inquiry is based on the premise that learning is ‘a lifelong process of change and growth’<sup>760</sup> or, as specified by Fels and Belliveau (2008), a process of ‘generative unfolding’.<sup>761</sup> Through performative inquiry, a hybrid, collective, and discursive third space in the educational context may be opened or unlocked. A third space or performative space is comparable to Vygotsky’s ZPD or, as specified by Pane (2007), a zone of transformation, in which ‘students begin to reconceive who they are and what they might be able to accomplish academically and beyond.’<sup>762</sup>

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<sup>757</sup> For further information on critical performative pedagogy see Catalina Villanueva and Carmel O’Sullivan, “Analyzing the degree of consensus in current academic literature on critical pedagogy,” *Scenario* 13, no. 2 (2019); Ross Louis, “Performing English, Performing Bodies: A Case for Critical Performative Language Pedagogy,” *Text and Performance Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (2005); Jennifer Ewald, “Comments on Graham Crookes and Al Lehner’s ‘Aspects of Process in an ESL Critical Pedagogy Teacher Education Course: A Plea for Published Reports on the Application of a Critical Pedagogy to ‘Language Study Proper,’” *TESOL Quarterly* 33 (1999); Alastair Pennycook, “Critical pedagogy and second language education,” *SYSTEM* 18, no. 3 (1990).

<sup>758</sup> Manfred Schewe, “Performative in a Nutshell,” *Scenario* 14, no. 1 (2020): 112.

<sup>759</sup> Piccardo, North, and Goodier, “Broadening the Scope of Language Education ...,” 17.

<sup>760</sup> Dorothy Lichtblau, “Theatre of Possibility: Performative Inquiry as Heuristic, Holistic, and Integrative Learning,” *Learning Landscapes* 2, no. 2 (2009): 271.

<sup>761</sup> Lynn Fels and George Belliveau, *Exploring curriculum: Performative inquiry, role drama, and learning* (Vancouver: Pacific Educational Press, 2008), 28.

<sup>762</sup> Debora Pane, “Third space theory: Reconceptualizing content literacy learning,” in *Proceedings of the Sixth Annual College of Education Research Conference: Urban and International Education Section*, eds. S. M. Nielsen and M. S. Plakhotnik (Miami: Florida International University, 2007).

A third space, in the language classroom, is a visionary space that facilitates action, collaboration, and reflection among participants. It is a space of presence and exploration where ‘intercultural interactions and possible negotiations and recognitions emerge’.<sup>763</sup> Lichtblau (2009) aptly characterises curriculum frameworks anchored in performative inquiry as ‘emergent, dynamic, co-constructed, complex, tied to context, shaped by subjectivities, intertextual, and relational’.<sup>764</sup> Once again, this is reflective of the CEFR’s focus on the agency given to the language learner while also considering ‘both the social and individual nature of language use, as well as the external and the internal context.’<sup>765</sup> Learning is contemplated as a journey – as an exploration at the end of which travellers are not guaranteed truths or discoveries – en route, however, they are ‘shaped by what they make of the experiences they encounter’.<sup>766</sup> These experiences are concretised through the use of performance and performance acts. Performance praxes, such as drama and theatre, permit learners to critically approach language and cultural narratives with a view to ‘see beyond accepted systems and received knowledge’.<sup>767</sup> Contrary to regarding language ‘as an “it” to be acquired or digested’, performative praxes embed language in historicised contexts, which opens up new ways of developing cultural and intercultural awareness, self-reflexivity, and transformation in both teaching and learning.<sup>768</sup>

In the Irish context, *Scenario*, a research cluster and working group, has played a significant role in this cross-disciplinary discussion, highlighting the manner in which a synergy between the performing arts and L2 learning has the potential to elevate the language learning process at third-level far beyond traditional approaches. In this regard, considerable attention has been given to drama and theatre as they incorporate both a ‘formative’ and ‘transformative’ element, that is to say, a marked influence on personal development and a behaviour and attitude changing dimension of teaching and learning.<sup>769</sup> As communicative language teaching methods took hold across Britain, Europe, and further afield, in the 1980s and 1990s, language teaching experts, influenced by the work of key figures at the fore of drama/theatre in education, became ‘increasingly committed to the building of bridges between

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<sup>763</sup> Lynn Fels and Lynne McGivern, “Intercultural Recognitions through Performative Inquiry,” in *Body and Language: Intercultural Learning through Drama*, ed. Gerd Bräuer (Connecticut: Ablex Publishing, 2002), 21.

<sup>764</sup> Lichtblau, “Theatre of Possibility...,” 271.

<sup>765</sup> Piccardo, North, and Goodier, “Broadening the Scope of Language Education ...,” 18.

<sup>766</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>767</sup> *Ibid.*, 257.

<sup>768</sup> Ross Louis, “Performing English, Performing Bodies: A Case for Critical Performative Language Pedagogy,” *Text and Performance Quarterly* 25, no. 4 (2005): 339.

<sup>769</sup> Schewe et al., “Recommendations for Promoting a Performative Teaching...,” 53.

their respective disciplines'.<sup>770</sup> Interestingly, this evolving inquiry into the use of drama and theatre in foreign language education has been more common in countries where the dominant language is not English. Hence, much of the literature on and discourse surrounding this topic has come from the perspective of non-native English speakers, as evidenced by the diverse range of contributors to *Scenario*.

In 2014, the first *Scenario* Forum international conference on *Performative Teaching, Learning, and Research* took place at University College Cork (i.e., UCC), Ireland.<sup>771</sup> Bringing together an international network of scholars, educators, artists, and practitioners, the primary aim of this conference was to provide a forum for debate, discussion, and reflection on progressive pedagogical thinking within the context of language education. As evidenced by conference proceedings, considerable critical attention was placed on the importance of developing 'innovative theoretical perspectives, research, and practices in order to revitalise and give a renewed impetus to language teaching programmes.'<sup>772</sup> Performative pedagogy was notably foregrounded as a new frontier in language education which holds great potential to enrich and innovate language teaching practices. It presents a novel take on the pedagogical process, wherein teaching and learning are 'performatively constituted and immersed in performative acts'.<sup>773</sup> Indeed, Schewe, who gave an insightful presentation at the conference on the topic of *Pedagogy in Transition*, asserts that performativity, when contemplated as a broader concept, signifies a 'complete rethinking [...] of education' in that it moves beyond the 'slavish way' of the textbook and, instead, constructs a transformative third space in the language classroom wherein physicality, emergence, improvisation, connection, presence, and the aesthetic experience are prioritised.<sup>774</sup> In this regard, it is emphasised in the CEFR that 'complex societies need people who are able to thrive creatively in a complex paradigm.'<sup>775</sup> It is, however, important to note that this is a growing tradition and is still at a nascent stage. Giebert (2014) highlights that, at present, research has principally explored the use of drama/theatre in the primary and secondary school setting, while research in the university

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<sup>770</sup> Manfred Schewe, "Taking Stock and Looking Ahead: Drama Pedagogy as a Gateway to a Performative Teaching and Learning Culture," *Scenario* 7, no. 1 (2013): 8.

<sup>771</sup> *Proceedings of Scenario Forum International Conference: Performative Teaching, Learning and Research, Cork, May 29-June 1* (Cork: Scenario Forum International Conference, 2014).

<sup>772</sup> Bellezza, "Developing Performative Competence and Teacher Artistry...", 25.

<sup>773</sup> Louis, "Performing English, Performing Bodies: A Case for Critical Performative Language Pedagogy," 338.

<sup>774</sup> Manfred Schewe and Susanne Even, "Pedagogy in Transition: Paving the Way Towards Performative Teaching and Learning," in *Proceedings of Scenario Forum International Conference: Performative Teaching, Learning and Research, Cork, May 29-June 1, 2014* (Cork: Scenario Forum International Conference, 2014).

<sup>775</sup> Piccardo, North, and Goodier, "Broadening the Scope of Language Education ...," 20.

context is less extensive.<sup>776</sup> This has also been accentuated by Schewe et al. (2018), who assert that creativity and innovation are ‘not yet sufficiently promoted at universities’, which signals the need for an ‘artistic reorientation in teaching and research’.<sup>777</sup>

In this regard, Bellezza (2020) emphasises that some third-level educators may shy away from engaging with the performing arts because they are uncomfortable with the notion of performative teaching and learning. In her comprehensive article, she recounts typical reactions that lecturers have had towards the notion of performative pedagogy such as: ‘It’s not for me, I am not an actor; I am here to teach, I am not a clown’ and ‘I like to draw a line between me and my students.’<sup>778</sup> These statements reveal a superficial understanding of what performative teaching and learning involves because of insufficient ‘exposure to drama pedagogy theories and praxis’.<sup>779</sup> Educators already engage in creative performances both within and outside the classroom. Productive and enriching teaching often hinges on ‘theatrical techniques of rehearsal, scripting, improvisation, characterization, timing, stage presence, and critical reviews’.<sup>780</sup> Bellezza exposes the hollowness of the notion that practitioners must be endowed with ‘artistic talents or a predisposition to histrionic behavior’ in order to teach performatively.<sup>781</sup> Although the educational and theatrical stages are non-identical, the inclusive momentum in the field of performance studies presents other academic disciplines with the opportunity to explore how interdisciplinary intersections may establish a framework for an embodied, interpretive, and dialectical learning experience.<sup>782</sup> With training and practice, it is possible for educators to bridge the gap between the artistic, personal, emotional, physical, and aesthetic dimensions of their teaching and their performative adeptness.<sup>783</sup>

Furthermore, in the context of the present investigation, the implementation of performative pedagogy has not yet been adequately explored in terms of its potential to teach language to university level students ‘for special purposes’.<sup>784</sup> With the aim of providing a valuable and practical learning experience to the student, it is necessary that performance

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<sup>776</sup> Stefanie Giebert, “Drama and theatre in teaching foreign languages for professional purposes,” *Langues de spécialité et professionnalisation* 33, no. 1 (2014): 95.

<sup>777</sup> Schewe et al., “Recommendations for Promoting a Performative Teaching...,” 52.

<sup>778</sup> Bellezza, “Developing Performative Competence and Teacher Artistry...,” 26.

<sup>779</sup> Schewe and Even, “Pedagogy in Transition: Paving the Way Towards Performative Teaching and Learning.”

<sup>780</sup> Elyse Lamm Pineau, “Teaching Is Performance: Reconceptualizing a Problematic Metaphor,” *American Educational Research Journal* 31, no. 1 (1994): 4.

<sup>781</sup> Bellezza, “Developing Performative Competence and Teacher Artistry...,” 26.

<sup>782</sup> Pineau, “Teaching Is Performance...”

<sup>783</sup> *Ibid.* It is important to note that lecture halls and tutorial rooms in universities and colleges are very rarely adapted for performing/performance, which may also impact on staff and students’ visions/perspectives of performance-based teaching.

<sup>784</sup> Giebert, “Drama and theatre in teaching foreign languages for professional purposes,” 95.

praxes employed in a university setting present a degree of challenge in order for them to be effective, functional, and constructive. Research has highlighted that the inclusion of theatre praxes (e.g., TiE, applied theatre, improvisation-based theatre, theatrical production etc.), as a companion to language instruction, is a fitting performance medium to achieve these objectives because ‘theatre is inherently collaborative and, more often than not encompasses all the arts.’<sup>785</sup> If properly executed, theatre ‘has the power to reach a spectrum of learner characteristics’.<sup>786</sup> In this regard, the next section moves on, more specifically, to contemplate the manner in which theatre may be employed in the university context in order to facilitate language learning and, in doing so, assist students in overcoming FLA.

### 5.3 A Theatre Praxis for Overcoming Foreign Language Anxiety

For the language learner, the language classroom is a meaningful ‘material scene which operates as both a locale for real world training and the real world itself’.<sup>787</sup> Theatre comprises a rich repertoire of tools and resources that hold great potential for facilitating language learning and encouraging learners to reflect on their values and beliefs. It also enables learners to refine their capacity to empathise and acknowledge their relationship with the external world.<sup>788</sup> The integration of theatre with language education is not merely the introduction of another methodology but rather a conceptual reorientation that epitomises a learning culture which fosters ‘engagement, joy, ownership and active participation,’ while positioning the body, emotions, and cognition at its core.<sup>789</sup>

Performance praxes, such as theatre, involve production, reception, and mediation. This is an essential component of language acquisition, which traditional approaches to language education do not always permit. While production is associated with self-expression and interaction is connected with ‘the joint construction of discourse to reach mutual understanding’, mediation adds a new component, that is to say, ‘the construction of new

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<sup>785</sup> Gail Humphries Mardirosian and Yvonne Pelletier Lewis, *Arts Integration in Education: Teachers and Teaching Artists as Agents of Change* (Bristol: Intellect Books, 2016), 13.

<sup>786</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>787</sup> Jennifer Ewald, “Comments on Graham Crookes and Al Lehner’s ‘Aspects of Process in an ESL Critical Pedagogy Teacher Education Course: A Plea for Published Reports on the Application of a Critical Pedagogy to Language Study Proper,’” *TESOL Quarterly* 33 (1999): 275-276.

<sup>788</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>789</sup> Michael Fleming, “Exploring the concept of performative teaching and learning,” in *Performative teaching, learning, research*, eds. S. Even and M. Schewe (Berlin: Schibri Verlag, 2016), 203.

meaning, in the sense of new understanding, new knowledge, new concepts.’<sup>790</sup> It consists of both reception and production and most often interaction. Communication can be mediated through the development of ‘shared spaces that facilitate creativity’ such as in a performance-based practice, while concepts can be mediated through *managing interaction* (i.e., the knowledgeable ‘other’), facilitating *collaboration interaction* with peers (i.e., as a team member), through the encouragement of *conceptual talk* (i.e., as a knowledgeable ‘other’), which will assist in establishing a new conceptual ground upon which learners may collaborate to construct meaning.<sup>791</sup>

Theatre allows language learners to engage with ‘the simulation of real, authentic, and meaningful language interaction environments necessary for the acquisition of [an] L2’.<sup>792</sup> Further, research has revealed that the use of performance as a companion to learning enables students to ‘cultivate a deeper understanding of content and improved long-term retention of knowledge’.<sup>793</sup> In the university context, research has also highlighted that learning through performance increases learner motivation, while also permitting higher education programmes to increase in difficulty and relate more closely to practice, which in turn presents graduates with better employment prospects.<sup>794</sup> In this respect, performance has the potential to accommodate diverse student strengths, preferences, and learning styles. For example, students may be evaluated in terms of their performative competencies, including both theoretical understanding (methodology/learning strategies) and practical aptitudes such as presentation skills, their ability to use voice and space, and soft skills including communication, teamwork, interpersonal skills, and work ethic etc.<sup>795</sup>

The radical departure from ‘work to process, from the art or literary object to the act, event, happening, action – in a word, to performance, has continued to influence and feed the theoretical discourse’ in the field of language education.<sup>796</sup> For example, Schewe’s (1993) research revealed that performance can, theoretically, be employed to address three key areas of a foreign language discipline, that is to say, language, literature, and culture.<sup>797</sup> In addition

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<sup>790</sup> Piccardo, North, and Goodier, “Broadening the Scope of Language Education ...,” 20.

<sup>791</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>792</sup> Gualdron and Castillo, “Theater for Language Teaching and Learning...” 212.

<sup>793</sup> Schewe et al., “Recommendations for Promoting a Performative Teaching...,” 52.

<sup>794</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>795</sup> George Belliveau and Won Kim, “Drama in L2 learning: Research Synthesis,” *International Journal for Drama and Theatre in Foreign and Second Language Education* 7, no. 2 (2013).

<sup>796</sup> Phillip A. Coggin, *Drama and Education. An Historical Survey from Ancient Greece to the Present Day* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1956), 232.

<sup>797</sup> Manfred Schewe, *Towards Drama as a Method in the Foreign Language Classroom*, ed. Peter Shaw (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1993).

to these fundamentals, more recent evidence has suggested that in and through performance the affective dimension of language acquisition may be addressed. In the context of the present investigation, theatre has occupied a prominent position because of its potential to confront some of the key mechanisms involved in triggering FLA. What follows highlights the manner in which significant components of a theatre performance may serve to reduce FLA, while also helping students to develop strong language competencies along the way. In this regard, three key areas are highlighted: (1) Learning Environment, (2) Pedagogical Practices and Skill Development, and (3) Self-Perceptions.

- ***Learning Environment***

As observed in case study: stage I, students' perceptions of the language learning environment and, more specifically, the key stakeholders within it, impacted upon their attitudes towards the language learning process. Several researchers have argued that creating a safe space in the language classroom where learners feel comfortable expressing themselves marks an important first step in mitigating FLA. As highlighted in Chapter Three, the learning process cannot take place in 'an emotion-and-value-free environment' because there is a significant interconnection between sharing, social acceptance, and self-acceptance.<sup>798</sup> Through the implementation of a theatre praxis, student-teacher and student-student relationships become embodied, power dynamics are restructured, teaching and learning are viewed as relational and temporal, and contingency is acknowledged as a powerful pedagogical tool.

In order to cultivate a safe environment in the language classroom, it is important that a reciprocal relationship is present between instructor and student. Emotional reciprocity, underscored by empathetic support, is essential on the part of the educator to encourage students to become risk takers in the language classroom, and to not fear the repercussions of making errors in the learning process. In the context of a theatre praxis, the educator/director does not assume a dictatorial role, but rather a facilitative role. As a facilitator, it is not the instructor's goal to act, nor to entertain, but to engage students through the art of performance.<sup>799</sup> The educator is often likened to a 'diagnostician' who adopts an organic approach to teaching, whereby allowances are made for spontaneity in order to deal with the

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<sup>798</sup> Gertrude Moskowitz, *Caring and sharing in the foreign language class* (New York: Newbury House Publishers, 1978), 14.

<sup>799</sup> Heathcote, *Dorothy Heathcote on Education and Drama...*

various situations that may arise.<sup>800</sup> Performative pedagogy is equally an experiment for the educator as it is for the student because their role is no longer considered as anchored and assured. It is important that this feature of the teaching and learning process is not regarded as a stumbling block or limitation but rather as an opportunity for growth and development. This factor may cause some educators to resist change and rely on traditional teaching practices; however, Paul (2015) accentuates that when integrating a theatre praxis in the language classroom teachers should ‘also feel the freedom to fail’ and view these minor glitches as moments to ‘refine, hone, and vary activities in their own style for the best outcomes’.<sup>801</sup>

In this respect, Bellezza (2018) draws our attention to two significant and interrelated concepts that are associated with fostering performativity in the classroom: (1) Affect attunement and (2) Flow. These concepts equally shed light on the manner in which performance addresses the affective dimension of language learning. Affect attunement, as defined by Fouts and Poulsen (2000), is associated with social dynamics in the classroom setting:

It [affect attunement] is a special kind of emotional connectedness in which the internal states of two people come together and match. A sense of communion or oneness occurs in which both want to be with each other to share and get lost in the moment.<sup>802</sup>

Affect attunement underpins our capacity to make connections and learn from each other. In a theatre praxis, the instructor/director becomes ‘attuned to the emotional, affective, and cognitive dimensions of students’, that is to say, they develop a like-mindedness with students and become ‘in tune with their words and their silences in order for flow to happen and grow’.<sup>803</sup> Student-teacher attunement plays a critical role in facilitating ‘flow experiences’ in the language learning process as it stimulates student interest and motivates them to learn. Flow encompasses ‘a state of being in which one is fully engrossed in the activity’.<sup>804</sup> When activities are in flow, ‘there is a sense of immersion, high energy, joy, and focus.’<sup>805</sup> Every educator is unique and, therefore, it is important that we reflect on our own effective and engaging teaching

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<sup>800</sup> Abigail Paul, “Incorporating theatre techniques in the language classroom,” *Scenario* 9, no. 2 (2015).

<sup>801</sup> *Ibid.*, 119.

<sup>802</sup> Gregory Fouts and John Poulsen, “Attunement in the Classroom: Emotional Connection May Be the Key to Student Success,” *Alberta’s Teachers’ Association Magazine* 81, no. 3 (2000), accessed February 27, 2022. <http://www.teachers.ab.ca/News%20Room/ata%20magazine/Volume%2081/Number%203/Articles/Pages/Attunement%20in%20the%20Classroom.aspx>

<sup>803</sup> Bellezza, “Developing Performative Competence...,” 27.

<sup>804</sup> Fouts and Poulsen, “Attunement in the Classroom...”

<sup>805</sup> *Ibid.*



experiences in order to further enhance and refine ‘flow’ in our lessons. Learner engagement, authentic and meaningful learning experiences, interpersonal relationships, learning setting, flexibility, and risk-taking, among other conditions, can facilitate flow experiences. Dalton et al. (2014) assert that ‘flow is not only desired but something that can be fostered’ in a learning environment.<sup>806</sup> Developing flow is a continuous process and it cannot be artificially created; however, educators can identify and shape the conditions that foster its development. In this regard, Bellezza (2020) insists that ‘unless teachers develop, experience, and practice flow themselves, no meaningful transfer to students can occur’.<sup>807</sup>

Further, as will be observed throughout this section, a theatre praxis is also student-centered and permits the learner to have a participatory and influential role in the language learning process. The performative language learning environment is immersive, both literally and figuratively. Several studies (e.g., Herrera and Murry, 2016) have revealed that immersive language learning environments, which emphasise communication, play an important role in lowering a language learner’s affective filter. Performance in and of itself is an immersive experience, thus, by combining it with language education, it enables learners to derive understanding and meaning from context and communication that is centered on linguistic and social interaction. This involves ‘a tangible social and environmental exchange in verbal and non-verbal communication both with the audience and amongst actors during the setting-up process of a play’.<sup>808</sup> Learners adopt a proactive role in the performative experience and must also take collective responsibility with their peers. For example, character development requires students to engage in comprehensive introspective study as they shape a character from their own imagination. This encourages them to value their contribution to the performance and fosters a sense of community as the ‘team’ works together in order to bring the final production to fruition. It is also important to note that both the strengths and limits of each student are taken into careful consideration in the performative learning environment. As students engage in performative inquiry, the responsibility of the educator/director is to ‘activize each student in the group while respecting each one’s immediate capacity for participation’.<sup>809</sup>

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<sup>806</sup> Angela Dalton et al., “Going with the ‘Flow’: Teachers’ Perspectives About When Things Really Work,” *ERIC Institute of Education Sciences* (2014), accessed April 27, 2021, url: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED545553.pdf>

<sup>807</sup> Bellezza, “Developing Performative Competence...,” 27.

<sup>808</sup> Gualdron and Castillo, “Theater for Language Teaching and Learning: The E Theater, a Holistic Methodology,” 214.

<sup>809</sup> Viola Spolin, *Improvisation for the Theatre* (Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1999), 10.

Furthermore, theatre also permits the creation of an authentic environment as students are presented with real discourse and at times must improvise. As highlighted in Chapter Three, many students feel their proficiency in a foreign language is inadequate in order to respond to real-world contexts and, thus, they have lower levels of confidence in their ability. A theatre praxis allows students to engage in problem solving as well as experiential language learning, which requires student participation on an intellectual, physical, and intuitive level.<sup>810</sup> Theatre has been identified as a tool that may ‘lend meaning to language structures by letting students experience the language in concrete situations’ as they ‘can practise using language and behaviour adequate to potentially complex situations in the safety of the classroom.’<sup>811</sup> Research has also highlighted that performance necessitates both physical movement and emotional connection. Giebert (2014) accentuates that these features of a theatre praxis enhance retention of language structures and vocabulary and also develop students’ social competence because of their proactive role in the learning process.<sup>812</sup>

#### - *Pedagogical Practices and Skill Development*

As noted in Chapter Three, learners’ negative self-appraisal of their abilities, competency, and knowledge of the French language can be a significant predictor of FLA. While the learning environment plays a key role in shaping learners’ evaluations of their ability, so too do the pedagogical practices that occur within it. Research has revealed that learners who have higher levels of confidence in their target language proficiency experience lower levels of FLA, while those who regard themselves as less skilled or proficient generally experience higher levels of language anxiety (e.g., Bailey et al. 1999; MacIntyre et al. 1998; Gardner and MacIntyre 1993). These findings highlight a need to assist students in becoming more self-efficacious in the language learning process. In this regard, several strategies may be employed in the language learning process in order to develop students’ language skills, while also mitigating FLA.

Many foreign language anxiety intervention studies have corroborated that cooperative learning activities, in particular, contribute to the reduction of students’ FLA. Project work, for example, has been found to foster peer encouragement and promote the development of a

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<sup>810</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>811</sup> Giebert, “Drama and Theatre in Teaching Foreign Languages for Professional Purposes,” 6-7.

<sup>812</sup> *Ibid.*

supportive learning environment ‘in terms of discussing, creating, and thinking in a group, rather than in a whole class’.<sup>813</sup> Project work ensures that students adopt an active role in language learning, which has been shown to increase both student motivation and confidence.<sup>814</sup> Further, as project work assessment is more intermittent, students do not have the impression that they are being constantly evaluated and assessed, which counteracts the feeling of low language ability.<sup>815</sup>

In a qualitative classroom-based case study analysis, carried out over one academic term, Tsiplakides and Keramida (2009) examined whether the inclusion of project work, coupled with support strategies in the language learning environment, would help to alleviate students’ FLA.<sup>816</sup> Several strategies were employed to encourage students and promote successful learning. For example, the instructor acknowledged that errors were a natural part of the learning process, students were encouraged to interact and ask questions without feeling concern about sounding foolish, and project groups were of mixed ability to ensure that there was ‘no differential treatment with respect to their language performance and out-of-school support’.<sup>817</sup> Strategies such as indirect correction, scaffolding, instructor immediacy, and direct provision were also implemented. At the end of the school term, findings revealed that anxious students were much more willing to communicate and did not avoid direct eye contact with the teacher. Further, language performance improved in terms of accuracy, fluency, and producing more grammatically correct utterances. In a similar vein, Suleimenova (2013) explored classroom intervention measures for FLA, however, she specifically focused on reducing learners’ communication apprehension. In a manner comparable to Tsiplakides and Keramida, she also highlighted the importance of creating a low stress and supportive learning environment. In this context, she emphasised the benefits of group work, one of which was to ‘create an atmosphere of group solidarity and support’ and the use of ‘non-threatening methods of error correction’ and positive reinforcement.<sup>818</sup> This is reflective of the CEFR’s vision of learning which ‘moves away from seeing language as a code to be taught, with subtraction of

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<sup>813</sup> Saovapa Wichadee, “Cooperative Learning Approach: A Successful Way of Reducing Learning Anxiety in an EFL Class,” *International Journal of Education* 33, no. 3 (2010): 5.

<sup>814</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>815</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>816</sup> Iakovos Tsiplakides and Areti Keramida, “Helping Students Overcome Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety in the English Classroom: Theoretical Issues and Practical Recommendations,” *International Education Studies* 2, no. 4 (2009).

<sup>817</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>818</sup> Suleimenova, Ziash. “Speaking Anxiety in a Foreign Language Classroom in Kazakhstan,” *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences* 93, (2013): 1867.

marks for mistakes, towards seeing language as action in experiential learning.’<sup>819</sup> Further, she noted the advantages of reducing the amount of new material to be learned and instead layering and reinforcing the material in order to encourage retention. She also drew attention to the importance of the learner’s voice in the acquisition process, emphasising that the educator should consider their ‘valuable insights, ideas and suggestions’.<sup>820</sup>

Radulescu (2011) specifies that a theatre praxis enables language learners to actively take part in a collaborative project in an unthreatening environment.<sup>821</sup> Lepper and Henderlong (2000) assert that collaborative acting exercises and performance in an L2 presents the learner with features of intrinsic motivation, that is to say context, challenge, curiosity, and control.<sup>822</sup> The concept of intrinsic motivation, as outlined in self-determination theory, is the ‘ongoing process for seeking and attempting to conquer optimal challenges’.<sup>823</sup> Findings have revealed that teaching through performance permits learning that is purposeful, compelling, and motivational and, therefore, is a practical and productive means to address the variable of motivation in language learning.

A theatre praxis permits an ‘embodied, interpretive, and dialectical’ approach to exploring a curriculum framework.<sup>824</sup> Performance permits students to associate knowledge gained from first-hand observations and experiences and collective knowledge with curriculum materials. As teachers and students ‘venture into new knowledge territories, they re-create the landscape as they tread it’.<sup>825</sup> This dialectical process, which involves both multilateral and multi-vocal discussion, stimulates student reflection and thus leads to deeper and refined understanding of subject matter.<sup>826</sup> In this context, Lichtblau (2009) affirms that it is imperative for educators to have a strong command of the subject/content they are going to explore with students, together with an awareness of performance techniques, in order to facilitate student

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<sup>819</sup> Piccardo, North, and Goodier, “Broadening the Scope of Language Education ...,” 18.

<sup>820</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>821</sup> Domnica Radulescu, “Finding liberation through performance/disguise in a foreign language/culture: A feminist perspective,” in *Dramatic interactions: Teaching languages, literatures, and cultures through theatre - Theoretical approaches and classroom practices*, eds. C. Ryan and N. Marini-Maio (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2011).

<sup>822</sup> Mark R. Lepper and Jennifer Henderlong, “Turning “play” into “work” and “work” into “play”: 25 years of research on intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation,” in *Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation: The search for optimal motivation and performance*, eds. Carol Sansone and Judith M. Harackiewicz (San Diego: Academic Press, 2000).

<sup>823</sup> Edward Deci and Richard M. Ryan, *Intrinsic Motivation and Self-determination in Human Behavior* (New York: Plenum, 1985), 32-33.

<sup>824</sup> Lichtblau, “Theatre of Possibility...,” 255.

<sup>825</sup> *Ibid.*, 271.

<sup>826</sup> *Ibid.*

reflection through performative inquiry.<sup>827</sup> If educators do not have these tools at their disposal, they will not be able to satisfactorily ‘shape educative experiences that stimulate insights and questions about the curriculum’.<sup>828</sup>

- *Self-Perceptions*

As observed in Chapter Three, language learners’ FLA can cause them to draw distinctions between the ‘self’ and the ‘other’. Oral production, in particular, has been found to be the greatest threat to their self-concept and world-concepts. A theatre praxis promotes intercultural dialogue and exchange, which permits the establishment of a transformative space that arbitrates between the ‘self’ and the ‘other’, the known and the unknown and, in doing so, fosters the development of a symbiotic entity.<sup>829</sup> Theatre is a vehicle through which the world may be brought closer and a deeper connection made between students’ subjective realities and realities of the unknown - the ‘other’.

The use of theatre-based activities and exercises in a language learning environment exposes learners to an ‘embodied, heuristic, interactive, and imaginative’ practice, which assists in developing their prior knowledge, refining the views they hold about themselves, their societies, and interests, as well as expanding their vision of what is other or foreign to them.<sup>830</sup> Thus, in the educational setting, students will already begin to confront conventional and unconventional issues about the ‘other’, which gives them the tools they need in order to perceive, approach, and think about the target language and culture in new and innovative ways. Howard (2019) describes performance as a ‘psychosocial exploration’, as an approach that facilitates self-awareness and personal transformation and, in the context of L2 acquisition, interpersonal awareness.<sup>831</sup>

Gallagher accentuates that it is important for educators to acknowledge that their reality:

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<sup>827</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>828</sup> *Ibid.*, 262.

<sup>829</sup> Benedikt Kessler, *Interkulturelle Dramapädagogik: Dramatische Arbeit als Vehikel des interkulturellen Lernens im Fremdsprachenunterricht* (Frankfurt: Lang, 2008), 90.

<sup>830</sup> Lichtblau, “Theatre of Possibility...,” 256.

<sup>831</sup> Howard, “Performance, Pedagogy, Potential...”

Is but one [...] operating in a classroom, the strength of their teaching, therefore, lies in their ability to receive, to learn alongside, and to extend the classroom walls to include the complexity and the richness of the world beyond.<sup>832</sup>

Theatre encourages the formation and investigation of imaginative and innovative questions, which results in students confronting what they once took for granted and, in doing so, ‘provides a window through which to envision alternate existences’.<sup>833</sup> As stories are interpreted through performance, they become multi-dimensional. The student or ‘performative inquirer’ does not simply portray a character, they also connect on a physical, emotional, intuitive, and spatial level with the other inquirers around them.<sup>834</sup> Lichtblau (2009) affirms that all which takes place on stage is ‘at once symbolic and interpretive’.<sup>835</sup> Each inquirer or ‘player’ imparts or conveys their own subjectivities to the situation and is constantly ‘in dialogue with others’ perspectives’, which permits students to uncover who they may become beyond the walls of the classroom.<sup>836</sup>

Performance scholar and practitioner Elyse Lamm Pineau affirms that students are often viewed as disembodied minds entering the classroom.<sup>837</sup> The body and mind, however, should not be viewed as two separate entities as the Cartesian dualist concept suggests. The association that exists between language and the senses in the process of meaning making has not been adequately addressed in pedagogy.<sup>838</sup> In the context of language education, it is necessary to ‘reposition body and emotions as the center of the L2 enterprise’.<sup>839</sup> Through the retraining of the senses, students may better understand and interpret the world around them in newly discovered and creative ways. Bellezza (2018), thus, asserts that body and voice should be incorporated into the learning process in light of their important function in ‘communicating emotion, mood, and attitude’.<sup>840</sup> In this regard, she accentuates that performance praxes, such as theatre, encourage learners to re-train their senses, while also acquiring training in liminality.

Experience is put to the forefront of the performative learning process. Performance is marked by a high degree of contingency. A theatre performance only takes shape during its evolution. It cannot be completely choreographed or prevised. It permits the ‘disruption of the

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<sup>832</sup> Gallagher, “Theatre Pedagogy and Performed Research...,” 107.

<sup>833</sup> Lichtblau, “Theatre of Possibility...,” 257.

<sup>834</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>835</sup> *Ibid.*, 269.

<sup>836</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>837</sup> Pineau, “Teaching Is Performance...”

<sup>838</sup> Bellezza, “Developing Performative Competence...”

<sup>839</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>840</sup> *Ibid.*

obvious'.<sup>841</sup> Over the course of a performance, students pass through a liminal experience – what Bellezza (2018) likens to a passage from a threshold ‘a state of temporary symbolic paralysis (temporary inability to read the signs), through a passage or transition resulting into a transformative experience’.<sup>842</sup> In a similar vein, Vaßen (2016) insists that the theatrical process permits ‘a productive tension between self and other to grow’.<sup>843</sup> Learners become more broad-minded and receptive, ‘accepting ambiguity, dealing with positions sometimes non-negotiable, and planning future scenarios’.<sup>844</sup> These are significant and critical skills that allow students to thrive ‘when found in the uncharted territory of the kind of encounters for which there is no map’.<sup>845</sup>

Theatre encourages the construction of new meanings and original experiences, which stem from self-reflection and a newfound self-awareness. Students become acquainted with the unfamiliar and alternate existences. In this regard, the notion of the ‘continuous self’ is underscored as a misconception.<sup>846</sup> Instead, the ‘self’ is represented as a ‘conflicted multiplicity’ in a continual process of identity construction and reconstruction.<sup>847</sup> Theatre is a channel through which the perceptual and sensory process may be decelerated and also permits learners to succumb to the unknown.<sup>848</sup> In this context, Bellezza asserts that it is important for educators to foster a proclivity in their students to ‘tolerate the ambiguous nature of our diverse, multilingual beings’.<sup>849</sup> Theatre gives us the licence to investigate ‘the powerful connection between language, emotions, body, and space in the construction of new enterprise born out of a process of self-awareness and critical thinking’.<sup>850</sup>

Apart from advancing a transformed vision of pedagogy, the integration of performative pedagogy with language education in the present study also affords a more intricate contribution to a theory of *Bildung*.<sup>851</sup> *Bildung*, which can be interpreted in the English language as development, formation, or knowledge, was originally introduced in mid-18th century German pedagogical and educational discourse by Prussian philosopher Wilhelm von

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<sup>841</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>842</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>843</sup> Vaßen, “The diversity of Theaterpädagogik in German schools,” 263.

<sup>844</sup> Bellezza, “Developing Performative Competence...,” 29.

<sup>845</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>846</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>847</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>848</sup> Elliot Eisner, *The arts and the creation of mind* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

<sup>849</sup> Bellezza, “Developing Performative Competence...,” 29.

<sup>850</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>851</sup> Christoph Wulff and Jörg Zirfas, *Pädagogik des Performativen: Theorien, Methoden, Perspektiven* (Weinheim: Beltz, 2007).

Humboldt.<sup>852</sup> In the German language, it is differentiated from *Erziehung* (education). This differentiation, Varkøy (2010) asserts, underscores ‘the tension between “to educate” a person as a human being’ (i.e., *Bildung*, a process with ‘no start and no end both in and outside school’) and ‘to educate a person in a certain professional field (i.e., *Erziehung*, a process ‘with a clear start and end, as in school education’).<sup>853</sup> In essence, *Bildung* exemplifies ‘the process and the outcome of a transformation which affects both one’s own self as well as one’s relationship to others and the world.’<sup>854</sup> The outcome of this process, however, is not predetermined. Expressed metaphorically as ‘the journey’, *Bildung* may be referred to as an unrestricted process of self-development through which individuals ‘[venture] away from oneself into the unknown, stretching one’s own limits in order to properly find one’s true self.’<sup>855</sup> *Bildung*, therefore, is a lens through which educators may observe how culture and identity may be united such that ‘it becomes possible to create the conditions which enable a person to relate to others and the world and, thus, ultimately, give the person’s self a form.’<sup>856</sup>

#### 5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explored the manner in which performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, may be employed as a tool in the language learning process in order to alleviate FLA. The first section provided the reader with a brief historical overview of the use of drama/theatre in education, focusing specifically on the British tradition. This was an important initial step in the discussion as the work of several British educationalists including Way, Bolton, and Heathcote has provided both theoretical and practical contributions to pedagogical practice in the Irish context and has influenced the integration of performance practices in language education. The second section then outlined the current position of the arts in the Irish educational context, concentrating on the place of drama in the education system. It then moved on to highlight the unique cross-disciplinary dialogue that is emerging between the performing arts and language education in the Irish third-level educational context. The final section concluded by outlining the potential of theatre as an embodied, immersive, and interactive intervention measure to counteract the negative consequences of FLA. It focused upon three

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<sup>852</sup> Øivind Varkøy, “The Concept of *Bildung*,” *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 18, no. 1 (2010).

<sup>853</sup> *Ibid.*, 86.

<sup>854</sup> Schewe, “Taking Stock and Looking Ahead...,” 18.

<sup>855</sup> Varkøy, “The Concept of *Bildung*,” 88.

<sup>856</sup> Schewe, “Taking Stock and Looking Ahead...,” 18.



key themes that have been highlighted in the literature on FLA intervention: (1) Learning Environment, (2) Pedagogical Practices and Skill Development, and (3) Self-Perceptions. The contextual knowledge reviewed in this chapter has important implications for the present investigation. The evidence base outlined in this chapter will be particularly valuable when interpreting findings from the second stage of the present case study. Having highlighted the potentiality of theatre in reducing FLA, Chapter Six now moves on to present the reader with the methodological underpinnings that informed this study.

## **CHAPTER SIX**

# **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

## **Chapter Six**

### **Research Methodology**

#### **6.0 Introduction**

This case study, divided into two principal stages, had two main aims. Firstly, it sought to uncover to what extent final year students of French, in the Irish third-level context, experience FLA, and to explore the principal factors that trigger this reaction in the language learning process. Secondly, it aspired to investigate the potentiality of performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, in reducing or alleviating students' levels of FLA. The present study was conducted at a point in time when tertiary institutions in Ireland were required to transition to distance education due to the COVID-19 global pandemic. This paradigm shift had a significant impact on the present investigation, transforming it from a physical into a remote research study. In this context, it was necessary to reconsider and modify certain methodological decisions that were made about the research process prior to COVID-19. These methodological changes were reviewed and approved by the Mary Immaculate Research Ethics Committee (MIREC) before the study was conducted. This chapter proceeds to outline the final methodological choices that were made about the research design and framework that informed this study. It begins by clarifying methodological terminology that played an important role in the research design process. In doing so, it delineates the research strategy, research design, research philosophy, and research paradigm adopted for and employed in the investigation. It then moves on to outline important ethical considerations and, finally, addresses potential research limitations of the present investigation. The main objective of this chapter is to illustrate that considerable critical attention has been given to the both the research design and framework of the present study in order to ensure its reliability and validity.

## 6.1 Research Design and Framework

Research is a social practice carried out by research communities. What constitutes “knowledge”, “truth”, “objectivity” and “correct method” is defined by the community and through the paradigms which shape its work.<sup>857</sup>

In order to develop the research design and framework for the present study, it was important firstly to explicitly define and clarify methodological terminology that played a vital role in the research design process, including educational research, applied research, research strategy, research design, research philosophy, research paradigm, and methodology. More specifically, it was necessary to detail how these terms were understood and applied within the context of this study. This initial step in the research process was essential in order to establish conceptual clarity, without which ‘the interface between philosophy, methodology, and methods is compromised’.<sup>858</sup>

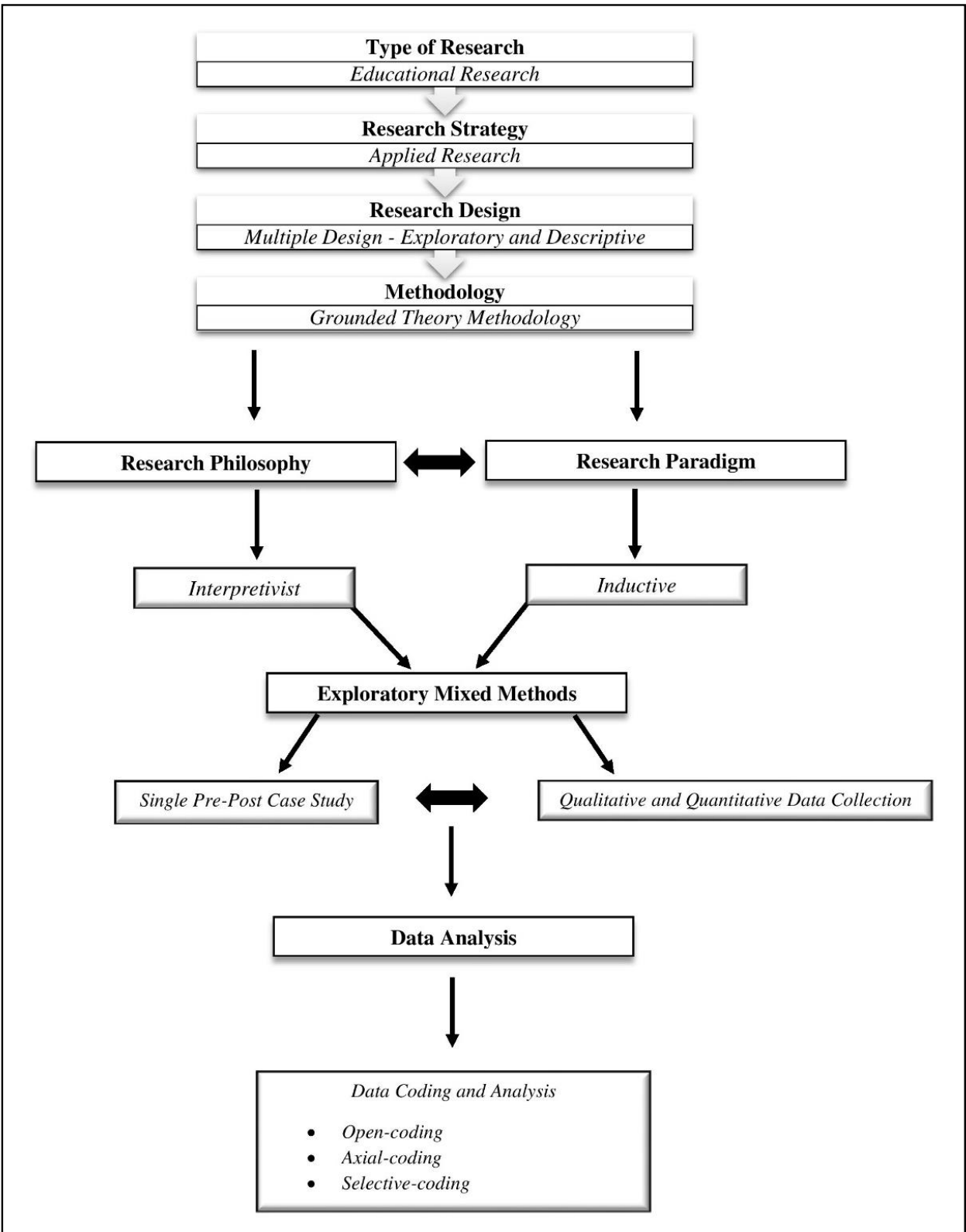
It is important to preface what follows by stating that there is a degree of uncertainty, across all disciplines, around the methodological terminology presented. The inconsistencies emerging from this uncertainty relate specifically to how terms are expounded individually and in respect to each other. The aim of this section is to clearly demonstrate the methodological foundations of the present scholarship. This section does not, however, resolve the contradiction between methodological terminology in the literature because, at present, there is ‘no agreement in the academy about what these terms mean and how they should be used’.<sup>859</sup> On the contrary, the discussion focuses on where there is consensus, namely, how the interpretation of methodological terminology impacts on the research framework. In order to scaffold this discussion, Figure 5.1 presents the reader with a visual breakdown of the research building and design process, highlighting the relationship that exists between each stage of its development. What follows proceeds to describe and elaborate upon the contribution of each component of the model in the overall research design process.

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<sup>857</sup> David Scott and Robin Usher, *Understanding Educational Research* (London: Routledge, 2010), 17.

<sup>858</sup> Sue L. T. McGregor, “Research Methodologies,” in *Understanding and Evaluating Research: A Critical Guide* (California: Sage Publications, 2018), 22.

<sup>859</sup> *Ibid.*, 49.



**Figure 6.1** Model of the Research Design and Building Process.

The present study conducted educational research. Educational research is a type of research that encompasses the collection and analysis of data associated with the field of education. The central aim of educational research is ‘not to discover contingent connections between a set of classroom activities and pre-standardised learning outputs, but to investigate the conditions for realising a coherent educational process in particular practical contexts’.<sup>860</sup> The defining characteristic of educational research is the researcher’s active role in its development and realisation, not only in its application.<sup>861</sup> As noted in Chapter Three, FLA is a significant area of pedagogical inquiry and is one of the most widely investigated affective variables in the field of SLA. Researchers have emphasised the need for an increased understanding and awareness of the construct and for the development of pedagogical practices to assist in its management. The study described here set out to contribute to the field of SLA by exploring FLA in the Irish third-level context and extending present knowledge of FLA reduction strategies. Thus, the two CRQs that guided the research framework and design of the present study were pedagogically motivated:

- (1) To what extent do final year students of French in the Irish third-level context experience foreign language anxiety, and what are the principal factors that trigger this reaction?
- (2) To what extent, when implemented, does performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, lower or alleviate students’ foreign language anxiety levels?

Traditional educational research has been characterised by a disconnection between research and practice.<sup>862</sup> Applied research, however, has emerged as a notable research strategy that has challenged traditional educational research by bridging the gap between theory and action. A research strategy is comparable to a blueprint that illustrates how a researcher plans, carries out, and oversees their study.<sup>863</sup> In the context of educational research, an applied research strategy is employed in order to explore and evaluate different components of the pedagogical process and, thus, uncover the most suitable and efficacious pedagogical practices for specific learning environments. The use of applied research is a well-established approach in the field of SLA as it permits researchers to expand upon their

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<sup>860</sup> John Elliot, “Making evidence-based practice educational”, in *Educational Research and Evidence-Based Practice*, ed. Martyn Hammersley (California: Sage Publications, 2007), 77.

<sup>861</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>862</sup> Sara Efrat Efron and Ruth Ravid, *Action Research in Education: A Practical Guide* (New York: Guilford Publications, 2019).

<sup>863</sup> Paul Johannesson and Erik Perjons, “Research Strategies and Methods,” in *An Introduction to Design Science*, eds. Paul Johannesson and Erik Perjons (London: Springer, 2014).

knowledge base, engage in reflective practice, bring about positive pedagogical change, and facilitate student development.<sup>864</sup>

There are three main types of applied research: (1) Evaluation research involves analysing existing information in order to make informed decisions, (2) Research and development concentrates on creating new solutions to target the identified needs of a particular group through a process of data collection, analysis, and interpretation, and (3) Action research is a cyclical approach to applied research. It entails identifying a research problem, gathering, analysing, and interpreting data, and then enforcing changes, evaluating the outcome, and reflecting on what has been achieved. The researcher will then refine the ‘action’ and repeat the process until the desired results are achieved.

The present investigation employed a research and development approach to applied research. It focuses upon process and outcome and, in doing so, proposes or creates a possible solution to an educational problem or challenge. Based on the data gathered, informed evidence-based judgements are made in order to inform future practice. Recommendations put forward from a research and development approach may then be assessed, extended, and enhanced later on through action research. Action research, originally developed by social psychologist Kurt Lewin in the early 1940s,<sup>865</sup> has significantly transformed ‘contemporary educational reform by emphasizing inquiry and placing teachers at the center of research-into-practice’.<sup>866</sup> By positioning the teacher as a learner in the research process, action research provides a methodical and purposeful approach to reshape teaching practice.

Consonant with the study’s research aims and objectives, a multiple research design was employed to facilitate the investigation. The research design is ‘a master plan specifying the methods and procedure for collecting and analyzing the needed information’.<sup>867</sup> The present research study is both exploratory and descriptive in nature and students’ subjective perceptions form the core data of the research study. Exploratory studies ‘are used to make preliminary investigations into relatively unknown areas of research [and] employ an open, flexible, and inductive approach to research as they attempt to look for new insights into

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<sup>864</sup> Geoffrey E. Mills, *Action research: A guide for the teacher researcher* (Boston: Pearson, 2014), 8.

<sup>865</sup> Clem Adelman, “Kurt Lewin and the Origins of Action Research,” *Educational Action Research* 1, no. 1 (1993).

<sup>866</sup> Meghan McGlinn Manfra, “Action Research and Systematic, Intentional Change in Teaching Practice,” *Review of Research in Education* 43, no. 1 (2019): 163.

<sup>867</sup> William Zikmund, *Business Research Methods* (Chicago: The Dryden Press, 1988), 65.

phenomena’.<sup>868</sup> The key purpose of an exploratory research design is to illuminate a topic that has not been thoroughly investigated and, therefore, is not fully understood on a theoretical level. Descriptive studies are implemented to ‘develop a “snapshot” of a particular phenomenon of interest’.<sup>869</sup> They present a description of ‘an event, or help define a set of attitudes, opinions, or behaviours that are measured at a given time and given environment’.<sup>870</sup>

A multiple research design, consisting of exploratory and descriptive research design principles, was adopted for this investigation for two key reasons. Firstly, there is currently a lack of knowledge on FLA in the Irish context and, secondly, there is an absence of a concrete model or framework that explicates how FLA may be lowered or alleviated. The study’s research design had a significant impact on many interrelated methodological decisions including methods employed, data collection and procedures, and data analysis, which will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter. However, it is necessary firstly to outline the research philosophy and research paradigm adopted for the present study as these components of the research framework also significantly informed these methodological decisions.

The term research philosophy or philosophical approach encompasses ‘a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge’, which occurs throughout the research process.<sup>871</sup> The most frequent assumptions that a researcher may encounter during the research process are epistemological, ontological, axiological, and methodological in nature. These assumptions frame the researcher’s understanding of the research questions, the methods employed, and how findings are interpreted. Thus, a key aspect of a philosophical approach is ‘a well-thought-out and consistent set of assumptions’, which constitute the basis of a reliable research philosophy.<sup>872</sup> The research paradigm is the worldview or conceptual lens through which the researcher contemplates methodological considerations underpinning their research.<sup>873</sup> Within the context of educational research, it refers to the researcher’s ‘perspective, or thinking, or school of thought, or set of shared beliefs, that informs the meaning or

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<sup>868</sup> Kevin Durrheim, “Research Design,” in *Research in Practice: Applied Methods for the Social Sciences*, eds. Martin Terre Blanche, Kevin Durrheim, and Desmond Painter (Cape Town: UTC Press, 2008), 44.

<sup>869</sup> David E. McNabb, “Quantitative Research Approaches and Methods,” in *Research Methods for Political Science* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 43.

<sup>870</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>871</sup> Mark N. K. Saunders, Philip Lewis, and Adrian Thornhill, “Understanding Research Philosophy and Approaches to Theory Development,” in *Research Methods for Business Students* (New York: Pearson Education, 2009), 124.

<sup>872</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>873</sup> *Ibid.*



interpretation of research data'.<sup>874</sup> The research paradigm is informed by underlying philosophical assumptions (i.e., research philosophy) and is associated with the research methodology as it guides the researcher in their interrogation and approach to systematic enquiry.

Both the research philosophy and research paradigm significantly impact upon and influence the research strategy adopted, the research methods used, as well as data collection and analysis procedures. Within the context of the present investigation, the research philosophy and paradigm adopted were underpinned by grounded theory principles. Grounded theory is one of the most practical methodologies to adopt when 'little is known about a phenomenon; the aim being to produce or construct an explanatory theory that uncovers a process inherent to the substantive area of inquiry'.<sup>875</sup> Thus, it served as a valuable tool in order to supplement and extend the present investigation.

Grounded theory is a widely used and well-known methodology in educational research. Further, this methodological approach is fast becoming a key component of research in the field of SLA in that it serves both a theoretical and practical purpose. Several researchers support the implementation and highlight the advantages of using grounded theory methodology in the field of SLA. Grounded theory not only enriches literature but also assists in developing 'theories that are understandable to teachers and learners', thus, permitting them to associate theory and practice.<sup>876</sup> Moreover, theories developed using grounded theory principles may also serve a progressive function 'in shaping the national policy relevant to second language learning and teaching'.<sup>877</sup>

Grounded theory embraces a distinct methodology that embodies 'a particular view of scientific method, and a set of specific procedures for analyzing [...] data and constructing theories from those data'.<sup>878</sup> This methodological choice directly contributed to the philosophical and paradigmatic underpinnings of the study. Since its development, in 1967, by sociologists Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss, grounded theory has evolved into three different perspectives: (1) Classical, (2) Evolved or Interpretive, and (3) Constructivist. Each perspective is categorised according to distinct ontological and epistemological assumptions. This study

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<sup>874</sup> Charles Kivunja and Ahmed Bawa Kuyini, "Understanding and Applying Research Paradigms in Educational Contexts," *International Journal of Higher Education* 6, no. 5 (2017): 26.

<sup>875</sup> Chun Tie et al., "Grounded Theory Research..." 1-2.

<sup>876</sup> Rashid et al., "Grounded Theory Methodology in Second Language Learning Research," 4681.

<sup>877</sup> *Ibid.*, 4682.

<sup>878</sup> Brian Douglas Haig, "Abductive Research Methods," in *International Encyclopedia of Education*, eds. E. Baker, B. McGaw, and P. Peterson (Oxford: Elsevier), 77.

followed the evolved, also known as the interpretative, methodological genre of grounded theory. More specifically, the present study followed an interpretivist philosophy approached through the lens of an inductive paradigm.

Interpretivist grounded theory derives its ontological influence from interpretivism.<sup>879</sup> It focuses on the importance of individual perceptions in the research process as they provide significant data that facilitates theoretical understanding. In this context, an inductive approach to data collection and interpretation is employed. Inductive reasoning begins ‘from specific observations and moves towards a general conclusion or theory’.<sup>880</sup> In this regard, grounded theory accentuates that researchers should develop an awareness of influences in the literature of their field ‘so that they do not negatively impact or steer their research focus, data collection or categorization’.<sup>881</sup> In doing so, it is argued that the ‘overall resolve and quality of the research, creation of data categories and, finally, theoretical assumptions’ will be consolidated and reinforced.<sup>882</sup> Charmaz and Bryant (2010) assert that when educational researchers adopt grounded theory strategies, it permits them to extend ‘the theoretical reach of their studies and to make tacit meaning and processes explicit’.<sup>883</sup> The methodology or architectural design of the present study can, therefore, be described as following an inductive approach, drawing greatly on interpretivist grounded theory philosophy.

Against this backdrop, the present study took the form of a single pre-post case study. In his informative publication, *Making Evidence-based Practice Educational*, Elliot (2004) highlights that:

Both the indeterminate nature of educational values and principles, and the context-dependent nature of judgement about which concrete methods and procedures are consistent with them, suggest that educational research takes the form of case studies rather than randomised controlled trials.<sup>884</sup>

The case study was carried out in two distinct stages, which permitted a progressive and phased based approach to data collection and analysis. This offered an effective way to build on the

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<sup>879</sup> Kailah Sebastian, “Distinguishing Between the Types of Grounded Theory: Classical, Interpretive and Constructivist,” *Journal for Social Thought* 3, no. 1 (2019).

<sup>880</sup> Kamel Khaldi, “Quantitative, Qualitative or Mixed Research: Which Research Paradigm to Use?,” *Journal of Educational and Social Research* 7, no. 2 (2017): 16.

<sup>881</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>882</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>883</sup> Antony Bryant and Kathy Charmaz, “Grounded Theory,” in *International Encyclopedia of Education*, eds. E. Baker, B. McGaw, and P. Peterson (Oxford: Elsevier), 410.

<sup>884</sup> Elliott, “Making Evidence-based Practice Educational,” 175-176.

findings of the previous stage while also highlighting issues that required further detailed investigation. Consistent with the multiple research design that framed the present study, a mixed methods research approach was chosen in order to gain an in-depth, detailed, and holistic picture of the phenomenon under investigation.

A mixed methods approach has many attractive features. For example, Ivankova and Wingo (2018) affirm that this approach permits researchers to deal with complex research questions, resolve both exploratory and confirmatory questions in a single study and, therefore, reveal perspectives on an issue or problem while ‘providing contextual understandings shaped by real life experiences and cultural influences’.<sup>885</sup> Qualitative methods are one of the most practical ways to gain insights into contextual-related problems by providing rich data that paints a contextual picture of ‘persons’ lives, lived experiences, behaviours, emotions, and feelings as well as about organisational functioning, social movements, cultural phenomena, and interactions between nations,<sup>886</sup> while quantitative research methods comprise ‘the utilization and analysis of numerical data using specific statistical techniques to answer questions like who, how much, what, where, when, how many, and how’.<sup>887</sup> Quantitative research methods, thus, supplement and extend the data analysis and findings gained from qualitative assessments, while also providing a logical explanation for the insights and observations gained from qualitative research findings.

Further, consistent with grounded theory methodology, once qualitative data is gathered, it undergoes a coding process. The first step in the coding procedure involves developing open codes. The data is broken down into smaller segments and labelled accordingly in order to establish potential theoretical ideas, connections, and contrasts in the data. Usually, participant transcripts are used at this stage in order to prevent researcher bias. Subsequently, axial coding takes place. This second step in the coding process draws upon the broader open codes in order to group the data into categories. Ultimately, a final selective code is presented. This is the core notion that connects all codes, which emerged from data analysis. Establishing a selective code is the final step in the coding process. It unifies the data collected and represents the main argument or finding from the investigation.

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<sup>885</sup> Nataliya Ivankova and Nancy Wingo, “Applying Mixed Methods in Action Research: Methodological Potentials and Advantages,” *American Behavioral Scientist* 62, no. 7 (2018): 980.

<sup>886</sup> Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research...*, 11.

<sup>887</sup> Oberiri Destiny Apuke, “Quantitative Research Methods: A Synopsis Approach,” *Kuwait Chapter of Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review* 6, no. 11 (2017): 41.

### 6.1.1 Research Questions and Hypotheses

In order to ensure that the scope of the present investigation was feasible, it was important to acknowledge resource limitations when specifying and finalising the study's research questions. This was a key aspect of the research process as a study's research questions are associated with all other components of the research, such as choosing the most appropriate methods to answer the research question/s and how the data is collected and analysed.<sup>888</sup> As previously mentioned, the present study sought to address two central mixed methods research questions. The overarching aim of a mixed methods research question is to establish a nuanced understanding of the study's objectives.<sup>889</sup> This is a relatively new type of research question used in research methods. Tashakkori and Creswell (2007) also refer to it as a hybrid or integrated question as it 'directly addresses the mixing of the quantitative and qualitative strands of the research'.<sup>890</sup>

In order to address a mixed methods research question, the researcher does not depend either solely on quantitative or qualitative data, rather a 'combination of the two provides the best information for the research questions and hypotheses.'<sup>891</sup> Mixed methods research questions can be constructed at the outset of the research study or as the research questions materialise gradually during the study. In a study that consists of two stages or phases, research questions can be developed separately to address specific questions relating to each particular phase or 'the mixed methods questions might be placed in a discussion between the two phases.'<sup>892</sup>

At the outset of this investigation, the principal researcher formulated two mixed methods research questions in order to guide the two-stage case study. Each CRQ was developed in order to address the broader research objectives of that particular stage of the study. The first stage of the research sought to assess students' baseline levels of FLA (i.e., pre-performance intervention) and the factors that triggered this response in the context of traditional language learning. Thus, the research question that framed the first stage of this investigation was exploratory and descriptive: **(CRQ1)** To what extent do final year students of French in the Irish third-level context experience foreign language anxiety, and what are the

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<sup>888</sup> John W. Creswell and J. David Creswell, *Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (California: Sage Publications, 2014).

<sup>889</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>890</sup> *Ibid.*, 138.

<sup>891</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>892</sup> *Ibid.*

principal factors that trigger this reaction? The second stage of the case study sought to explore the potentiality of performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, in reducing or alleviating students' levels of FLA (i.e., post-performance intervention). Accordingly, the research question that framed the second stage of the investigation was exploratory: **(CRQ2)** To what extent, when implemented, does performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, lower or alleviate students' foreign language anxiety levels? In this investigation, the mixed methods questions are analysed both individually and in relation to each other.

In order to account for potential factors that may impact on the principal dependent variable under investigation – FLA – sub-research questions or secondary questions were also developed during the research design process. These were formulated in order to help explain and interpret differences and similarities between participant responses in the first and second stages of the case study. Five central sub-research questions were constructed to account for differences in students' language learning histories and also developments within the wider educational context (i.e., independent variables) that may impact on their perceptions of the language learning process:

1. How confident do final year students of French feel in the following four language skills (i.e., as per the CEFR: reading, writing, listening, and speaking)?<sup>893</sup>
2. What are student perceptions of the educator in the language learning process?
3. What impact does technology have on the French language learning experience (with specific reference to the paradigm shift to online education during the COVID-19 pandemic)?
4. Do past language learning experiences of the Irish language influence students' perspectives on subsequent language learning experiences?<sup>894</sup>
5. What do language students consider to be the most effective way/s to learn French?

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<sup>893</sup> As noted earlier, the Council of Europe has produced an extended version of the CEFR scale (See Appendix V). The revised and extended version of the CEFR includes several other skills and competencies in language education such as considering the user/learner as a social agent, co-constructing meaning in interaction (including online interaction), and expanding upon the notions of mediation and plurilingual/pluricultural competences. For the first stage of the case study, the four fundamental skills (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) are concentrated upon in particular as these have been the key focus of the learners' language learning experience prior to the performance-based intervention. However, in the second stage of the case study, reference is also made to the new illustrative descriptors.

<sup>894</sup> As highlighted by Britta Jung (2020), in her work *The impact and experience of foreign languages in the context of Erasmus+ in all education sectors in Ireland*, 'the compulsory nature of Irish language education, marks many students' first formal experience with language learning and has – at times – had the detrimental effect of increasing not only a disinterest in the subject at hand, but also other languages, laying the foundation for the perceived difficulty of learning languages in general' (p. 19). Given the context of the present investigation, it is therefore important to analyse the role of *Gaeilge* in subsequent foreign language learning experiences. Views on and attitudes towards the Irish language will be explored further in chapter 4.

Unlike traditional hypothesis testing derived from existing theory, within the context of a grounded theory framework, a researcher ‘begins with an area of study and allows the theory to emerge from the data’.<sup>895</sup> Theory is grounded in the data, which is ‘systematically gathered and analysed through the research process’.<sup>896</sup> Accordingly, before data collection takes place, the researcher does not formulate hypotheses as they would then be ungrounded in the data. Grounded theory, therefore, ‘begins inductively by gathering data and posing hypotheses during analysis that can be confirmed or disconfirmed during subsequent data collection’.<sup>897</sup> Theory is generated inductively. The process begins by observing, noting any particular patterns in the data, formulating tentative hypotheses, and finally generating theory rooted in the data. Grounded theory, therefore, incorporates ‘both a method of inquiry and a resultant product of that inquiry’.<sup>898</sup>

### 6.1.2 Sampling Strategy and Research Participants

In research methodology, the term sampling encompasses the selection of specific sources from whom data are collected to address the research aims and objectives. By examining the characteristics of a sample, certain assumptions can be made about the properties of the population from which it was taken. Different terminology has been employed in the literature to describe the manner in which the sample for analysis is selected from the research population. For example, the term sampling strategy has mainly been employed within the context of the case study approach, while other terms such as sampling methods, data gathering strategies, and sampling techniques have been employed in grounded theory studies.<sup>899</sup> In the interest of clarity, and unless otherwise stated, the term sampling strategy is used exclusively in the framework of this study to describe the techniques employed to select the research sample from the target university population as a whole.

This investigation employed mixed sampling. It combined two different yet complimentary sampling strategies: (1) Purposive sampling, which is primarily used in case studies and (2) Theoretical sampling, a variant of purposive sampling, which is mainly

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<sup>895</sup> Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research...*, 12.

<sup>896</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>897</sup> Neil J. Salkind, “Grounded Theory,” in *Encyclopedia of Research Design* (California: Sage Publications, 2010), 548.

<sup>898</sup> Chun Tie et al., “Grounded Theory Research...,” 3.

<sup>899</sup> Stephen J. Gentles et al., “Sampling in Qualitative Research: Insights from an Overview of the Methods Literature,” *The Qualitative Report* 20, no. 1 (2015).

employed within the context of the grounded theory approach.<sup>900</sup> A purposive/theoretical sampling strategy aligned both conceptually and theoretically with the research purpose, design, and method. Further, taking COVID-19 constraints into consideration including limited time frame, travel restrictions, and limited student numbers, this sampling method was a feasible, ethical, efficient, and practical strategy to address the study's aims and objectives.

Research traditions differ in how they understand the composition of the sampling unit, that is to say, who or what to sample in order to address the aims and objectives of the research. Purposive sampling, frequently employed in case studies, involves selecting the cases and data sources 'that best help us understand the case,'<sup>901</sup> while in theoretical sampling the data source is often not specified, and is rather understood as 'where to go to obtain the data'.<sup>902</sup> A thorough analysis of the literature on grounded theory methodology by Gentles et al. (2015) revealed a significant variation in what researchers consider to be an appropriate data source. For instance, Strauss and Corbin (1998) define the data source as 'sample incidents, events, or happenings and not persons per se [...] which represent situations',<sup>903</sup> while Charmaz (2014) refers to the data source as 'people, events, or information to illuminate and define the properties, boundaries and relevance of this category or set of categories'.<sup>904</sup>

The present study aligned itself with Charmaz's definition of the data source. This was considered an appropriate methodological decision based on the research design and framework of this investigation. A purposive/theoretical sampling strategy provided the study with information rich cases for detailed study (i.e., purposive sampling). Information rich cases are defined as 'those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry'.<sup>905</sup> Within this context, participants for the present investigation were chosen 'based on their anticipated richness and relevance of information in relation to the study's research questions'.<sup>906</sup> Selection or inclusion criteria for the present study were specified as follows:

1. The participant was Irish (i.e., gone through the Irish education system, Irish or English was their first language).
2. The participant was in their final year of French Studies at MIC.

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<sup>900</sup> Seyyed-Abdolhamid Mirhosseini, *Doing Qualitative Research in Language Education* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

<sup>901</sup> Robert E. Stake, *The Art of Case Study Research* (California: Sage Publications, 1995), 56.

<sup>902</sup> Corbin and Strauss, *Basics of Qualitative Research...*, 201.

<sup>903</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>904</sup> Kathy C. Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory* (California: Sage Publications, 2014), 345.

<sup>905</sup> Michael Q. Patton, *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods: Integrating Theory and Practice* (California: Sage Publications, 2015), 264.

<sup>906</sup> Robert K. Yin, *Qualitative Research from Start to Finish* (New York: Guilford Press, 2011), 311.

3. The participant had completed year 1, 2, and 4 of their French Studies at MIC, not in another tertiary institution in Ireland or elsewhere.
4. The participant had studied traditionally taught classroom-based French modules on campus at MIC (This was an important prerequisite for the study because in year 4 of students' studies, MIC was required to transition to remote learning due to COVID-19. In order to provide an accurate and reliable comparison between student perceptions of traditional and performative teaching practices, participants were required to have previously studied traditionally taught classroom-based French Studies modules).

A purposive/theoretical sampling strategy also permitted the collection of data that facilitated a theory to emerge inductively from the data gathered (i.e., theoretical sampling). Theoretical sampling enabled the identification of 'patterns, concepts, categories, properties, and dimensions of the given phenomena' in the data collected from participants.<sup>907</sup> It ensured that there was a logical organisation to data collection and data analysis procedures. The phased approach to data collection meant that supplementary data could be gathered accordingly based on the evolving theory and until data saturation was satisfied. The overarching aim being to gather sufficient data so that conceptual ideas were developed rather than just accumulating general information.

The final sample or selected case for the present study was composed of 9 participants in their final year of French Studies at MIC as they were identified as information rich cases (1 male, 8 female; age range, 18-24 years (M = 21 years); nationality, Irish) – representing approximately 64% of the cohort (14 students in total). In year 1 of their French Studies, two students learned French at ab-initio/beginner level (aligned with the CEFR A2 level) and seven students learned French at advanced level (aligned with the CEFR B2 level). By year four of their French Studies, ab-initio and advanced students come together and follow the same language course and content modules. In year 1 and 2 of their French Studies, ab-initio and advanced students all follow the same traditionally taught classroom-based content modules. While in year 3, all French Studies students are required to spend at least one semester abroad in a French speaking country. In spite of the COVID-19 pandemic, all participants in the present case study spent at least one semester abroad in a French speaking country as part of their studies.

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<sup>907</sup> Stanley B. Thompson, "Sample Size and Grounded Theory," *JOAAG* 5, no. 1 (2011): 45.



### 6.1.3 Ethical Considerations

Before the research study could be conducted, it was necessary firstly to seek ethical approval from MIREC. MIREC ensures that all research undertaken by MIC staff and postgraduate researchers ‘is carried out to the highest possible standards, with regard for the welfare of human participants and in accordance with recognised legal, professional and ethical standards’.<sup>908</sup> As part of the ethics application, a thorough description of the study was provided. This included information about the research methodology, research participants, ethical considerations, consent and confidentiality, and storage of materials. Copies of the data collection procedures and instruments along with the participant information letter, consent form, and debriefing form were also submitted (See Appendices B, C, and D). The application was successful, and permission was granted to conduct the study in January 2019 (See Appendix A). In light of COVID-19 restrictions, the researcher liaised with MIREC regarding certain methodological changes that would have to be made to the research design. In order to maintain the feasibility of the remote research study, data collection procedures would have to be conducted online through the survey software Qualtrics and semi-structured interviews would have to take place through the video conferencing software Microsoft Teams. These methodological changes were reviewed and approved by MIREC before the research was undertaken in September 2020.

Subsequently, it was necessary to obtain permission from the Department of French Studies at MIC prior to observing the French Production and Performance Module and beginning data collection. A request to conduct the proposed study was submitted to the Head of the Department of French Studies. As part of this request, the research proposal, ethics approval ID, research questionnaires, and proposed schedule for data collection were submitted. This request was successful, and the researcher was granted permission to begin the study in September 2020. During the semester, the researcher also sent a formal written request to the module coordinator to ask if he would be willing to take part in a short interview to share his insights about the module and if some of his resources could be reproduced in the thesis. This request was also successful (See Appendix H). In accordance with the ethical standards of MIREC, the following ethical principles were upheld in the present study:

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<sup>908</sup> Mary Immaculate College, “Research Ethics,” MIC, accessed February 14, 2021. <https://www.mic.ul.ie/research/research-graduate-school/supports/research-ethics?index=0>

- ***The Use of Human Participants***

The use of human participants was essential to this study as data gathered from them provided an established foundation for the research and ensured its successful completion. Personal responses and perspectives from human participants played a fundamental role in this investigation, firstly, by shedding light on why FLA manifests itself in the language student in the Irish context and, secondly, by providing insight into the effectiveness of performative intervention in alleviating FLA. Responses recorded from human participants consolidated theoretical discoveries and also provided evidence-based findings that contributed to and enhanced current knowledge of FLA intervention strategies. Moreover, data gathered from human participants permitted evidence-based judgements to be made in order to ensure the greatest benefit possible to students, educators, and educational organisations. Therefore, data from human participants was vital to the present study in order to expand knowledge and awareness about the factors that cause FLA to manifest itself in the French language student in the Irish context and to investigate the effectiveness of possible interventions that may alleviate it.

- ***Participation of the Final Year French Studies Student Cohort***

At the time of this investigation, the principal investigator taught and interacted with students at various levels of their French language study in the Department of French Studies at MIC. Thus, it was inevitable that some of their students may decide to participate in the proposed research study. The investigation is student-focused; therefore, the inclusion of the learner's voice provides significant evidence that informs the CRQs that frame this study. In order to develop their ethical literacy about research integrity while carrying out fieldwork, the principal researcher attended the MIC Research and Graduate School (i.e., RGSO) seminar on *Being an Ethical Researcher: Ethical Considerations in Research*. This seminar provided invaluable information about upholding ethical practice when collecting data from human participants.

In accordance with MIREC policy, the principal researcher was not involved in the introduction of the research project to their students who, at the time, were potential research participants. A gatekeeper informed potential participants about the study orally and they were also given a participant information sheet. The gatekeeper explained that participation was voluntary, and if at any time they would like to leave the study they may do so without

consequence. Participants were also informed that all data collected would be anonymous and that no names would be recorded when analysing data. All participants were given an identification number to safeguard their privacy. Before partaking in the study, students were required to give their informed consent. An independent party was also sought to conduct the semi-structured interviews. The principal researcher was only given the anonymised transcripts (all digitally recorded data was destroyed). It is also worth noting that the principal researcher did not teach the final year French Studies cohort in the second semester of their final year when they engaged in the performance-based intervention.

- ***Informed Consent, Anonymity, and Confidentiality***

Before beginning the research study, informed consent was sought by the principal investigator. Participants were given adequate and important details about the study orally and participants were also given a participant information sheet. This information provided potential participants with sufficient knowledge about the study so they could make an informed decision about whether they would like to participate or not. If they wished to participate, they were instructed to contact the principal researcher, who would then provide them with an informed consent form to sign. Participants were informed that all data collected would be anonymous and that no names would be recorded when analysing data. All participants were given an identification number to safeguard their privacy. In order to protect the data collected, it was stored on a private computer and any files transferred to a memory key were password-protected. These files and passwords were only available to the principal researcher and their supervisor throughout the research process.

- ***Storage of Materials***

In order to ensure that the data was findable and readily accessible throughout the research process and for reference thereafter, it was stored under a filing system specifically dedicated to the study's files and folders, all of which were given clearly identifiable file names. To safeguard the data collected, it was stored on a private computer and any files transferred to a memory key were password-protected. These files and passwords were only made available to the principal investigator and their supervisor during the research process. Data loss was prevented by storing files safely, regularly backing them up and creating back-up files throughout the course of the research. In order to verify that the data was FAIR (i.e., findability,

accessibility, interoperability, and reusability), all data collected and used over the course of the study was documented by using a research journal. This journal was used to observe the progress of the research. It contained data from the documents that were used in the study including questionnaires, interview transcripts/notes, as well as contact information for the sources used, and the various sections of written reports.

Data has since been stored and retained in accordance with MIC's data retention policy, which states that anonymised data may be retained indefinitely. Once transcribed all audio/digital recordings from semi-structured interviews were destroyed. Moreover, confidential information, including personal data was destroyed immediately once it was no longer required. During the research process, participant data, files, and passwords were only made available to the principal investigator and their supervisor. The data collected during the study will be made available for verification and reuse through the College network data repository: Mary Immaculate Research Repository (i.e., MIRR). This repository digitally preserves and stores the thesis so that its contents are interoperable and may be used for reference by other researchers. Data is managed and governed in compliance with statutory requirements, for example the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulation.

#### - *Theoretical Sensitivity*

Theoretical sensitivity is a fundamental property of the grounded theory research process. It refers to the researcher's ability to recognise when they have discovered a data segment that is significant to the developing and emerging theory. This may occur during data generation, collection, and analysis. More specifically, theoretical sensitivity pertains to the researcher's 'ability to give meaning to the data, and the capacity to [...] separate what is pertinent from that which is not'.<sup>909</sup> In order to foster theoretical sensitivity, it is important to consider 'life from multiple vantage points, make comparisons, follow leads, and build on ideas'.<sup>910</sup> Theoretical sensitivity constantly develops and strengthens throughout the research process. As theoretical sensitivity evolves and is employed throughout the research process, it permits 'the analytical focus to be directed towards theory development and ultimately results in an integrated and abstract [grounded theory]'.<sup>911</sup> Different analytic tools and techniques can be applied during the research process to heighten theoretical sensitivity. In order to cultivate

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<sup>909</sup> Strauss and Corbin, *Basics of Qualitative Research...*, 41.

<sup>910</sup> Charmaz, *Constructing Grounded Theory*, 233.

<sup>911</sup> Chun Tie et al., "Grounded theory research..." 7.

theoretical sensitivity in the present study, the researcher employed the following analytic tools: (1) Reading and engaging with the literature, (2) Identifying and extracting codes from the data, (3) Developing core categories, (4) Reviewing memos taken during the research process, and (5) Regularly referring back to data gathered to discern further lines of investigation.

#### **6.1.4 Research Limitations**

A research limitation refers to a possible weakness in the study that may impact upon the overall investigation. Research limitations, unlike research delimitations, are components of the research process that are not within the control of the researcher. In this context, limitations which may influence the trajectory of a research study include methodological factors, such as sample size and research design, or researcher-based factors, including time constraints and limited access to data or resources. Although a research limitation is an ‘imposed restriction’, that extends beyond a researcher’s control, it is important to acknowledge their role in the research process because of the potential impact they may have on the conclusions reached and recommendations put forward.<sup>912</sup> As with the majority of studies, the design of the current study was subject to some limitations. Although the operationalisation process of the present investigation is believed to have sustained construct validity, it is still important to acknowledge certain factors which may have limited the results of the study.

##### **- *Timing of the Investigation***

As noted in the introduction to this thesis, the present investigation was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Globally, approximately 1.37 billion learners, across the different education sectors, were required to transition to distance education, which was facilitated through the use of different forms of ICT.<sup>913</sup> While the chief focus of this study was to explore the impact of FLA on the L2 acquisition process in the Irish third-level context and evaluate the potential of performative pedagogy in alleviating this negative affective response, the paradigm shift in delivering education, as a result of the pandemic, left a marked impression

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<sup>912</sup> Dimitrios Theofanidis and Antigoni Fountouki, “Limitations and Delimitations in the Research Process,” *Perioperative Nursing* 7, no. 3 (2018): 156.

<sup>913</sup> UNESCO, “1.37 billion students now home as COVID-19 school closures expand, ministers scale up multimedia approaches to ensure learning continuity.”

on this investigation. Most notably, it impacted upon the dynamic of the study, changing its direction from a ‘physical study’ that would have taken place on the MIC campus to a ‘remote study’ that occurred online owing to survey software, video conferencing software, and observations of the online teaching environment.

Furthermore, this paradigm shift raised new questions in the context of the present investigation, which were not integral to the original research design process. Technology became an important independent variable in the investigation and, thus, its role had to be contemplated in terms of its potential impact on students’ levels of FLA and the extent of its applicability in the realisation of the performance-based intervention. This unanticipated obstacle, however, also presented an opportunity to evaluate and gain important new insights into intersections between performance-based education, innovative pedagogical practices, technology, and language learning. The educational consequences of COVID-19, which initially appeared to be a barrier to the successful realisation of this investigation, in fact gave it a newfound and timely focus. It enabled the present study to consider how educational and learning requirements, in light of COVID-19, are transforming the manner in which technology is being used in the realm of drama/theatre education and also foreign language education.

#### - *Sample Size*

As noted in Chapter Four of this thesis, at present, the study of foreign languages at third-level in Ireland has a low uptake rate. Thus, the principal researcher anticipated that the target sample size for the investigation may be small. In this regard, important steps were taken during the methodological design process to ensure the reliability and validity of this preliminary investigation. Firstly, a mixed methods approach was adopted in order to facilitate an in-depth research analysis that gained detailed and meaningful data from the participants. Secondly, the sampling strategy employed, purposive/theoretical sampling, was chosen on the basis of its ‘capacity to provide richly-textured information, relevant to the phenomenon under investigation’ and, further, because of ‘the greater efficiency’ this sampling strategy has demonstrated relative to random sampling strategies.<sup>914</sup> Finally, the selected sample size was compared with other sample sizes in the educational literature on FLA intervention studies.

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<sup>914</sup> Konstantina Vasileiou et al., “Characterising and Justifying Sample Size Sufficiency in Interview-Based Studies: Systematic Analysis of Qualitative Health Research over a 15-year Period,” *BMC Medical Research Methodology* 18, no. 148 (2018): 2.

Toyama and Yamazaki's (2021) excellent systematic review of investigations into FLA revealed that three quarters of all FLA intervention studies 'had sample sizes smaller than 100'.<sup>915</sup> Sample sizes are largely dependent on or dictated by the type of research being undertaken. In light of this investigation's small sample size (N = 9), a case study research method was chosen in order to serve as a springboard from which other researchers may advance knowledge of FLA in the Irish third-level context.

Case study research may centre on 'a specific event, person, place, thing, organization, or unit (or if more than one, typically a small number)'.<sup>916</sup> Unlike the generalisation that materialises from the outcome of solely quantitative studies, case study research permits transferability of the principles and insight gained from the case to other situations. In general, samples selected for qualitative research are usually small in size 'in order to support the depth of case-oriented analysis that is fundamental to this mode of inquiry'.<sup>917</sup> Since FLA has never been investigated in the Irish context, to the researcher's best knowledge, this preliminary case study investigation offers new potentially useful and valuable information that may assist in advancing the Irish educational sphere with regard to language learning. While it was not one of the underlying objectives of the present study to explore the variable of gender, moving forward, it is recommended that this demographic factor is examined in the Irish context in order to interrogate if a gender difference exists relative to FLA levels. A gender analysis using a wider research demographic would foreseeably assist in understanding and further developing the knowledge base on students' experiences of language learning in the Irish context.

## 6.2 Conclusion

This chapter presented the reader with a comprehensive overview of the research methodology employed in the present investigation. This pre-post case study falls under the category of educational research. Within this context, an applied research strategy was employed in order to bridge the gap between theory and practice and make informed evidence-based recommendations for future research. A multiple research design was adopted in order to address both the exploratory and descriptive components of this study, and a mixed methods

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<sup>915</sup> Toyama and Yamazaki, "Classroom Interventions and Foreign Language Anxiety..."

<sup>916</sup> Gary J. Burkholder et al., *Research Design and Methods: An Applied Guide for the Scholar-Practitioner* (California: SAGE Publications, 2019), 246.

<sup>917</sup> Vasileiou et al., "Characterising and Justifying Sample Size..." 2.

research approach was implemented in order to gain an in-depth and holistic picture of the psychological phenomenon under investigation. The research framework was designed under an inductive paradigm, drawing greatly on interpretivist grounded theory philosophy. Having outlined the research methodology that framed this investigation, the discussion now moves to present case study: stage I, which sought to uncover the extent to which final year students of French in the Irish third-level context experience FLA, and to explore the principal factors that trigger this reaction in the language learning process.



## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **CASE STUDY: STAGE I PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND FINDINGS**

## **Chapter Seven**

### **Case Study: Stage I - Presentation, Analysis, and Findings**

#### **7.0 Introduction**

This chapter, divided into two principal sections, introduces the first stage of the present case study, which sought to uncover the extent to which final year students of French in the Irish third-level context experience FLA, and to explore the principal factors that trigger this reaction in the language learning process. The first section of this chapter begins by outlining the data collection procedures that took place. It then goes on to describe the data collection instruments that were employed and clarifies the methods implemented in order to analyse and interpret the data. The second section of this chapter then moves on to present the statistical analyses that were conducted and the findings that emerged from the analyses.

#### **7.1 Data Collection Procedures and Instruments**

The first stage of data collection took place in October 2020. Final year students of French at MIC had just started semester one of the academic year 2020/2021. Due to the impact of COVID-19, the autumn semester began slightly later in comparison to previous academic years. Further, the tertiary institution was required to confront the impact of COVID-19 by implementing a significant paradigm shift to online teaching and learning. This particular cohort of final year students had been on their semester/year abroad or work placement in year three of their studies (academic year 2019/2020). Prior to their return to university in September 2020, they had always engaged in traditional classroom-based teaching and learning on the MIC campus and also while abroad. Therefore, it was the first time that this student cohort would experience a significant change in their teaching and learning environment. In this regard, it was important to consider distance learning in the revised research design as a potential confounding or independent variable that may impact on students' perceptions of the language learning process and, more specifically, on their levels of FLA.

The data collection process began with the administering of the following questionnaires (See Appendices E, F, and G):

1. Socio-Demographic Questionnaire.
2. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS; Horwitz et al. 1986).
3. Questionnaire on Attitudes Towards ICT in French Language Learning.

All questionnaires were developed using the MIC approved online survey software Qualtrics. All participants were emailed an anonymous link to the respective surveys which safeguarded their anonymity. Specific instructions were provided for the respondents at the beginning of each questionnaire. All questionnaires and instructions were written in English to ensure that the participants clearly understood what was expected and asked of them. Participants were informed to contact the principal investigator if they had any problems completing the questionnaires or if they encountered any technical difficulties. The average response time to complete the three questionnaires was approximately 37 minutes. In November 2020, when stage I data analysis was completed, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the participants in order to gain further insight into the qualitative findings. What follows proceeds to further elaborate upon the data instruments employed and the methods used in order to analyse and interpret the data gathered.

- ***Socio-Demographic Questionnaire***

The *Socio-demographic Questionnaire* was comprised of thirty-four questions and consisted of both open-ended and closed questions. Closed questions prompted participants to select either a “yes” or “no” answer, chose from a set list of statements, or Likert-type questions (e.g., Q. 28 – *In your opinion, is it better to learn the French language from a native speaker or non-native speaker of the language? a. Native speaker / b. Non-native speaker*). When further detail was required, participants were prompted to briefly explain their responses to closed-ended questions. The first section of the questionnaire contained socio-demographic questions (e.g., Q.13 – *How many years have you been studying the French language?*). The second section of the questionnaire was directed towards students’ language learning experiences (e.g., Q.23 – *When learning French, are you more at ease in the classroom if you*

are being taught by a native French speaker, an anglophone teacher, or a teacher who is the same nationality as you?). Finally, the third section of the questionnaire was oriented towards students' perceptions of the language learning and teaching process (e.g., Q. 27 – *Can a good teacher/teaching method influence how well you enjoy learning a language?*). Socio-demographic data provided important insight into participants' perspectives on and attitudes towards the language learning process. Further, it provided supporting evidence from which certain inferences could be drawn about students' levels of FLA.

- ***Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS; Horwitz et al. 1986)***

Horwitz et al.'s FLCAS, as noted in Chapter Three, was used to measure participants' baseline levels of FLA toward traditional classroom-based French language instruction. Students were provided with clear instructions at the beginning of the questionnaire, which stated that they should respond to the questionnaire based exclusively on their experience of traditional French language instruction (i.e., Year 1 to 3 of their French Studies). It was important that this was clearly articulated to students in light of the recent pivot to online learning due to COVID-19.

The FLCAS is a 33-item scale measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Each statement in the scale assesses one of three analogies of FLA: (1) Communication apprehension (e.g., Item 4 – *It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language*), (2) Fear of negative evaluation (e.g., Item 19 – *I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make*), and (3) Test anxiety (e.g., Item 10 – *I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class*). FLA levels were calculated by computing responses to all questions. Negatively worded items on the FLCAS (e.g., Item 2 – *I don't worry about making mistakes in language class*) were reversed scored.<sup>918</sup> The option *strongly disagree* is given a score of 5, while the option *strongly agree* is given a score of 1.

The 25<sup>th</sup> and the 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles were used as anxiety score cut-off points (See Table 6.1). A score between 33 and 66 indicated low anxiety, 67 to 132 moderate anxiety, and 133 or above high anxiety. When final scores were computed, the participants were categorised as

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<sup>918</sup> FLCAS items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22, 28, and 32 were negatively worded and reverse coded during analysis. Reversing coding, that is to say, rephrasing a positive statement/question in a negative way, is a validation strategy employed for survey items in order to ensure that participants are giving consistent responses throughout the questionnaire.

having either low, medium, or high anxiety levels. Initial analyses of the scale indicated its excellent internal consistency, demonstrating a Cronbach’s alpha value of  $\alpha = .93$ .<sup>919</sup> The FLCAS continues to be regularly implemented in research to investigate the psychological construct of FLA. In a reanalysis of the scale, it reached a Cronbach’s Alpha of  $\alpha = .95$ ; furthermore, all standards of an optimal rating scale were met.<sup>920</sup> The FLCAS displayed strong internal consistency in the present study ( $\alpha = .93$ ).

**Table 7.1 FLA Score Ranges.**

<u>Anxiety Level</u>	<u>Score Range</u>
Low	33-66
Moderate	67-132
High	133-165

**- Questionnaire on Attitudes Towards ICT in French Language Learning**

It was important to consider how a swift pivot to online education may have impacted on final year students’ experiences of French language learning. Therefore, a questionnaire was developed to explore students’ attitudes towards the use of ICT in French language learning. The first section of the questionnaire asked students to list the different technology-based tools or online learning platforms and resources that they used to learn French both at university and at home. The second section of the questionnaire comprised a 20-item scale measured on a 5-point Likert scale (5 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree).

Questions were developed in order to examine how students felt remote learning impacted on their language learning (e.g., Q. 10 – *Using ICT helps me to improve my French*

<sup>919</sup> A Cronbach’s alpha is a measure of the internal consistency and reliability of a scale (i.e., a group of scale items). A scale demonstrating a Cronbach’s alpha of .70 or above is accepted in the social sciences as having good internal consistency, .80 or above better internal consistency, and .90 or above the best internal consistency.

<sup>920</sup> Panayiotis Panayides and Miranda Jane Walker, “Evaluating the Psychometric Properties of the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale for Cypriot Senior High School EFL Students: The Rasch Measurement Approach,” *Europe’s Journal of Psychology* 9, no. 3 (2013).

*listening skills*), how students considered and compared online learning to traditional learning (e.g., Q. 19 – *I think using technology to learn French is more beneficial compared to traditional language instruction in the classroom*) and, finally, how at ease students were using ICT and interacting in an online environment (e.g. Q. 6 – *I feel more confident speaking in French online than face-to-face with my language teacher*).

Students’ attitudes towards ICT were calculated by computing responses to all questions. Negatively worded items on the questionnaire (e.g., Q. 18 – *Using ICT for French language lessons makes me feel tense and uncomfortable*) were reversed scored. The option *strongly agree* was given a score of 1, while the option *strongly disagree* is given a score of 5. A lower score indicated a more positive attitude towards the use of ICT in French instruction, while a higher score indicated a negative outlook towards the use of ICT in French instruction. The present study used the 25<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentile cut off points to classify positive, indifferent, and negative attitudes towards ICT in French instruction. A score between 75 and 100 indicated a negative attitude towards ICT, between 51 to 74 an indifferent attitude, and between 20 to 50 a positive attitude. When final scores were computed, the participants were categorised as having either a positive, indifferent, or negative attitude towards ICT in French instruction. The questionnaire developed as part of this research to explore students’ attitudes towards the use of ICT in French language learning had very good internal consistency ( $\alpha = .86$ ).

**Table 7.2 Student Attitudes Toward ICT in Language Instruction Score Ranges.**

<u>Attitudes toward ICT</u>	<u>Score Range</u>
Positive	20-50
Indifferent	51-74
Negative	75-100

## **7.2 Data Analysis and Findings**

In order to perform statistical analyses, all data were entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences Software (SPSS), version 27. This section presents the results of each analysis carried out to address the aims for stage I of the case study.<sup>921</sup> The section begins with an analysis of participants' socio-demographic data. It then goes on to present baseline FLCAS scores towards traditional French instruction. This includes results of the descriptive analyses followed by inferential statistics and, finally, the coding process procedure. Responses documented during qualitative analysis are also used to substantiate and draw inferences about quantitative findings. Subsequently, results of analyses conducted to address secondary research questions that provide additional and supporting data for stage I are presented.

### **7.2.1 Socio-Demographic Data Analysis**

Socio-demographic data confirmed that the first language of all participants was English. They all received their primary, secondary, and tertiary education in Ireland. Participants were all in their final year of French Studies at MIC. As part of their joint honours degree, four participants paired French with Irish, four paired French with English and, finally, one participant was studying French and History. Seven participants reported that French was the first foreign language that they learned, the remaining two participants listed Spanish and German respectively as the first foreign they learned. Seven participants recorded that they learned their first foreign language in secondary school, the remaining two participants learned their first foreign language in primary school. The age range at which participants learned their first foreign language was between 4 to 13 years of age (mean = 11.33).

At the time of data collection students had been studying the French language for an average of 7.67 years (range 4-10 years). Three participants categorised their French language learning experience as strongly positive, while six participants classified their experience as mostly positive. Three factors were identified as major contributing factors to participants' positive French language learning experience: (1) Teacher; (2) Teaching style; (3) Classroom practices. These variables will be examined in greater detail later in this chapter. Five participants indicated that they were primarily taught by female instructors. The remaining three participants noted that they were taught by an even mix of male and female instructors.

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<sup>921</sup> The second stage of this case study is presented and elaborated upon in Chapter Eight.

In all cases, participants indicated that they were at ease regardless of the gender of their French language instructor.

Five participants reported that they were taught by both native French speakers and instructors of another nationality (primarily Irish) and four participants recorded that they were mainly taught by speakers of another nationality (primarily Irish). Six participants reported that they were more at ease when taught by an instructor who is the same nationality as them. One participant listed that they were most at ease with an anglophone instructor, another noted that they were most at ease with a native French speaker and, finally, one participant responded that they were at ease in all circumstances. Participant responses revealed that they were more at ease with a French language instructor who was the same nationality as them or an anglophone instructor for three principal reasons: (1) Empathy towards their French language learning experience, (2) Similar language learning background, and (3) Their ability to recognise difficulties of the French language. Again, these factors will be explored in greater depth later in this chapter.



**Table 7.3 Socio-Demographic Data.**

<i>Participant No.</i>	<i>Participant L1</i>	<i>First L2 learned</i>	<i>Age at which L2 was learned</i>	<i>Subject Combination</i>	<i>Education Location (Primary, Secondary, &amp; Tertiary)</i>	<i>Instructor Nationality</i>	<i>Instructor (with which student was most at ease)</i>
<b>1.</b>	English	French	14 (Secondary School)	French & Irish	Ireland	Native French speakers & native Irish instructors.	Instructor the same nationality as them.
<b>2.</b>	English	French	12 (Secondary School)	French & Irish	Ireland	Native French speakers & native Irish instructors.	Instructor the same nationality as them.
<b>3.</b>	English	French	13 (Secondary School)	French & English	Ireland	Speakers of another nationality (primarily Irish)	At ease in all circumstances.
<b>4.</b>	English	French	14 (Secondary School)	French & English	Ireland	Native French speakers & native Irish instructors.	Instructor the same nationality as them.
<b>5.</b>	English	French	13 (Secondary School)	French & English	Ireland	Speakers of another nationality (primarily Irish)	Native French speaker.
<b>6.</b>	English	French	13 (Secondary School)	French & English	Ireland	Native French speakers & native Irish instructors.	Instructor the same nationality as them.
<b>7.</b>	English	French	13 (Secondary School)	French & English	Ireland	Native French speakers & native Irish instructors.	Anglophone instructor.
<b>8.</b>	English	Spanish	4 (Primary School)	French & Irish	Ireland	Speakers of another nationality (primarily Irish)	Instructor the same nationality as them.
<b>9.</b>	English	German	6 (Primary School)	French & Irish	Ireland	Speakers of another nationality (primarily Irish)	Instructor the same nationality as them.

### 7.2.2 Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) Data Analysis

As previously noted, the scoring system for the FLCAS awards between 1 to 5 points for each statement, depending on the extent to which participants agree or disagree with that statement. A participant's total score represents their level of FLA. The lowest possible score a participant could receive was 33 and the highest possible score was 165. The neutral mean was 82.5. The higher the score, the more anxious the participant. The 25<sup>th</sup> and the 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles were used to determine anxiety cut-off points. A score between 33 to 66 indicated low anxiety, 67 to 132 moderate anxiety, and 133 to 165 high anxiety. When final scores were computed, participants were categorised as having either low, moderate, or high anxiety.

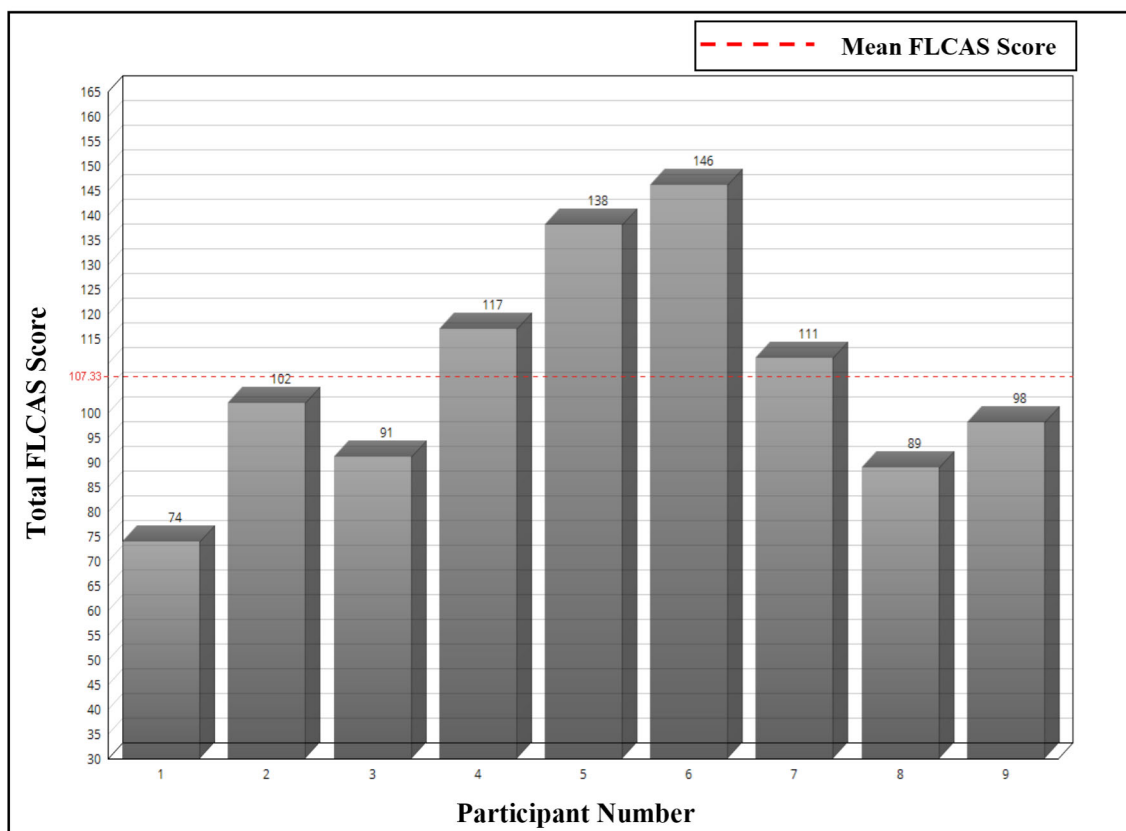
The maximum mean score that any FLCAS item could receive was five. This would indicate that the item caused anxiety among all participants. Participant responses were used to calculate a mean score for each individual FLCAS item. For example, a score of 28, when divided by the number of participants (i.e., 9) gives a mean score of 3.11. Horwitz (2008) specifies that 'students with averages around 3 should be considered slightly anxious, while students with averages below 3 are probably not very anxious. Students who average near 4 and above are probably fairly anxious.'<sup>922</sup> This point of reference was used to interpret participants' individual responses to each FLCAS item and also total scores for each item based on participants' combined responses.

To measure the level of FLA among the participants in this study, means for responses to each FLCAS item were calculated. The mean language anxiety score for the nine participants was 107.22 (SD = 23.33),<sup>923</sup> which indicated that the majority of participants were moderately anxious. As displayed in Figure 7.1, the minimum FLCAS score was 74 and the maximum score was 146 (Range = 72). Seven participants were in the moderate anxiety category, while two participants were in the high anxiety category. score was 146 (Range = 72).

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<sup>922</sup> Elaine Horwitz, *Becoming a language teacher: A practical guide to second language learning and teaching* (Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon, 2008), 235.

<sup>923</sup> SD = Standard Deviation. A standard deviation is a measure of how dispersed the data is in relation to the mean. A low standard deviation means data are clustered around the mean, and a high standard deviation implies data are more spread out.



**Figure 7.1 Total Participant FLCAS Scores.**

The 33 items on the FLCAS are categorised into three components of FLA. Eleven items on the scale assess communication apprehension,<sup>924</sup> fifteen items assess test anxiety<sup>925</sup> and, finally, seven items assess fear of negative evaluation<sup>926</sup> in the language classroom. In this study, the mean score for the first category, communication apprehension, was 3.45. The mean score for the second category, test anxiety, was 3.15 and the mean score for the final category, fear of negative evaluation, was 3.14.

Participants responded anxiously (mean 3 or slightly above\*) to 24 out of the 33 statements on the FLCAS and highly anxious (mean 3.5 or above\*\*) to 13 statements in particular. The overall mean anxiety scores for each FLCAS item are shown in Table 6.3. The average FLCAS score of participants in this study was 3.25, which indicated that students were fairly anxious. Figure 6.2 provides an overview of the 13 items that participants responded to

<sup>924</sup> Items that assess communication apprehension include items 1, 4, 9, 14, 15, 18, 24, 27, 29, 30, and 32.

<sup>925</sup> Items that assess test anxiety include items 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, and 28.

<sup>926</sup> Items that assess fear of evaluation include items 2, 7, 13, 19, 23, 31, and 33.

with high levels of anxiety. Participants responded with high levels of anxiety to five items under the category of communication apprehension, five items under the category of test anxiety, and three items under the category of fear of negative evaluation.

Table 7.4 provides an overview of the coding process that was performed based on the qualitative data analysis, which was supported by participants' quantitative data. The coding process highlights connections that were made between the open and axial codes. Ultimately, it presents the final selective code, the core variable that connected all codes, which emerged from the procedure. In the present investigation, the main reason why final year students of French in the Irish third-level context experienced FLA stemmed from their negative self-focused cognitions, which interfered with the language learning process. The basis of students' negative self-related cognitions is elaborated upon later in this chapter. However, it is important firstly to consider secondary analyses which may assist in interpreting these research findings.

**Table 7.4 Mean FLA Score for each FLCAS Item.**

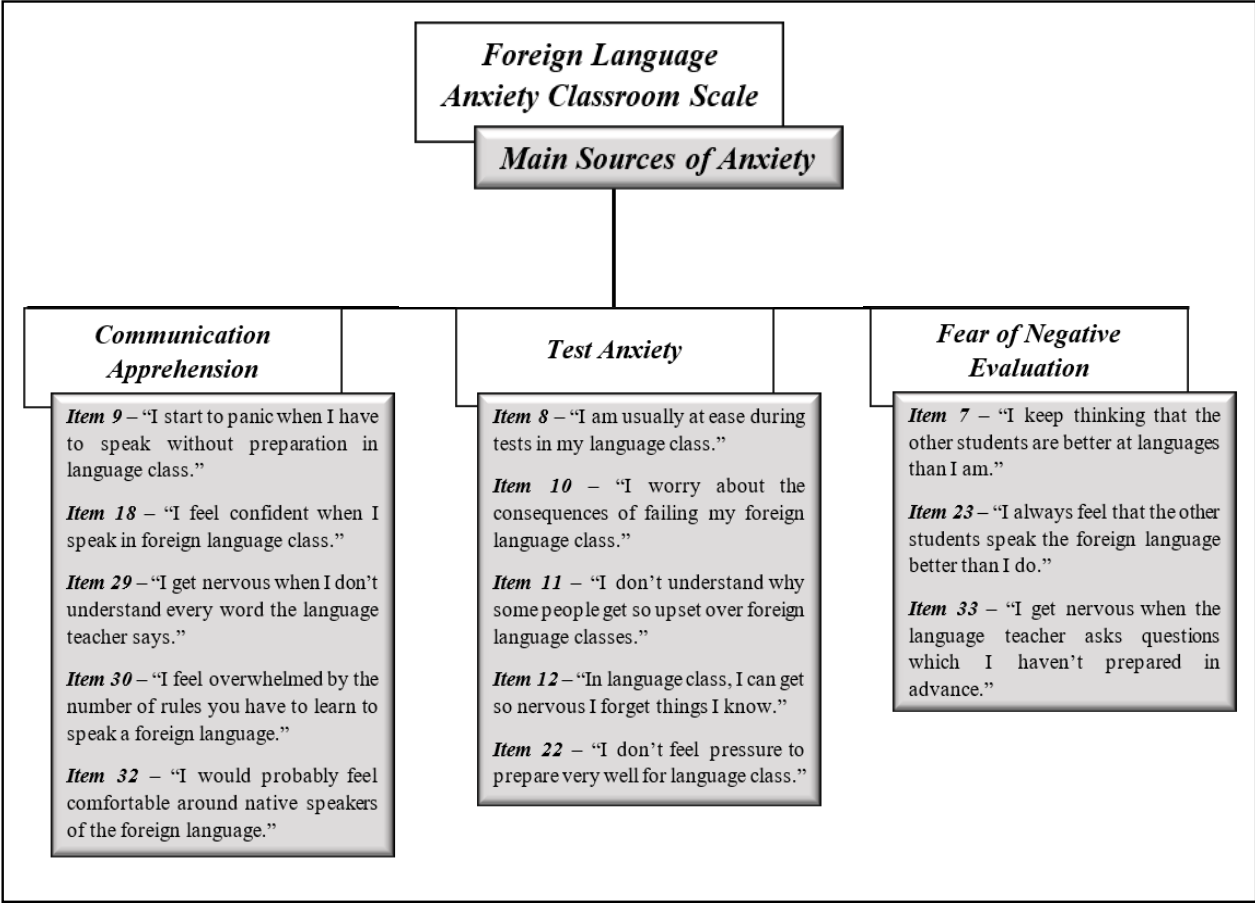
FLCAS Item	Mean
1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.	3.11*
2. I <i>don't</i> worry about making mistakes in language class.	3.11*
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.	3.11*
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.	3.22*
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.	2.22
6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.	2.00
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.	3.89**
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.	4.11**
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.	3.78**
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.	4.44**
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.	3.89**
12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.	3.56**
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.	2.78
14. I would <i>not</i> be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.	3.22*
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.	2.78
16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.	2.67
17. I often feel like not going to my language class.	2.22
18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.	3.89**

Note: \* = Mean participants' scores indicated that they were slightly anxious (mean 3 or slightly above)  
 \*\* = Mean participants' scores indicated that they were highly anxious (mean 3.5 or above)

**Table 7.4 Continued.**

FLCAS Item	Mean
19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.	2.44
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.	3.00*
21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.	2.22
22. I <i>don't</i> feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.	4.11**
23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.	3.78**
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.	3.44*
25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.	3.33*
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.	3.22*
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.	3.00*
28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.	3.11*
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.	3.78**
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.	4.11**
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.	2.44
32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.	3.67**
33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.	3.56**

*Note:* \* = Mean participants' scores indicated that they were slightly anxious (mean 3 or slightly above)  
 \*\* = Mean participants' scores indicated that they were highly anxious (mean 3.5 or above)



**Figure 7.2 Participants’ Main Sources of FLA.**

Table 7.5 Coding Process Breakdown.

<u>Open Codes</u>	<u>Properties</u>	<u>Examples of participants' words</u>	<u>Axial Codes</u>
<p><u>Fear of real and anticipated communication</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of confidence in speaking ability (production).</li> <li>▪ Fear of not understanding the target language (teacher).</li> <li>▪ Overwhelmed by number of grammar rules they need to learn.</li> <li>▪ Feel as though they do not have enough time to develop language skills.</li> <li>▪ Lack of confidence communicating with French native speakers.</li> <li>▪ Not immersed enough in the language.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “You can learn all the vocabulary but if you don’t have the confidence to say it out loud it’s no good.”</li> <li>- “I just feel I am on my toes a lot more and am more cautious of, for example, my pronunciation when I must speak [in front of a native speaker].”</li> <li>- “[The greatest challenge] is the grammar side of learning a new language.”</li> <li>- “I think living in the place where the language is spoken is better because you are surrounded by it, whereas in a classroom you’re only there for maybe 45 minutes.”</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students lacking confidence in their ability to communicate.</b></p>
<p><u>Fear of Failure</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Value/importance placed on exams and assessment.</li> <li>▪ Pressure to prepare for class.</li> <li>▪ Pace of the class is too quick for some students.</li> <li>▪ Classroom environment at times is not a relaxed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “You can learn a lot from outside the classroom environment where there is sometimes a more relaxed atmosphere.”</li> <li>- “It takes me longer to understand than other students, I think I don’t follow along as quick as they do.”</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students placing importance on exams/assessments to such an extent that it impacts on their recall, and they begin to anticipate failure.</b></p>



	<p>atmosphere, which impacts students' recall.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lack of focus/direction.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “[The greatest challenge is that] it’s a bit aimless at times. Feeling like there’s nothing to work towards. Not being sure of how to prepare for exams.”</li> </ul>	
<p><u>Peer Comparison and Fear of Negative Judgement</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Peer evaluation.</li> <li>▪ Students comparing themselves to other students.</li> <li>▪ Trying to keep up with their peers.</li> <li>▪ Teacher evaluation.</li> <li>▪ Fear of negative evaluation from teacher (particularly for responses students must come up without preparation – links back to communication/apprehension/speaking ability).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- “You are expected to keep up with everyone else and this is especially difficult at third-level because everyone started at different times.”</li> <li>- “I end up feeling stressed and worried I’ll be asked a question and not understand it.”</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students fearing negative judgement from their peers and instructor.</b></p>
<p><b><u>Selective Code</u> - Students’ negative self-focused cognitions mediate the language learning process.</b></p>			

### 7.2.3 How confident are final year French students in the four language skills?

Having established participants' baseline levels of FLA, the present study observed the extent to which final year students of French were confident in the following four language skills. Participants were asked to record how confident they were in each of the four fundamental CEFR language skills: (1) Reading, (2) Writing, (3) Listening, and (4) Speaking, by selecting the statement (Extremely Confident, Fairly Confident, Somewhat Confident, Not Confident at All) that best represented how they felt about their ability. As observed in Table 6.5, one participant recorded that they were extremely confident in their reading ability, four stated that they were fairly confident, and four stated that they were somewhat confident. Regarding writing ability, three participants indicated that they were fairly confident, three noted that they were somewhat confident, and three stated that they were not confident at all. A similar pattern was observed in relation to speaking ability. Finally, three participants reported that they were fairly confident in their listening ability, and five noted that they were only somewhat confident.

**Table 7.6 Final Year French Students' Confidence in the Four Language Skills.**

	<b>Extremely Confident</b>	<b>Fairly Confident</b>	<b>Somewhat Confident</b>	<b>Not Confident at all</b>
<b>Reading</b>	1	4	4	
<b>Writing</b>		3	3	3
<b>Listening</b>		3	5	
<b>Speaking</b>		3	3	3

A Pearson product-moment correlation<sup>927</sup> was carried out to determine if there was a relationship between participants' confidence in the four language skills and their FLCAS score. There was a moderate positive relationship between participants' confidence in the four language skills and their FLCAS score. However, this relationship fell short of statistical significance at the 0.05 level ( $r = .649$ ,  $n = 9$ ,  $p = .059$ ).

<sup>927</sup> A Pearson product-moment correlation assesses of the strength and direction of association that exists between two variables measured on an interval scale.

#### **7.2.4 Do past learning experiences of the Irish language influence students' perspectives of subsequent language learning experiences?**

Socio-demographic data established that all nine participants studied the Irish language at primary and secondary school. Four participants continued their study of Irish at tertiary level. None of the participants attended a *Gaelscoil* or were from an Irish speaking area. Six participants considered the Irish language as Ireland's native language, while the remaining three participants considered it to be an L2. One participant described their Irish language learning experience as strongly positive, five participants reported that their experience was mostly positive, and three participants stated that their experience was neither positive nor negative. A Pearson product-moment correlation was carried out to determine if there was a relationship between participants' French language learning experience and their Irish language learning experience. There was a very weak negative relationship between participants' perspectives on their Irish language learning experience and French language learning experience. The relationship was not statistically significant the 0.05 level ( $r = -.500$ ,  $n = 9$ ,  $p = .170$ ). This suggests that participants' prior Irish language learning experiences did not impact on their French language learning experience. These findings contradict anecdotal evidence that has emerged in the Irish context. However, a possible explanation for these results may be related to the demographic and socio-economic background of the 'case' under investigation.

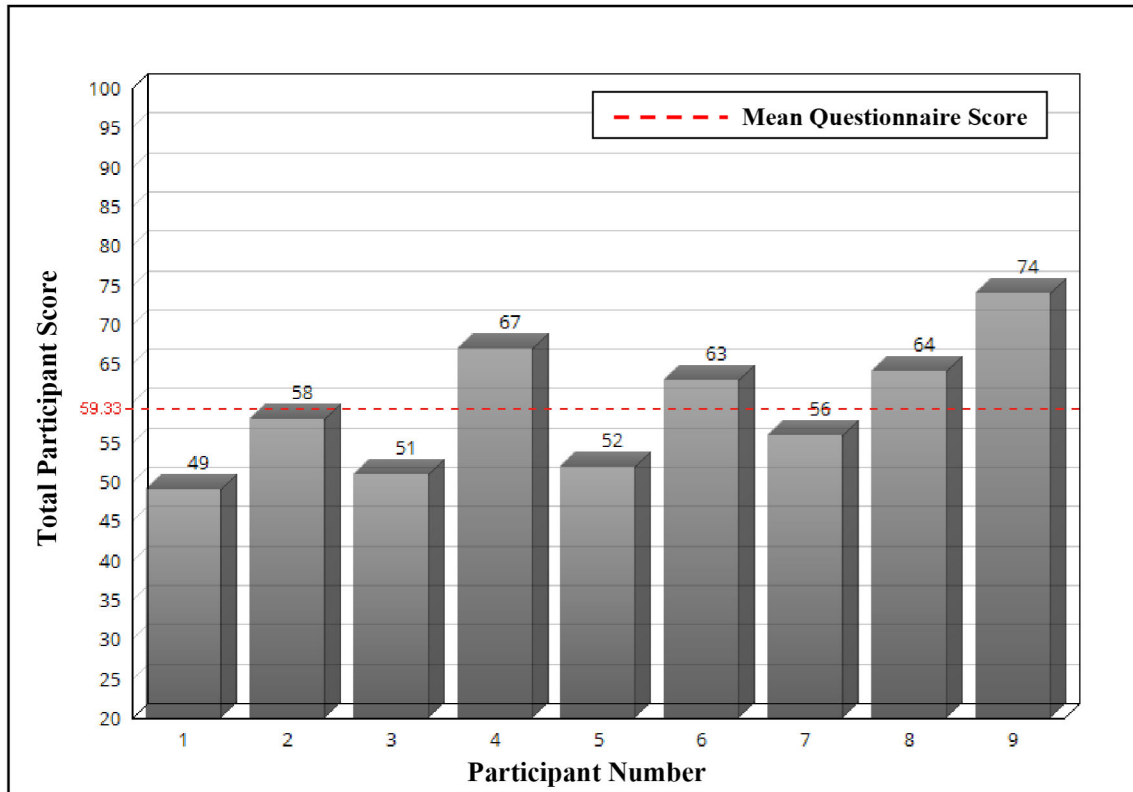
#### **7.2.5 What impact does technology have on the French language learning experience?**

As noted previously, the scoring system for the *Questionnaire on Attitudes Towards ICT in French Language Learning* awards between 1 to 5 points for each statement, depending on the extent to which participants agree or disagree with that statement. A participant's total score represents their attitude towards ICT in French language learning. The lowest possible score a participant could receive was 20 and the highest possible score was 100. The neutral mean was 50. The option strongly agree is given a score of 1, while the option strongly disagree is given a score of 5. A lower total score indicated a more positive attitude towards the use of ICT in French instruction, while a higher score indicated a negative outlook towards the use of ICT in French instruction. The present study used the 25<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> percentile cut off points to classify positive, indifferent, and negative attitudes towards ICT in French instruction. A score between 75 and 100 indicated a negative attitude towards ICT, between 51 to 74 an indifferent attitude,

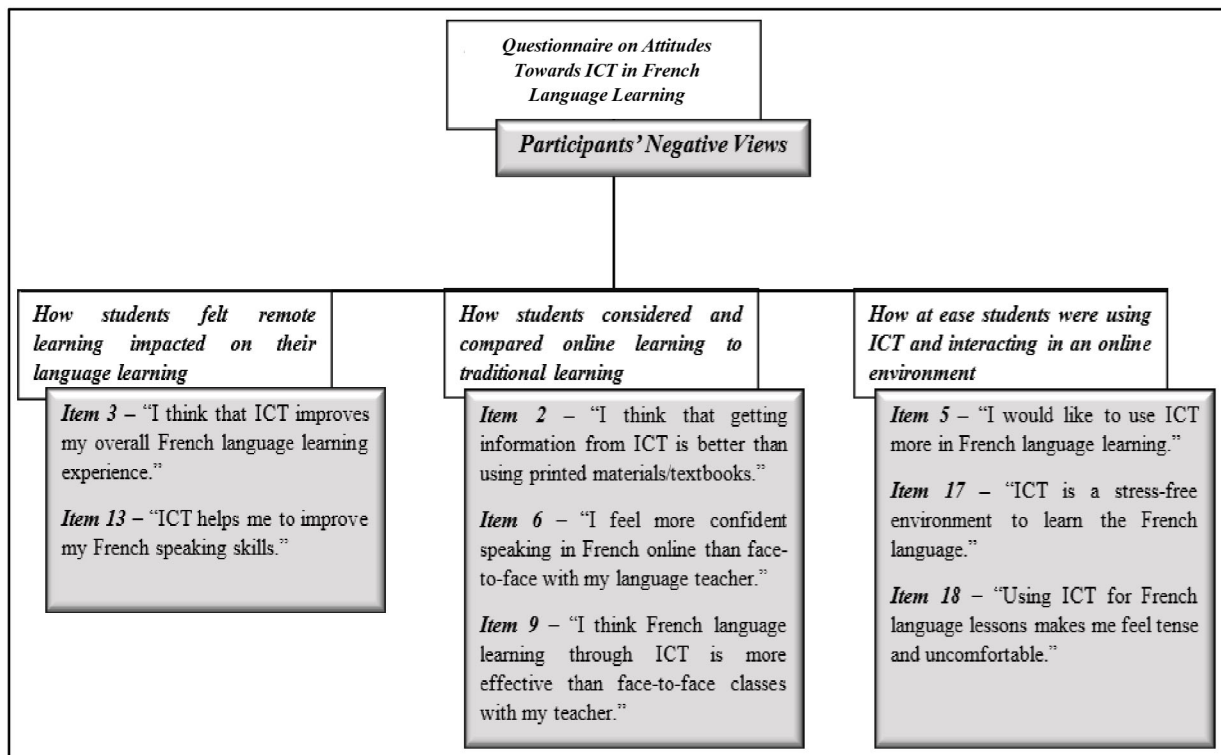
and between 20 to 50 a positive attitude. When final scores were computed, participants were categorised as having either a positive, indifferent, or negative outlook towards ICT in French language learning.

To measure participants' attitudes towards ICT in this study means for responses to each questionnaire item were calculated. The mean score for the nine participants was 59.33 (SD = 8.31), which indicated that the majority of participants had an indifferent attitude towards the use of ICT in French language instruction. As displayed in Figure 6.3, the minimum score was 49, the maximum score was 74 and the range was 25. One participant had a positive attitude towards ICT in French language learning, while the eight remaining participants had an indifferent attitude towards the use of ICT in French language instruction.

The 20 items on the questionnaire were categorised into three main categories. Five items on the scale assessed how students felt remote learning impacted on their language learning, eight items assessed how students considered and compared online learning to traditional learning and, finally, seven items examined how at ease students were using ICT and interacting in an online environment. The mean score for the first category was 2.96. The mean score for the second category was 3.03. And the mean score for the final category was 2.99. Participants responded negatively (mean 3 or slightly above\*) to 8 out of the 20 statements on the questionnaire. The overall mean score for each item on the ICT questionnaire is shown in Table 6.6. The average score of participants in this study was 3.41, which indicated that they had a quite negative outlook on the use of ICT in French language instruction. Figure 6.4 provides an overview of the eight items that participants responded negatively to and the category to which each item belongs. Participants responded negatively to two items under the category of how remote learning impacted on their language learning, three items under the category of how students considered and compared online learning to traditional learning, and three items under the category of how at ease students were using ICT and interacting in an online environment.



**Figure 7.3** Total Participant Scores for Questionnaire on Attitudes Towards ICT in French Language Learning.



**Figure 7.4** Students' Negative Responses on the Questionnaire on Attitudes Towards ICT in French Language Learning.

**Table 7.7 Mean Score for each Item on the ICT in French Language Learning Questionnaire.**

Questionnaire Item	Mean
1. I am comfortable using technology in my French language classes.	2.67
2. I think that getting information from ICT is better than using printed materials/textbooks.	3.67*
3. I think that ICT improves my overall French language learning experience.	3.22*
4. I think that the use of ICT allows me to take greater control of my French language learning.	2.67
5. I would like to use ICT more in French language learning.	3.00*
6. I feel more confident speaking in French online than face-to-face with my language teacher.	2.89
7. I feel more confident speaking in French online than face-to-face with other students in my class.	2.89
8. I feel anxious when I have to use the French language in an online setting.	2.78
9. I think French language learning through ICT is more effective than face-to-face classes with my teacher.	3.78*
10. Using ICT helps me to improve my French listening skills.	2.44
11. ICT makes French language lessons more interesting than traditional module instruction.	2.78
12. ICT makes French language learning easier for independent learning.	2.33
13. ICT helps me to improve my French speaking skills.	3.67*
14. ICT is a useful tool for developing my writing skills in French.	2.78
15. I get more useful feedback in online French lessons.	2.44
16. I am confident working with and using computers for my French language lessons.	2.78
17. ICT is a stress-free environment to learn the French language.	3.89*
18. Using ICT for French language lessons makes me feel tense and uncomfortable.	3.00*
19. I think using technology to learn French is more beneficial compared to traditional language instruction in the classroom.	2.89
20. Using ICT makes French language learning more interesting for me.	2.78

*Note:* \* = Mean participants' scores indicated that they responded negatively to that item (mean 3 or above)

**NB** - Item 18 was reverse scored.

### 7.3 Research Findings and Discussion

Stage I of this investigation set out to uncover the extent to which final year students of French in the Irish third-level context experience FLA, and also set out to interrogate the principal factors that may trigger this reaction in the language learning process. Having reported the results obtained from the questionnaires and the coding breakdown of the data obtained from semi-structured interviews, the present discussion now moves on to examine these results further by presenting the study's major findings.<sup>928</sup> Conclusions drawn from the research findings are based on data gathered as part of the present investigation and are also expounded with reference to the literature and theory reviewed in the previous chapters. This study produced results which corroborated the findings of a great deal of the previous work in the field of SLA; however, it also provided new insight into and a nuanced understanding of the impact that FLA has on third-level students in the Irish context.

#### **7.3.1 Perceptions of the Irish Language: 'Irish is taught like a subject and not as a language!'**

In order to reach a deeper understanding of the nature of FLA in the Irish third-level context, the present study placed emphasis on the voice of the language learner, including their experiences of as well as their thoughts and beliefs about language learning. In this context, it was important firstly to gauge students' opinions and views of the Irish language, which for the vast majority of participants was the first 'second' language they learned in primary school. Interestingly, no correlation was observed between participants' Irish language learning experience and French language learning experience. This suggests that participants' prior Irish language learning experiences in primary, secondary, and tertiary level (at the time of the investigation four participants were completing a joint honours degree in French and Irish) did not impact on their French language learning experiences in secondary and tertiary level. However, it is important to bear in mind that these findings cannot be extrapolated to all third-level students in the Irish context considering the small sample size and, thus, should be interpreted with caution.

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<sup>928</sup> The responses, quotes, and excerpts presented in this section reflect research participants' beliefs, values, and perceptions of the language learning process in the Irish context. All participants gave their informed consent prior to data collection and agreed to the anonymous reproduction of their viewpoints. Direct references to participants' own words remain anonymous and no identifying information has been included.

A common thread that filtered through participant responses centered upon the divergent manner in which the Irish language and French language are taught in the Irish education system. This finding corroborates broader discourse on language teaching practices in the Irish context described in Chapter Four. Interviewees expressed that Irish language learning at primary level was quite enjoyable. Although none of the participants attended a *Gaelscoil*, they expressed that the Irish language was a key component of their daily lessons and was not compartmentalised from the other school subjects on the primary school curriculum. Parallels could be drawn between participant descriptions and the CLIL approach, as discussed in Chapter Four. As one interviewee described:

I feel like it [i.e., Irish] was very much integrated into our class day to day. Irish was taught throughout the day. It wasn't just like "oh we have Irish now at two o'clock!" If the teacher was doing maths, she would ask: "Oh what is this in Irish now?" We weren't in an Irish school or anything, but it was still very much a part of our everyday lessons.

As a result of this integrative approach to Irish language learning at primary level, participants highlighted that they gained a good degree of familiarity with the language and, thus, did not consider it to be a 'daunting' undertaking. Participants described Irish language learning, at this stage of the education system, as 'very easy flowing'. As students began to express their views on Irish language learning at second-level, however, a conflicting discourse emerged. As one interviewee put it: 'Irish is taught like a subject and not as a language!'

A recurrent theme in the interviews was a sense amongst interviewees that Irish language learning became 'forced' and 'drilled into you' at second-level. This, once again, reflects anecdotal evidence about Irish language learning in the Irish context, which suggests that language learning is often taught through traditional teacher-centered approaches as opposed to a communicative-based approach. Participants highlighted that they felt teachers in second-level had a preconceived notion that, upon entering secondary school, students already had a very high standard and understood the fundamentals of Irish and, therefore, could begin learning poetry and novels immediately. In this regard, participant responses suggest that conversational Irish was not focused upon initially at second-level and, consequently, they found it more difficult to develop knowledge of and fluency in the language throughout their studies. For example, one interviewee emphasised:

It [i.e., Irish] wasn't a fun language to learn because you were learning off essays. My teacher focused on rote learning. From first to third year, I had this teacher who would be



like: “Get this sheet, learn this sheet off!” Then the next day she would be like, “Okay, line seventeen, what was that?” and you would have to remember all of them. I was rote learning Irish for the Junior Cert and then for Leaving Cert I had to try to readjust my brain and come up with sentences and essays by myself.

Further, participant discourse accentuated their belief that the Irish language, at second-level, is primarily taught in order to achieve curriculum aims and objectives. Otherwise stated by an interviewee: ‘They teach you so you can do an exam, not so you can speak it.’ In this context, participants expressed strong views. They asserted that Irish language learning was at times a matter of learning material by heart and reciting it without having a clear idea of the purpose or rationale behind the activity: ‘You learn it off, but you don’t know why you are learning it off.’ This impacted upon their overall enjoyment of the language learning process and also made them question the utility of learning the language.

When asked about their perceptions of languages in the Irish context, participants agreed that the English language is looked upon in a practical sense. This finding is consistent with previous research and survey data reviewed in Chapter Four, which highlighted the value attributed to the English language amongst the Irish population. The present investigation, however, also provides some further insight into language learning perceptions in the Irish context by gaining first hand descriptions through the student voice. Indeed, participants expressed their disappointment in and frustration with the Irish Government with regard to Irish language learning. Participants drew attention to the amount of time dedicated to learning Irish in the education system and, yet, at the end of second-level, they emphasise that they are unable to speak it fluently or use it in practice. Findings from the present investigation suggest that students do want to have the capacity to ‘use Irish to its optimum’; however, the transitional phase between primary and second-level appears to impact upon the realisation of this objective.

In this context, participants also began to contemplate the extent to which the Irish language should be considered as the first language of the country:

I feel that the [Irish] Government has let us down in the respect of Irish because ... actually, I think it was one of my roommates said recently: “Oh, do you know that it is coming into the European Parliament that Irish is the first language of Ireland now!” Like this was only a couple of weeks ago ... and I said that’s a load of rubbish! I think they are letting us down. They are putting us through ... let’s say twelve years of schooling and, then at the end of it, they don’t give us the opportunity to use it in real life experiences. It’s not really fair!

While participants did not argue against the fact that the Irish language is in fact a ‘native’ language, they did question the extent to which it should be accorded the status of a first language due to its lack of use in everyday life in the Irish context.<sup>929</sup> It was at this point, in their reflections, that participants also began to contrast the utility of learning the Irish language as opposed to the French language – a foreign language.

Participants emphasised the value of learning French because it provided them with opportunities for work and travel on an international scale. They also assessed its worth in terms of their ability to use the language for communication in contrast to Irish: ‘I could hold a conversation in French, but I would struggle big time with Irish.’ One interviewee stressed: ‘When I started to learn French, the first key was being able to communicate. I found with Irish that we were reading these novels, but we actually couldn’t speak it.’ This, again, substantiates the discourse surrounding the manner in which the Irish and French language are taught in secondary school. These findings suggest that the Irish language and the French language are looked upon differently by students. While the Irish language appears to be primarily taught with an examination on the horizon throughout second-level, the French language, in contrast, appears to be taught in line with the communicative approach of language learning, as observed in chapters two and four, until the end of Junior Cycle. That said, a significant shift in student perceptions of the French language learning process was observed as participants began to recount and detail their experiences of language learning during Senior Cycle.

### **7.3.2 Early Sources of Foreign Language Anxiety: ‘Your Irish accent is just ridiculous.’**

In their accounts of learning French at Senior Cycle, participants highlighted that the teaching focus significantly shifted to the Leaving Certificate Examination.<sup>930</sup> It is within this context that early indications of FLA and, more specifically, communication apprehension may be observed. As noted in Chapter Three, a fear of real and anticipated communication is a key indicator of FLA. Against this backdrop, issues related to accent were particularly prominent in the interview data. Participant accounts emphasise the extent to which teachers accentuated that their ability to speak French was negatively impacted upon due to their Irish accent.

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<sup>929</sup> In this context, it is interesting to note participants’ awareness of the terminology used in the field of SLA, as explored in Chapter One and, further, the nuanced manner in which they employed it in the context of this investigation.

<sup>930</sup> It is worth noting that as many of the students transitioned to Senior Cycle, they were now working with different teachers than those at Junior Cycle.

Mastering an accent is important for pronunciation and understanding in any language; however, it appears that the manner in which some participants' teachers imparted this to them reduced their confidence in their ability to speak the French language. Interviewees revealed that teachers often identified their weaknesses in pronunciation, in what they believed to be a witty or light-hearted manner. For example, students recalled some of the following remarks their teachers passed about their accent when trying to speak in French:

Your Irish accent is just ridiculous!
You're the definition of an Irish person!
Get rid of your Irish accent!
Even at my parent-teacher meeting, she [i.e., the teacher] said to my mother that I had an awful strong Irish accent...and that when I was speaking French I needed to get rid of it!

However, these comments left a mark on the students, as evidenced by their recollection of them years later. Students expressed that they often shied away from speaking French in class because of their fear of 'getting something wrong'. This sentiment also indicates signs of fear of negative evaluation, another important component of FLA. Talking about this issue, one interviewee's response interestingly calls attention to the conflict or inconsistency between a learner's true self and limited self, as advanced by Horwitz et al. (1986):

It made me dread it a little bit [i.e., speaking the French language]. I was kind of like, I don't know how to get rid of my accent ... so when I was speaking, I was like: "Oh my god, am I speaking French? Am I speaking Irish?" I was like: "I don't know." It was just in my head.

Student reactions to using the French language at Senior Cycle were also consistent with the psychological and physical indicators of FLA, as explored in Chapter Three. For example, one student stated: 'When I heard my name called, my stomach would always drop. It wasn't like that for any other class. My mind would just go blank!' These findings further support the proposition that FLA may occur if students are exposed to a negative experience in the foreign language learning context and, as will be observed, that this frame of mind may persist, and in some cases become exacerbated, as students embark on the next stage of their language learning journey in third-level. As one interviewee recalled: 'It [i.e., nervousness during language learning] was brought on from my experience at secondary school.'

### **7.3.3 The Situation-Specific Nature of Foreign Language Anxiety: ‘I’m not an anxious person at all, but for the French oral exams, it was 100% just pure anxiety.’**

It is interesting to note that participant descriptions specified that the nervousness they felt was unique to foreign language learning: ‘It’s a different kind of nervousness’ / ‘No, it’s just for French!’ (Student response when asked if they felt as nervous studying other subjects). Collectively, both quantitative and qualitative findings suggest that the anxiety students experience when learning a foreign language is a distinct situation-specific anxiety, thus, substantiating Horwitz et al.’s proposition that the anxiety encountered during language learning is a situation-specific anxiety.

As mentioned in Chapter Four, a learner’s ecosystem contemplates their relationship with the different interrelated levels of their environment. Within the context of the present investigation, fear of negative teacher and peer evaluation were identified as the most significant sources or predictors of anxiety at the microlevel, which informs students’ perceptions, values, and beliefs about language learning. This source of anxiety principally derived from students’ communication apprehension and fear of negative judgement. These performance anxieties recurred throughout student discourse as the most significant consequences of students’ FLA.

#### **- *Teacher Evaluation***

Students articulated feelings of anxiousness when they were required to speak in class without preparation or as one participant stated: ‘on the spot’, and when the teacher asked questions which they did not have the opportunity to prepare in advance. Student responses indicated that they may feel overwhelmed and anxious when producing output due to a lack of confidence in their speaking ability. Talking about this issue, one student explained: ‘You can learn all of the vocabulary, but if you don’t have the confidence to say it out loud it’s no good.’ Students’ responses also highlighted negative future oriented thoughts and feelings with regard to language learning events that had not or were yet to happen: ‘I end up feeling stressed and worried I’ll be asked a question and not understand it.’

As noted in Chapter Three, Horwitz et al. (1986) assert that, during the language learning process, students may become very self-conscious when they must engage in speaking activities which may reveal their incompetency, and these feelings often lead to fear or panic.

The results of this study are consistent with these findings. Participants were particularly sensitive to teacher evaluation of their speaking ability:

And then you get so nervous. You are afraid that your voice is going to break. And you are like: “Oh god, what am I going to say...”
---

It’s more daunting in French because if you mumble your words, they [i.e., teachers/natives] won’t understand what you’re saying.
---

While language instructor gender was not found to be an anxiety inducing factor for students in the present investigation, there was, however, a strong relationship between language instructor nationality and FLA. Six students in this case study reported that they prefer to be taught by a French language instructor who is the same nationality as them (i.e., Irish), while one student reported that they were most at ease when being taught by an anglophone speaker.

Student responses indicated that they felt the empathic resonance of an Irish or anglophone instructor would be greater than that of a native speaker. A common view amongst students was that instructors of the same nationality have a similar language learning background and can appreciate the challenges and difficulties that can arise when learning French as a foreign language. For example, one student said: ‘I suppose they may have a similar background to me and understand my culture and know what struggles non-native speakers of the French language may encounter’, while another explained: ‘The native speaker can correct us but may be less sympathetic to common mistakes we make as anglophones.’ These findings corroborate Bigdeli and Bai’s (2009) proposition that a sense of detachment may precipitate anxiety when learners feel that there is a lack of empathic understanding in their interpersonal environment.

Further, student responses suggest that communication apprehension increases in the presence of a native speaker because of students’ fear of negative evaluation: ‘I just feel I am on my toes a lot more and am more cautious of, for example, my pronunciation when I must speak [in front of a native speaker].’ This finding matches those observed in earlier studies such as Çağatay (2015), who discovered that FLA escalates at a higher rate when exchanging with a native speaker of the target language in comparison to a classmate.

- **Peer Evaluation**

Peer comparison was also found to be a significant source that triggered students' FLA. Horwitz et al. (1986) propose that the classroom environment may seem threatening to the language learner as they must communicate with and in front of their peers in a foreign language and often feel as though they are being evaluated while doing so.<sup>931</sup> The findings in this study suggest that communication apprehension and fear of negative judgement were two of the principle underlying factors that contributed to students engaging in negative peer comparison. This result is consistent with that of Young (1990), who found that students display higher levels of anxiety when they are required to speak in front of their classmates.<sup>932</sup>

In the context of the present case study, competitiveness emerged as a negative effect of peer comparison. Students in this study reported that they felt other students were better at the French language than them and, thus, were judging every little error they made:

I kept thinking to myself ... "Oh, what if I get that wrong!" People [i.e., peers] will think I'm stupid!
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Oh, she can't speak French ... They [i.e., peers] didn't say that, but that's what they would be thinking, you know, if you did make a mistake.
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Further, students' lack of confidence in their speaking ability led them to believe that their peers spoke the language better than them. Competitiveness has been identified as a significant contributing factor to students' FLA. As observed in Chapter Three, Bailey (1983) accentuates that competitiveness can provoke anxiety when learners engage in peer comparison or compare their performance in the foreign language to an idealised self-image,<sup>933</sup> while Aydin (2008) asserts that self-comparison can cause learners to display more competitive behaviours as they place emphasis on achievement and success in the foreign language.<sup>934</sup> Dewaele, Petrides, and Furnham (2008) also affirm that a language learner's self-perception is a significant predictor

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<sup>931</sup> Horwitz et al., *Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety*.

<sup>932</sup> Dolly J. Young, "An Investigation of Students' Perspectives on Anxiety and Speaking," *Foreign Language Annals* 23, no. 6 (1990).

<sup>933</sup> Kathleen M. Bailey, "Competitiveness and Anxiety in Adult Second Language Acquisition: Looking at and through the Diary Studies," in *Classroom Oriented Research in Second Language Acquisition*, eds. Seliger Herbert W. and Michael H. Long (Massachusetts: Newbury House, 1983).

<sup>934</sup> Selami Aydin, "An investigation on the language anxiety and fear of negative evaluation among Turkish EFL Learners," *Asian EFL Journal* 30, no. 1 (2008).

of FLA.<sup>935</sup> Learners who have lower self-esteem are more likely to undervalue their ability and are more inclined to worry how their peers perceive them. Learners' fear of making mistakes in front of their peers may, therefore, make them less inclined to participate and use the language both inside and beyond the classroom walls.

#### 7.3.4 Using French Outside of the Classroom: 'Wait...did I say that wrong?'

Previous research has demonstrated that language learners generally experience higher levels of anxiety when they must produce language away from the language classroom. As noted in Chapter Three, since the foreign language is being used outside of the classroom, the student does not regard it as a feature of the learning process, but as a feature of a real-world context. In the context of the present investigation, participants' Erasmus placement in a French speaking country was a defining moment in their studies as it was the first time that they spent an extended period away from their friends and family surrounded by another language and culture. In this respect, acculturation – the process through which language learners engage in cultural exchange and adaptation – was a crucial element of the language acquisition process. As highlighted in chapters two and three, research studies, such as that of Tollefson (1991), have demonstrated that learners who desire to assimilate with a target language community are generally more successful learners than those who are preoccupied with maintaining their original cultural identity.

Findings from the present study indicate that students' communication apprehension and fear of negative judgement impacted negatively on the acculturation process. While students highlighted the advantages of their placement abroad, such as a perceived improvement in their receptive skills, they also emphasised that even after a period of immersion they would not feel comfortable conversing with native French speakers and would be less confident in a French speaking country:

It [i.e., the placement] made me second guess myself and wonder if my level was good enough after years of study.
It was just a bit of a culture shock. I was like: "Oh my god, what's the word for this? What's the word for that? How do I ask for this?" You know like basic things you learn in the first year of secondary school.'

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<sup>935</sup> Jean-Marc Dewaele, K.V. Petrides, and Adrian Furnham, "The effects of trait emotional intelligence and sociobiographical variables on communicative anxiety and foreign language anxiety among adult multilinguals: A review and empirical investigation," *Language Learning* 58, no. 4 (2008).

It can be a culture shock when you go to a French speaking country for the first time and realise the gravity of feeling every single person around you speaks nothing but French!

Further, some participants noted that their communication apprehension and fear of negative judgement was exacerbated by the lack of conversational reciprocity exhibited by French natives:

I was on Erasmus by myself, so I was trying to get to know the town. I was just stopping people, you know, asking them where the grocery store or pharmacy was and they would just walk straight past me. It made me ask myself: “Wait ... did I say that wrong?”

This perception also played a significant role in students’ tendency to ‘other’ the target language community, leading them to believe that ‘Irish and French personalities don’t mix well’, and also contemplating whether they would return to France: ‘I don’t know if I would go back to live in that area.’ Thus, findings from the present investigation suggest that the language anxiety students experience in the classroom environment may filter down to and, in some cases, become intensified in the real-world context.

As observed in Chapter Three, Guiora (1983) attributes the conflict of the ‘self’ to the ‘profoundly unsettling psychological proposition’ that foreign language learning can impress on students’.<sup>936</sup> The language learner may, therefore, perceive foreign language use outside of the classroom as a threat to their self-concept and world-concepts, particularly if they are not performing in keeping with their idealised self-image. Furthermore, language production away from the classroom is not regarded as an exercise within the classroom environment, but a feature of the learner’s reality. This represents a clear challenge for the learner if they are unable to appear or perform in keeping with the identity that they have constructed in their native language.

Consistent with previous findings, oral production, in particular, was found to be the greatest threat to the learner’s self-concept, self-identity, and ego, which they had ‘formed in their first language as reasonable and intelligent individuals.’<sup>937</sup> It could, thus, be argued that the more anxiety a learner experiences, the more they will disconnect themselves from the

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<sup>936</sup> Alexander Z. Guiora, “The dialectic of language acquisition,” *Language Learning* 33, no. 5 (1983): 8.

<sup>937</sup> *Ibid.*



language and, by extension, the culture they are studying. As a result, the student may revert back to what they know and are comfortable with, referred to as ‘the unchanging self’ by Bigdeli and Bai.

When participants were asked: ‘What do you think are the greatest challenges that learners of French face in the Irish education system?’, the overwhelming response from students was a lack of immersion in the target language. An immersive teaching environment reflects that of a natural learning environment, such as that proposed in Krashen’s natural approach. It is comparable to the environment in which children learn their first language, wherein they are continuously exposed to the target language. Hence, in the present case study, it could conceivably be hypothesised that students’ lack of consistent exposure to and engagement in the French language, as they transition through the different stages of the education system, is a key component of the framework that explains students’ communication apprehension and fear of negative evaluation in the third-level context.

### **7.3.5 Test Anxiety: ‘That essay was a killer!’**

Data analysis also observed an association between course assessment and students’ test anxiety. As noted in Chapter Three, test anxiety is a type of performance anxiety that arises from students’ fear of failure. Although students agreed that traditional course delivery was structured very well and self-correction exercises allowed them to improve their marks, they expressed that they still feared the consequences of failing their foreign language class, and also explained that they were usually not at ease during tests. Further, findings suggest that test anxiety precipitated the language learner’s affective filter. Students described how they could get so nervous in language class that they often forgot things that they knew. They also highlighted that they felt a certain amount of pressure to prepare very well for language class and became discouraged when they did their best on an assessment and they received a poor mark. Participant remarks indicated that they focused on the assessments they were weaker in: ‘That essay was a killer! It discouraged me because it was the worst grade I ever got – that’s why I remember it.’ Students’ negative self-focused cognitions also appear to have had a negative impact on their confidence levels in the four language skills. No students reported that they were extremely confident in their speaking, writing, and listening ability, while only one student reported they were extremely confident in their reading ability.

## 7.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented, analysed, and interpreted the findings from the first stage of the present case study. The following CRQ framed this stage of the investigation: To what extent do final year students of French in the Irish third-level context experience FLA, and what are the principal factors that trigger this reaction? Firstly, the data collection procedures and instruments were outlined, data analysis was then presented and, finally, both the qualitative and quantitative data was interpreted, and findings expounded.

In the context of the present investigation, students experienced moderate to high levels of anxiety towards traditional French language instruction. Evidence gathered in the investigation indicated that students' FLA stemmed from two performance anxieties in particular: (1) Communication apprehension and (2) Fear of negative evaluation. Data highlighted that students' earliest experiences of these performance anxieties stemmed from fear of negative teacher and peer evaluation during the Senior Cycle of their Leaving Certificate Examination. Findings from the first stage of this case study indicate that students' experiences of FLA at second level persisted upon entering third-level education. Similar data patterns were observed with regard to students' feelings of apprehension towards oral production both inside and beyond the classroom due to fear of negative judgement. FLA appears to have negatively impacted upon students' confidence in the French language, specifically with respect to oral production and, further, the perceptions they have of their proficiency in the French language. In this context, it could thus be concluded that, in the present investigation, students' negative self-focused cognitions significantly mediate the language learning process.

Having established students' baseline FLA levels and explored the manner in which this psychological phenomenon impacts upon learners of French in the Irish third-level context, Chapter Eight moves on to explore the potential of performative pedagogy in alleviating students' language anxiety by presenting case study: stage II, which explores the extent to which performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, lowers or alleviates students' levels of FLA in the Irish third-level context.

# **CHAPTER EIGHT**

## **CASE STUDY: STAGE II PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND FINDINGS**

## Chapter Eight

### Case Study: Stage II - Presentation, Analysis, and Findings

#### 8.0 Introduction

Set against the backdrop of a French Production and Performance Module, the second part of this case study sought to explore to what extent performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, may lower or alleviate students' FLA levels. As noted in Chapter Five, in the present investigation, theatre is employed as an all-embracing term that refers to 'a group effort that is both process- and product-oriented [...] in which every single participant is invited to negotiate and overcome personal, linguistic, social, cultural, and psychological differences and hurdles'.<sup>938</sup> Originally designed and developed as a final year French Studies module, in 2017, by Dr. Loïc Guyon, Head of the Department of French Studies at MIC, County Limerick, Ireland, the French Production and Performance Module functions as a unique lens through which we may advance knowledge of and better understand the impact of performance and, more specifically, theatre practices on the process foreign language learning in the Irish third-level context.

Divided into three main sections, the chapter begins by providing a detailed overview of the French Production and Performance Module. This *tour d'horizon* is informed by the Module outline, specific details provided by the Module coordinator during a semi-structured interview, and researcher observations throughout the duration of the module. The second section then describes the data collection instruments employed and clarifies the methods implemented in order to analyse and interpret the data. The third section presents the statistical analyses that were conducted and, finally, the research findings are expounded and interpreted.

#### 8.1 French Production and Performance Module Overview

The Department of French Studies, at MIC, offers the French Production and Performance Module (Module code – FR4777) in the second semester (Autumn) of students' final year of undergraduate studies (i.e., fourth year of French studies). The Module is compulsory and is

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<sup>938</sup> Matthias, "Acting is the Recovery of a Lost Physical Reading..." 65.

worth a total of 6 credits.<sup>939</sup> This case study examines and gives an account of the French Production and Performance Module carried out in the academic year 2020/2021. Dr. Loïc Guyon, who has coordinated the Module since 2017, is both the language instructor and director/facilitator of the play. He also oversees theatrical training for the amateur actors, and in pre-Covid times was responsible for stage management and design. The Module lasts for one academic semester, from mid-January to the end of April, and a final live performance marks the culmination of the exercise.<sup>940</sup>

Each year, the number of students involved in the Module varies (e.g., 5 students in 2016/2017; 16 students in 2021/2022). In the academic year 2020/2021, a total number of fourteen students participated in the module and production of the play. Students had 3 contact hours per week (a total of 36 contact hours over the 12-week semester) and were advised to engage in up to seven hours of private study at home on a weekly basis. In the academic year 2020/2021, Dr. Guyon ensured that all online classes and rehearsals, which took place two days a week, were synchronous in order to meaningfully engage the learners, and also to coordinate the module in as similar a manner possible to pre-Covid times. All of the students involved in the module were in their fourth and final year of the Bachelor of Arts honours degree at MIC. Among the fourteen students undertaking the module, two students began learning French in their first year at ab-initio level, and the remaining twelve students followed the advanced programme.

In pre-Covid times, both classes and rehearsals took place on the MIC campus in tutorial spaces for the duration of the semester. Early productions of the play were performed on campus in the former MIC theatre and more recent performances took place in the Blue parlour room on campus (See Figure 8.1), which is decorated to reflect the historical period of the play. Students embodied their assigned character in costume (See Figure 8.1 and 8.2) and also had the opportunity to use props in the different scenes they performed (See Figure 8.3).<sup>941</sup>

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<sup>939</sup> A credit, in the Irish third-level education system, is the nominal weight assigned to each module.

<sup>940</sup> The in-person live performance was not possible in the academic year 2020/2021 due to the pandemic.

<sup>941</sup> Permission was received by Dr. Guyon to reproduce the images taken during the production of the play and also the resources used in order to facilitate the teaching of the play (See Appendix H). All artefacts included in this chapter are credited to Dr. Guyon.



**Figure 8.1 Last On-site Production of *Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné* Pre-Covid.** This image was taken in the Blue Parlor during the last on-site production of the play, which took place on the MIC campus in pre-Covid times. Students in the image are all in the costume of their assigned character and the Module coordinator and designer, Dr. Guyon, can be seen in the foreground of the image.



**Figure 8.2 First Production of *Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné*.** This image was taken, in 2017, during the first production of the play. This specific production took place in the former MIC theatre. Students in the image are all in the costume of their assigned character.



**Figure 8.3** Props used in the Production of *Le Doge et Le Dernier Jour d'un condamné*. These stills are taken from the first production of the play in 2017. Several of the props used in the original production may be observed in the shots. Those less visible include parchment and an ink quill, jugs, a prison bed, and a pocket watch.

Dr. Guyon clarified that there were two principal sources of inspiration for the development of the French Production and Performance Module. Firstly, his personal interest in the play, which arose during his own PhD research and, secondly, his motivation to find a new way to engage the students when teaching both French language and literature. In 2017, the French Production and Performance Module replaced another traditional module on crime and justice that Dr. Guyon had created when he first began teaching at MIC. As part of this module, students were required to read a number of texts, either extracts or books, discuss them in class and complete an essay assessment. However, Dr. Guyon revealed that after a while he realised the students were not completing the assigned reading or engaging with the texts. Thus, the teaching experience became quite frustrating because the ‘lectures were only one-way’ and ‘there was no interaction anymore.’ Since the students had not engaged with the reading material, Dr. Guyon explained that they did not have any questions, were unable to give their opinions, or discuss key themes in the texts. In this regard, Dr. Guyon accentuated that he had to start ‘spoon feeding’ the students during the lectures. This, he explains, became ‘demotivating’ for him and was not productive for the students.

Thus, Dr. Guyon’s interest in theatre led him to develop the French Production and Performance Module. He undertook training with a specialist in using theatre for pedagogical purposes and became both lecturer and stage director. Throughout the years, he would also invite guest lecturers to come to do workshops with the students. For example, in 2017, Odile Ledru-Menot, a singing and acting coach, came to work on articulation with the students and, in 2022, Dr. Brian Desmond, programme leader of drama and theatre studies at the University of Chester, England, did a session on acting techniques, placing great emphasis on play, coordination, and cooperation. Dr. Guyon did, however, highlight that developing the module at the outset was a challenging undertaking because he had to ‘start everything from scratch’. He had to source the costumes, figure out where the play would be performed and, naturally, he was not sure how the students would react to the non-traditional module either.

Prior to taking part in the present investigation, Dr. Guyon informed the researcher that he had never heard of FLA and had never experienced the psychological phenomenon when learning the English language. When asked why he never experienced nervousness during language learning, at first, he jokingly responded that perhaps he ‘had too much self-confidence’. However, he then went on to explain that when learning English at school in France a lot of time was initially spent on written English. Therefore, when he did move to England, at the outset, he found it difficult to speak in English and understand what people



were telling him, but he persevered and ‘went for it’. He mentioned that, at the time, he thought to himself: ‘Everyone can see that I am a foreigner, so if I make mistakes they won’t really mind.’

Dr. Guyon then transitioned to speak about anxiety in the context of the Module. He explained that he knew ‘it was a big ask of the students’ to perform as they were not students of drama or theatre. Further, for the 2020/2021 academic year, the unexpected shift from stage to screen due to covid restrictions also posed a significant challenge in comparison to previous years. This, in a way, also made him nervous because he did not know for certain how everything would take shape. Over the years, however, he saw how much the students enjoyed taking part in the play, which gave him some reassurance. He noted that, every semester, when students find out that they are going to have to perform in a play for the final assessment their ‘faces become white’. However, as the semester continues, they begin to let loose and have fun, ultimately, resulting in a positive learning experience. Dr. Guyon stressed that, during a theatre performance, it is said ‘that if you don’t actually have butterflies, when you go out on stage, it’s bad.’ It is, thus, important for students to feel this sensation in order to perform well: ‘This little amount of nervousness that students may feel at the beginning of the semester is perhaps something that will help them to learn better in the end.’

The French Production and Performance Module has two primary aims: (1) To expand students’ knowledge of French cultural history and (2) To increase students’ proficiency in the French language. In order to achieve these aims, the module was divided into two key stages. Weeks one to eight were process-oriented, during which the students analysed the text and completed translation, vocabulary, and pronunciation exercises. Thus, students not only learned about the historical context that the play is based upon but also improved their productive and receptive language skills. In the context of this case study, the significance of voice (i.e., tone, register, pronunciation) in the performative process was also emphasised. Weeks nine to twelve were product-oriented, during which the students took part in weekly rehearsals in preparation for the final performance. In this regard, students acquired some basic acting techniques which equipped and prepared them to embody their allocated role during rehearsals and the final performance. Module assessment was divided into two key parts: (1) Assessment *of* learning (40%) and (2) Assessment *as* learning (60%). In week nine, students were required to complete a short summative assessment (assessment of learning) based upon various aspects of the play explored, including vocabulary, expression, characters, and context. In week twelve, students then took part in the performance-based assessment (assessment as

learning) during which they performed selected scenes from the play. Students were assessed on their communication skills as well as the fluency of their French and the accuracy of their pronunciation and intonation.

The French theatre play that students both studied and performed is entitled *Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné, ou le Canon d'alarme* (1829). It is a 19<sup>th</sup>-century vaudeville written by Antoine Simonnin and Louis Vanderburch. The cultural and artistic context that frames the satire sheds light on the fall of Classicism and the rise of Romanticism. The play, divided into three *tableaus*, is made up of nineteen scenes in total. Each year, the students act out seven of the scenes during their final performance (i.e., scenes III, V, IX, X, XI, XII, and XIII – See Appendix Q for the French version and Appendix R for the English version of the scenes). Throughout the module, students are given the necessary tools and skills to embody their allocated character and perform in a live play, all the while developing their French foreign language skills. Students are also given the opportunity to understand their mistakes (e.g., pronunciation, translation) and learn how they may improve and develop their skillset before the final performance. Although the final performance is a concrete goal for which students are able to plan and prepare in advance, the entire process leading up to the performance was vitally important for the overall development and construction of the play.

Structurally, the researcher observed that the module was divided into three key stages: (1) Preparation, (2) Rehearsal, and (3) Performance. The researcher noted significant parallels between the manner in which the module coordinator facilitated the performative learning experience and educational theorist and psychologist David Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory (ELT). Kolb's ELT is based on the premise that:

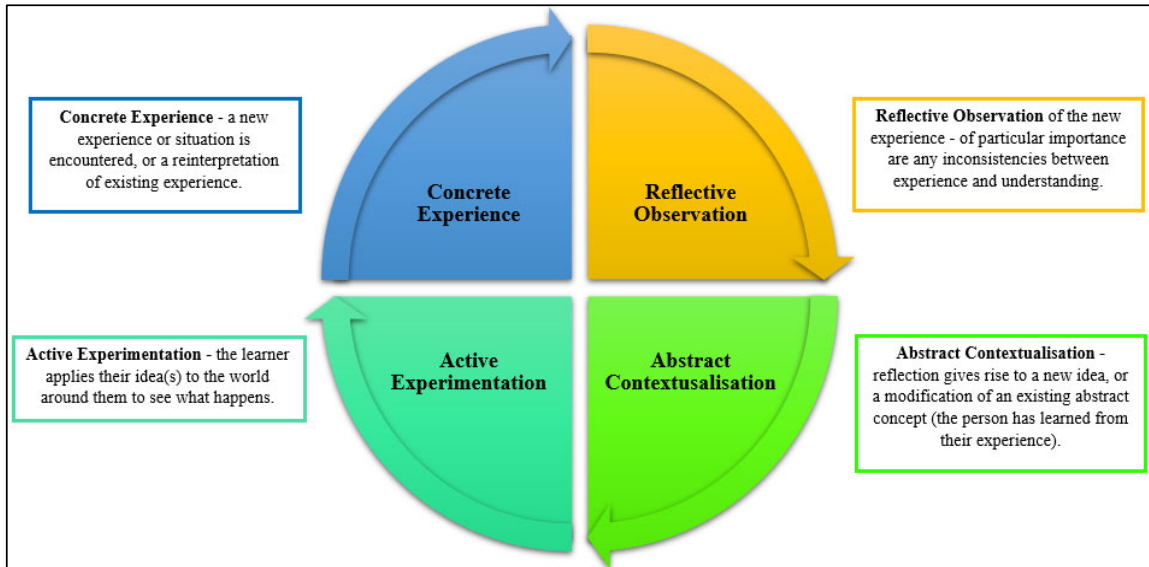
Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping experience and transforming it.<sup>942</sup>

Similar to social-interactionist perspectives of learning, Kolb proposes that knowledge is developed in and through interactions in a learner's environment. As part of his theory, Kolb developed an experiential learning cycle that may be enacted during each interaction to facilitate the learning continuum (See Figure 8.4). Subject to the learner's environment, they

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<sup>942</sup> David A. Kolb, *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1984), 41.

may enter the cycle at any point, and provided that the learner transitions through each phase of cycle, they should grasp the task or skill they are trying to master.



**Figure 8.4 Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle.** Adapted from McLeod (2017), this diagram illustrates the four main phases of Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle.

In order to further elucidate the application of Kolb's experiential learning cycle, in the context of the present investigation, Figure 8.5 provides two different examples that illustrate the practical manner in which students engaged with experiential learning throughout the course of the performative learning experience. In the first example, the learners entered the experiential learning cycle requiring concrete experience. At the outset of the French Production and Performance Module, students did not have the specific knowledge required to perform the play and, therefore, needed concrete experience before they could engage in active experimentation. In the second example, however, students were able to begin the cycle at a different point of entry (i.e., reflective observation) because they had already completed all four phases of the cycle in example one. By balancing and alternating between these phases, the instructor provided a strong foundation upon which he was able to promote effective learning for students with different levels of French proficiency in the university context.

**Example 1.**

**Concrete experience** – Receiving explanations, practical techniques, and advice from the course instructor.

**Abstract conceptualisation** – Understanding the theory (e.g., context of the play, character study, pronunciation, voice) and having a grasp of the performing concept.

**Reflective observation** – Thinking about performing and watching other students perform.

**Active experimentation** – Student using performance skills developed and practical knowledge gained to engage in performance.

**Example 2.**

**Reflective observation** – Students thinking about the lines they have just performed.

**Abstract conceptualisation** – Rereading the script to get a clearer grasp on the lines just performed.

**Concrete experience** – The instructor providing the student with expert pronunciation and voice tips.

**Active experimentation** – Student practicing lines again and taking constructive feedback and critique on board.

**Figure 8.5 Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle in Practice.** This figure provides examples of the manner in which Kolb’s experiential learning cycle was observed in the context of the present investigation.

What follows proceeds to elaborate further on how the stage ‘instructed’ and also how experiential learning was incorporated into the module, by delineating the various activities that took place over the course of the preparation, rehearsal, and performance phases. The discussion is notably scaffolded by the specific details and insight that Dr. Guyon shared with the principal researcher during a semi-structured interview in April 2022.

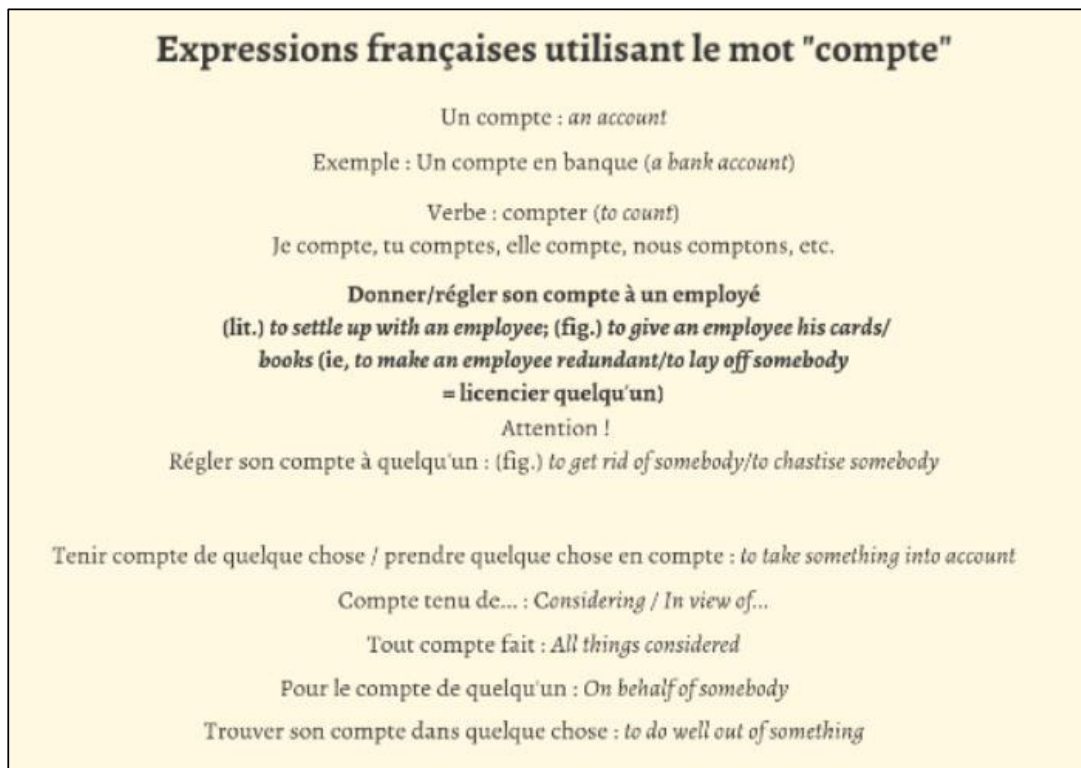
## 1. Preparation

The preparation phase (weeks one to eight) made up a considerable portion of the module. These weeks were process-driven, during which the instructor explored significant background information about the political, cultural, historical, and artistic context of the play with the students. Students also expanded their knowledge of vocabulary and expression in the French language through translation practice and also through word association. Before translating together as a class, the instructor would ask the students to prepare and translate a scene in advance and then they would work through it during class time. If the students had any questions or difficulties, the instructor would provide a detailed breakdown of an expression or line in the play.

For example, in Figure 8.6, the students were working on the following line in the play (Act I, Scene I): ‘Smarra est assise devant un secrétaire; elle tient des mémoires et donne le compte à chacun’ (Smarra is seated in front of a writing desk; she is taking notes and is laying off each person).<sup>943</sup> The students were not familiar with the French expression ‘donner son compte à un employé’ (to lay off/fire an employee). The instructor developed a word web in order to break the expression down. He began by introducing students to material that they were familiar with, for example, the noun ‘un compte’ (an account) and its verbification ‘compter’ (to count), which permitted students to recall their prior knowledge. The instructor then explored other modern ways to express the verb ‘donner son compte à un employé’. Following this activity, the students were then provided with contemporary expressions that they could put into practice in everyday life using the word ‘compte’, such as ‘prendre quelque chose en compte’ (to take something into account) and ‘tout compte fait’ (All things considered).

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<sup>943</sup> Baptiste and Simonnin, *Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné...*, 4.



**Figure 8.6 Example of a Word Web.** This figure illustrates an example of a word web designed by the module coordinator based on the French word ‘compte’ (An account).

The module instructor also integrated different exercises and activities throughout the semester when exploring the play in order to engage the students. These included but were not limited to reflective, translation, vocabulary, and pronunciation activities. In doing so, the students not only learned about the historical context of the play but also improved their productive and receptive language skills. The following include some of the central process-oriented activities and exercises applied throughout the course of the Module:

**A) Creative Exploration and Reflection – Analyse de l’Image**

At the outset of the module, before presenting the play or topic of study, the instructor prompted students to recall their prior knowledge on the subject matter by asking them to analyse a caricature (see Figure 8.7) entitled *Les Romantiques Chassés du Temple* (1838). By asking students exploratory questions, it led them to envisage imaginative reconstructions (e.g., What was happening? Where was it happening? Why was it happening? Who was involved?). The learners had to ‘challenge their taken for granted knowledge and attune to their

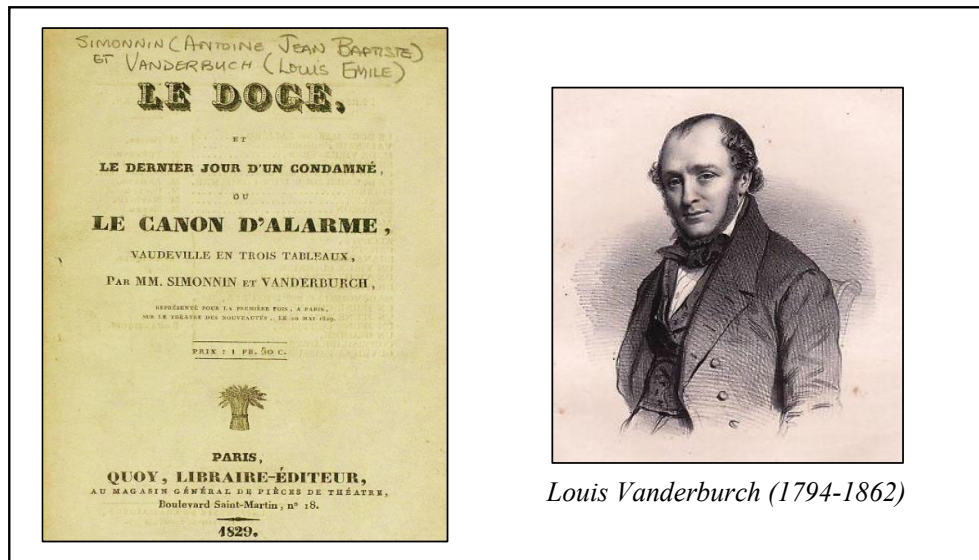
unconscious knowledge', which was a constant activity that took place over the course of the module in and through other activities.<sup>944</sup> This introductory exercise was a highly effective means through which students could be both introduced to the module topic and content and begin to envision alternate existences.



**Figure 8.7 Les Romantiques Chassés du Temple.** This caricature appeared in *La Caricature provisoire*, n° 6, December 23, 1838. It shows Victor Hugo and Alexandre Dumas being chased from the *Théâtre Français* and heading towards the *Théâtre de la Renais Cendre*, which alludes to the *Théâtre de la Renaissance* they had just founded.

<sup>944</sup> Lichtblau, "Theatre of Possibility...", 257.

## B) Reading, Translating, and Analysing the Script of the Play



**Figure 8.8** Title Page of *Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné, ou le Canon d'alarme* (1829) by Antoine Simonnin and Louis Vanderburch. No visual representation of Antoine Simonnin (1780-1856) exists.

Reading, translating, and analysing the entire script of the play (See Figure 8.8), facilitated an embodied and interactive exploration of the text, including key themes that it dealt with such as the death penalty. By examining the narrative ‘off the written page’, students were prompted to ‘enter segments of the narrative imaginatively, as if they were currently experiencing them’.<sup>945</sup> The instructor was also responsive to dialogue, developing knowledge, and unplanned/unforeseen curricular circumstances (e.g., adapting the play to be performed online).

As students began to understand their role in the performative process as explorers, inquirers, or players rather than passive recipients, they started to ‘build a learning community engaged in creative inquiry’.<sup>946</sup> The dialogue that occurred outside of reading and translating the text was just as important to this process. Both formal and informal dialogue with the instructor and amongst students allowed relationships to grow. This was a significant component of the learning process because, as noted in Chapter Five, it is through building empathetic relationships in the classroom that a climate of trust is created. Dr. Guyon described

<sup>945</sup> *Ibid.*, 256.

<sup>946</sup> *Ibid.*, 259.



that through studying this particular module with the students, it perhaps allows for them to have more fun together, especially during rehearsals, which permits a stronger bond to form.

Further, as Lichtblau (2009) asserts, it is through different forms of articulation that ‘learners also gain competency in different types of communication and begin to think about which form of language might be most appropriate to a given situation.’<sup>947</sup> Classroom discourse permitted all students to contribute to the learning process and express themselves. In doing so, a safe space was established where ‘inclusive decision making, working through concerns, and evaluating activities’ unfolded.<sup>948</sup> The instructor’s responsiveness towards students’ reactions to curricular material and classroom events permitted him to discern their self-perceptions, aims, and needs in the pedagogical process.

### C) *Character Study*

Each unique discovery about the different characters in the script was a combination of the students’ reading experience, the contextual knowledge they had acquired, the context in which the material was read and presented, the author’s objectives, and the subject matter of the text. In total, there were six central characters in the theatre play (Smarra, M. de Vieux-Vers, Figaro, Clair de Lune, Valentin, and Le Dernier Jour). In his work, *Les martyrs de la veuve: romantisme et peine de mort*, Dr. Guyon (2010) clarifies that the characters in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century vaudeville are representative of ‘romantic’ and ‘classic’ figures in literary texts. This added another important layer to the performative process as students were able to visualise their allocated character through another lens (e.g., background information, personality traits, mannerisms, costume etc.). Each character’s name is based upon a literary work or an indicative surname of their artistic point of view (See Figure 8.9 for some examples). The ‘classic’ characters are ‘represented as senile, jealous of the success of the new generation, and backwards as much artistically as socially or politically,’ while the ‘romantic’ characters mirror the characteristics of romanticism, that is to say, nature is celebrated, there is an emphasis on the individual experience and the common man, and the themes of isolation and melancholy are underscored.<sup>949</sup>

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<sup>947</sup> *Ibid.*, 261.

<sup>948</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>949</sup> Loïc Guyon, “Les Martyrs de la Veuve: Romantisme et peine de mort,” in *Le Romantisme et après en France*, Vol. 19, ed. Peter McGuinness (Bern: Peter Lang, 2010), 85. French original: ‘Les Classiques sont tous représentés

By exploring the various characters within the broader historical, political, cultural, and artistic context of the play, the instructor was able to guide students in their performative inquiry and assist them in contemplating how individuals' 'daily existence and interests connect with larger issues and systems and how the personal and political impact one another'.<sup>950</sup> Further, through performative inquiry, the instructor encouraged students' 'interior or tacit understandings to surface and crystalise into tangible material' with which they were able to associate.<sup>951</sup> The value of this exercise was integral to the performative experience as it revealed to students the manner in which the development of their character contributed to and informed the narrative and plot. Further, from the perspective of L2 acquisition, this exercise also placed the learning of vocabulary in a concrete context and gave it a specific goal (i.e., communicative competence) rather than learning expression in an abstract vacuum.

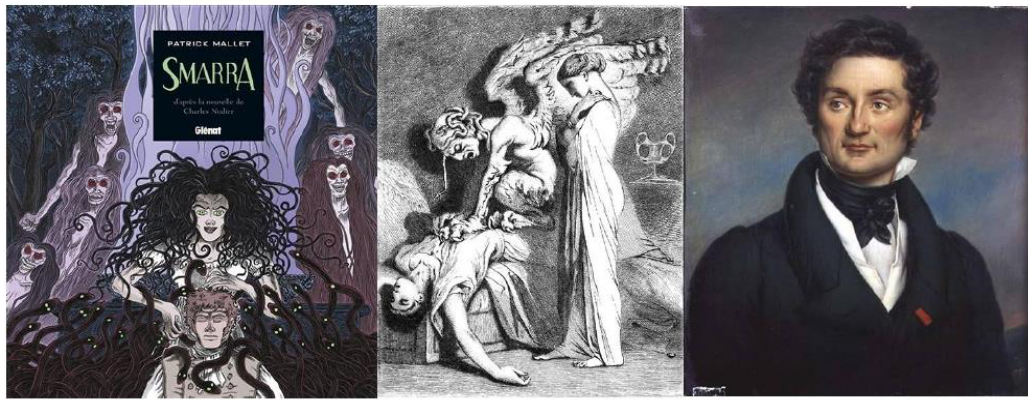
In week two of the semester, students were allocated the roles they were going to play in the final performance and smaller scene teams emerged. Therefore, students knew the characters they were going to act out and perform while reading the script during the semester. Nonetheless, the instructor selected students at random to read lines for different characters. The instructor listened to and corrected students' pronunciation and intonation when necessary and encouraged all other members of the class to take this guidance on board when preparing and practising their own lines. Oral language skills were focused upon and developed through short coaching sessions with the instructor.

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comme séniles, jaloux du succès de la nouvelle génération et rétrogrades tant artistiquement que socialement ou politiquement.'

<sup>950</sup> Lichtblau, "Theatre of Possibility...", 269.

<sup>951</sup> *Ibid.*



The character of Smarra is based upon Charles Nodier's (1780-1844) 'romantic' text *Smarra, ou Les démons de la nuit* (1821).



The character of Figaro is based upon Pierre-Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais's (1732-1799) 'Figaro', who featured in several of his romantic comedy plays including *The Barber of Seville* (1775), *The Marriage of Figaro* (1778), and *The Guilty Mother* (1792).



The character of Le Dernier Jour is based upon Victor Hugo's (1802-1885) 'romantic' short novel *Le Dernier Jour d'un Condamné* (1829).

**Figure 8.9** Character Origins in *Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné* (1829).

## 2. Rehearsal

Weeks nine to twelve were solely dedicated to rehearsals for the final performance. In contrast to previous years, preparation and trial performances took place in a virtual rehearsal space. The rehearsal phase began to overlap the preparation phase in week nine, and students started to specifically read their roles in the script and receive constructive feedback from the module director/facilitator. Character work, pronunciation, and intonation were key areas of focus during this stage. This phase of the performative experience presented students with opportunities to use the French language, experience it contextually, and expand their intercultural communicative competence as they worked through each scene and tableau.

Each of the three tableaux outlined the décor of the theatre and this was elaborated upon at the outset of each scene through the stage directions. This was of great value to the students as they could not be physically present on the decorated set. It gave them key details about their characters such as their location, position in the scene, emotional state, and activities completed or being undertaken (See Figure 8.10). This incorporated development of students' open, curious, and critical attitudes, knowledge in sociocultural practices (i.e., *savoir s'engager/to develop critical awareness*), skills of relating and making sense of cultures (i.e., *savoir comprendre/to develop new attitudes*), and abilities to discover and perform knowledge and skills (i.e., *savoir apprendre/to develop new skills*) in and through social interaction.<sup>952</sup>

Both the preparation phase and the rehearsal phase expanded students' fluency in the French language as they engaged in authentic scenarios and engaged with authentic communicative aspects of language' such as intonation (voice pitch and rhythm), repetition, pauses, and fragmented sentences. This was also facilitated through rehearsals, which necessitated students to engage in collaboration, negotiation, and rich exchanges with their peers. Communication was a key component of the performative experience. This was significant because, as Belliveau and Kim (2013) assert, 'communicative situations can evolve learners' imaginations to an extent where they may step out and move beyond the confined walls of the classroom.'<sup>953</sup> The performative process encouraged students to instinctively interact with their environment in constructive ways and permitted them to experience and use different registers, styles, and discourse as well as develop interaction skills while collaboratively building an original world.

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<sup>952</sup> Michael Byram, Bella Gribkova and Hugh Starkey, *Developing the Intercultural Dimension in Language Teaching: A Practical Introduction for Teachers* (Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 2002).

<sup>953</sup> Fels and Belliveau, *Exploring curriculum: Performative inquiry, role drama, and learning*, 12.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Premier Tableau.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Le Théâtre représente un Salon.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SCENE PREMIERE.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">SMARRA, LE VIEUX PERRUQUIER, LE VIEUX CUISINIER, LE VIEUX TAILLEUR.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">( Smarra est assise devant un secrétaire ; elle tient des mémoires et donne le compte à chacun. )</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>First Tableau</b></p> <p>The Theatre depicts a lounge.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Scene I</b></p> <p>Smarra, the old wigmaker, the old cook, and the old tailor.</p> <p>(Smarra is seated in front of a writing desk; she is taking notes and is laying off each person).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Deuxième Tableau.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Le Théâtre change et représente une chambre délabrée, ayant une fenêtre grillée. Une cruche, un pain de munition, une petite mauvaise table sur laquelle il y a du papier, des plumes et de l'encre. — Une chaise grossière est devant la table.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>SCÈNE IX.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">LE DERNIER JOUR, <i>seul</i>, puis VALENTIN.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LE DERNIER JOUR. Condamné!... Voilà six semaines que j'habite avec cette</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Second Tableau</b></p> <p>The Theatre changes and depicts a dilapidated room, with a barred window. A jug, some soldiers' bread, a small inadequate table on which there is some paper, feathers, and ink – A basic chair is in front of the table.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Scene IX</b></p> <p>Le Dernier Jour, alone, then Valentin.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">.....</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Troisième Tableau.</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Le Théâtre change et représente un coin du jardin du Palais-Royal. — Sur une grande porte on lit: <i>Littérature en gros et en détail, et grand Bazar dramatique.</i> — Des commissionnaires traversent la scène en roulant des ballots de différentes grosseurs, sur lesquels on lit: <i>Drames, Mélodrames, Tragedies, etc. Moïse, l'Espion, la Fiancée, Lancastre, et autres titres d'ouvrages nouveaux.</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">.....</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Third Tableau</b></p> <p>The Theatre changes and depicts an area of the garden of the Royal Palace. On a large door one reads: Literature wholesale and retail, and a dramatic grand Bazaar. Brokers cross the stage wrapping bundles of different sizes, on which one reads: Dramas, Melodramas, Tragedies, etc. <i>Moïse, l'Espion, la Fiancée, Lancastre,</i> and other titles of new publications.</p>

**Figure 8.10 Examples of Stage Directions in the Different Tableaus.**

Dr. Guyon expressed that he wanted the students to gain confidence during the rehearsal phase and made a concerted effort to support and encourage students so that they did not feel insecure or discouraged after their first performances: 'I'm very cautious to always be supportive and encouraging.' He went on to explain that if he systematically corrected every pronunciation mistake that the students made, it would have become impossible for them to perform and embody their characters. Instead, he decided to focus upon the acting at the outset of rehearsals and then built upon students' pronunciation skills, reminding them that they needed to work independently on their pronunciation outside of class time. In order to facilitate student rehearsals in between classes, Dr. Guyon created recordings of the various scenes with native French speakers. Students had access to these recordings during the module and could listen to a native performing the role 'so that they could have a point of comparison to try to improve their own pronunciation'. Dr. Guyon also noted that usually more than one student plays a certain role in each scene team (for example, in one of the scene teams, due to student numbers, two different students played *Le Dernier Jour*). Thus, during rehearsals students were able to observe their peers playing the same character as them, who were sometimes 'doing a better job than them'. This created a sense of positive competition among students and 'pushed them to perform well'.

Dr. Guyon also mentioned that the rehearsals revealed students' strengths to him. He said that he remembered some students 'who were extremely shy, extremely quiet at the beginning of the semester or throughout their degree, who opened up completely during the rehearsals and the final performance'. He explained that he could visibly see them transform throughout the rehearsals as they became engrossed in performing their roles. The rehearsals and final performance, in particular, helped the students to gain a lot of self-confidence in their ability. Dr. Guyon also noted that he believed the collective responsibility that students had to do well also gave them extra motivation in contrast to traditional modules, which 'they often do not put as much effort into'. He went on to mention that he could see the students were generally supportive of one another. In this context, 'good vibes' surrounded the learning experience which may have 'diffused the anxiety'.

### 3. Performance: Transitioning from Stage to Screen due to COVID-19...

All The World's a Stage...  
(William Shakespeare, 1603)<sup>954</sup>

The famous phrase that opens the monologue delivered by 'The Melancholy Jacques' in William Shakespeare's comedy play *As You Like It* (1603) and which has become synonymous with the notion of performance. This sentiment, however, took on a newfound meaning for the performing arts when faced with the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Performance practices had to be reconceptualised in an online space, which led to a re-imagining of Shakespeare's famed expression in performance discourse – *All the World's a Screen*. The 'literal show-stopping pandemic' halted the production of traditional performances, including the French Production and Performance Module, and impelled performing arts instructors to 're-think their courses, rehearsals, concerts, and shows' for an online environment.<sup>955</sup> During this unprecedented time, instructors could have suspended their performance projects; however, they met the challenge and discovered new ways to 'innovate in the production, presentation and promotion of their art works' in order for the show to go on.<sup>956</sup>

Perhaps the greatest challenge in this regard, as highlighted by Cara Lavalley (2020), was developing new ways to stimulate students' sense of purpose and enthusiasm 'with no final curtain call to motivate them' in an online learning environment.<sup>957</sup> In the context of the present investigation, this was also one of the main concerns that Dr. Guyon voiced to the researcher. Theatre is an art form that relies considerably on human interaction and communication. Dr. Guyon expressed that he felt the transition to online learning 'basically ruined the essence of the module because it prevented interaction'. While online learning facilitated the preparation phase of the performance well, its bounds or limits were most noticeable during the rehearsal and performance phase of the production, which centered upon interchange and connectedness.

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<sup>954</sup> William Shakespeare and Horace Howard Furness, *As You Like It (1603)* (New York: Dover Publications, 1963).

<sup>955</sup> Cara Lavalley, "Four Strategies for Taking the Performing Arts Online," *GlobalOnlineAcademy*, October 1, 2020, accessed January 4, 2021, <https://globalonlineacademy.org/insights/articles/four-strategies-for-taking-the-performing-arts-online>

<sup>956</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>957</sup> *Ibid.*

In light of the global impact of COVID-19 on the performing arts, researchers have recently shown an increased interest in investigating the manner in which performance may be facilitated in an online learning environment. While much evidence, at present, is based upon instructors' anecdotes and personal experiences of teaching during the pandemic, empirical evidence is emerging which offers important insights to advance our understanding of how performance may be enacted on screen. Upon reflection, the researcher noted significant parallels between Dr. Guyon's approach to effectively stage the play online during the pandemic and the recommendations proposed by Lavallee (2020), in accordance with the *National Core Arts Standards: A Conceptual Framework for Arts Learning*, to effectuate constructive performance-based learning opportunities in an online setting.

The *National Core Arts Standards*, initially established in America, in 1994, and revised since, sets out to present 'a unified view of the Standards for the five arts disciplines'.<sup>958</sup> It seeks to assist performance educators in their practice by delineating common goals for students as they advance in the arts. As observed in Figure 8.11, each component of the *National Core Arts Standards Framework* is comprised of anchor standards, which 'describe the general knowledge and skill that teachers expect students to demonstrate throughout their education in the arts'.<sup>959</sup> The anchor standards are applicable to different 'arts disciplines and grade levels and serve as the tangible educational expression of artistic literacy'.<sup>960</sup> In her informative publication, *Four Strategies for Taking the Performing Arts Online*, Lavallee (2020) draws attention to the potential applications of the *National Core Arts Standards Framework* in facilitating performance in an online space.

When transitioning the performance arts from stage to screen, Lavallee highlights the importance of re-examining the 'The Big Four' of the *National Core Arts Standards Framework*: (1) Creating, (2) Performing, (3) Responding, and (4) Connecting. Before the pandemic, performing arts programmes naturally laid great emphasis on the 'performing' component. In this respect, she accentuates that, culturally speaking, 'we are used to consuming performing arts as a final product, polished after months of rehearsal and repetition'.<sup>961</sup> However, when adapting the performing arts for remote learning, it is important to reflect upon these components in a conscious and purposeful manner, gradually moving away from

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<sup>958</sup> National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS), *National Core Arts Standards: A Conceptual Framework for Arts Learning* (Washington: NCCAS, 2014), 8.

<sup>959</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>960</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>961</sup> Lavallee, "Four Strategies for Taking the Performing Arts Online."



‘the performing expectation and seizing the opportunity to lean into the creating, responding, and connecting categories’.<sup>962</sup>



**Figure 8.11** The National Core Arts Standards: A Conceptual Framework for Arts Learning.

In a manner comparable to Lavallee, a dance director, Dr. Guyon focused upon fostering students’ creativity, responsiveness, and connectivity in order to effectively transition from stage to screen during the pandemic. Lavallee emphasises that fostering creativity in an online learning space still necessitates ‘some level of risk-taking and vulnerability’ and, therefore, it is important for instructors to develop criteria and standards upon which they can permit students to demonstrate their work.<sup>963</sup> In this regard, she encouraged students to gradually showcase their creativity, or ‘flex their creative muscles’, by using accessible technology and taking part in activities to inspire their imagination. In the present investigation, Dr. Guyon set out specific criteria for students to showcase their creativity, understanding, and

<sup>962</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>963</sup> *Ibid.*

ability. The traditional style assessment permitted students to demonstrate their newly acquired vocabulary, their knowledge about the artistic, social, historical, and political context of the play, and their written skills, as these questions had to be answered in French. The final performance then gave students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to communicate in the French language and perform in public.

In order to promote responsiveness in an online learning setting, Lavalée maintains that peer-based activities can encourage students to voice their opinions, while also ‘simultaneously gathering insight into who their students are as individuals’.<sup>964</sup> As noted previously, peer work was a key component of the French Production and Performance Module. Dr. Guyon expressed that students ‘find the motivation’ to put more work into the final performance as opposed to a traditional examination because ‘they will be there on the spot and they will have nowhere to hide.’ This encourages team spirit because ‘if one of them fails completely, it will have an impact on the others who perform in their group.’

In an effort to support connectivity, Lavalée draws attention to the important role of both teacher-student and peer feedback in the online learning process. She clarifies that through performance, instructors aspire to impart learners with ‘a global perspective on the art form so they can see not only where their lives intersect with the performing arts, but also where topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the performing arts come into question’.<sup>965</sup> As previously mentioned, Dr. Guyon provided the students with ample feedback throughout the preparation and rehearsal phase in order to give them all the tools and skills necessary to confidently embody their character during the live performance.

Finally, in order to facilitate the performance component in an online space, Lavalée suggests that attention should be placed upon process and practice. In week twelve, the students entered the final phase of the French Production and Performance Module, which culminated in the live performance. Dr. Guyon sought to ensure that the live performance was coordinated in as similar a manner possible to pre-Covid times. Similar to on campus productions of the play, the instructor ensured that each group performed the different scenes of the play in succession and without any pauses. While one group was acting, the other students turned off their cameras and microphones to ensure that there would be no interference, background noise, or disruptions. As noted in Chapter Five, there was no external audience present at the final

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<sup>964</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>965</sup> *Ibid.*

performance, however, in a manner comparable to process drama, the students performed the dual role of both ‘theatrical ensemble’ and ‘internal audience’.

## **8.2 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures**

The second stage of data collection took place in May 2021. Due to the impact of COVID-19, the tertiary institution continued to maintain online teaching and learning. In May 2021, fourth year students at MIC had completed their final semester of French Studies in the academic institution. In week twelve of this semester, they performed the theatre play, *Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné, ou le Canon d'alarme*, via Zoom. In week thirteen of the semester, the researcher began the data collection process by administering the following questionnaires:

1. Adapted Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS; Horwitz et al. 1986) Performance Intervention.
2. Questionnaire on Student Opinions and Perceptions of the French Production and Performance Module.

All questionnaires were developed using the online survey software Qualtrics. All participants were emailed an anonymous link to the respective surveys in order to safeguard their anonymity. At the beginning of each questionnaire, participants were provided with specific instructions. All questionnaires and instructions were written in English to ensure that the participants clearly understood what was expected and asked of them. Participants were informed to contact the principal investigator if they had any problems completing the questionnaires or if they encountered any technical difficulties. The average response time to complete the two questionnaires was approximately 35 minutes. In week fourteen of the semester, semi-structured interviews were then conducted with the participants using Microsoft Teams to gain further insight into their experience of the French Production and Performance Module.

- ***Adapted Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS; Horwitz et al. 1986) Performance Intervention***

During the first stage of data collection, Horwitz et al.'s FLCAS (1986) was used to measure participants' baseline levels of FLA toward traditional classroom-based French language instruction. In the second stage of data collection, the same scale was used to measure participants' FLA levels toward the performance-based French Performance and Production Module; however, wording was slightly adapted in order to clearly specify that the scale was addressing this module. This is a common practice among researchers depending on the type of study they are carrying out on FLA (e.g., testing an intervention, specific instructions to answer FLCAS based upon speaking anxiety). Some researchers have also translated the FLCAS into the native language of their students to facilitate successful completion of the questionnaire. However, to ensure the adapted scale's internal validity, a Cronbach's alpha was computed. The adapted FLCAS displayed excellent internal consistency in the present study ( $\alpha = .93$ ). Students were provided with clear instructions at the beginning of the questionnaire, which stated that they should respond to the questionnaire based exclusively on their experience of the French Production and Performance Module.

The adapted FLCAS for the French Production and Performance Module demonstrated the same features as the original scale. It was a 33-item scale measured on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Each statement in the scale assessed one of three constructs of FLA: (1) Communication apprehension (e.g., Item 4 – *It frightened me when I didn't understand what the teacher was saying in the French Production and Performance module*), (2) Fear of negative evaluation (e.g., Item 19 – *I wasn't self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students in the French Production and Performance module*), and (3) Test anxiety (e.g., Item 17 – *The more I studied for tests in French Production and Performance module, the more confused I got*).

FLA levels toward the French Production and Performance Module were calculated by computing responses to all questions. Negatively worded items on the adapted FLCAS (e.g., Item 2 – *I didn't worry about making mistakes in the French Production and Performance module*) were reversed scored.<sup>966</sup> The option *strongly disagree* was given a score of 5, while the option *strongly agree* was given a score of 1. The 25<sup>th</sup> and the 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles were used as anxiety score cut-off points (See Table 8.1). A score between 33 and 66 indicated low anxiety,

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<sup>966</sup> FLCAS items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 18, 22, 28, and 32 were negatively worded and reverse coded during analysis.

67 to 132 moderate anxiety, and 133 or above high anxiety. When final scores were computed, the participants were categorised as having either low, medium, or high anxiety levels.

**Table 8.1 FLA Score Ranges.**

<u>Anxiety Level</u>	<u>Score Range</u>
Low	33-66
Moderate	67-132
High	133-165

**- *Questionnaire on Students’ Opinions and Perceptions of the French Production and Performance Module***

The *Questionnaire on Students’ Opinions and Perceptions of the French Production and Performance Module* was comprised of thirty-five questions and consisted of both open-ended and closed questions. Closed questions prompted participants to select either “yes” or “no”, chose from a set list of statements, or Likert-type questions (e.g., Q. 8 – *The French Production and Performance module was a largely positive learning experience*). When further detail was required, participants were prompted to briefly explain their responses to closed-ended questions.

The first section of the questionnaire contained some background questions related to students’ prior performance experiences (e.g., Q.2 – *Do you think that you had any specific individual skills/attributes that you felt helped you in particular with this module (e.g., have you performed before, public speaking, plays, debate etc.)*). The second section of the questionnaire was primarily directed towards students’ opinions and perceptions of the French Production and Performance Module. In this context, questions focused upon students’ initial opinions of the Module (e.g., Q.3 – *What was your opinion of the module at the outset of the semester?*), their perceptions of the preparation phase including attitudes towards their peers and instructor (e.g., Q.4 – *Teamwork was a large component of the French Production and Performance module. Did this affect your overall learning experience in a positive or negative*

*manner?*), their thoughts on the rehearsal and performance phase, including attitudes towards skill development, personal achievement, and their learning preferences (e.g., Q.7 *I felt a sense of accomplishment during my performance.* / Q.16 – *In your opinion, what was the most challenging part of the French Production and Performance module?*).

This questionnaire data provided important insight into participants' perspectives of and attitudes towards the performative language learning process. Moreover, it provided supporting evidence from which certain inferences could be drawn about students' levels of FLA, and also proved invaluable later in the investigation when developing follow-up questions for the semi-structured interviews.

#### - ***Semi-Structured Interviews***

Once the researcher had completed data collection and analysis for the adapted FLCAS, and the *Questionnaire on Students' Opinions and Perceptions of the French Production and Performance Module*, the final phase of data collection for second part of the case study began. Based on the data gathered in the first phase of data collection, in week thirteen, the researcher produced a list of twenty follow-up questions for semi-structured interviews. These questions addressed participants' past language learning experiences, their perceptions of languages in the Irish context, their language learning experience at MIC and, finally, their opinions on and attitudes towards the French Production and Performance Module.

In May 2021, an independent party was sought to conduct the semi-structured interviews. Before partaking in phase two of data collection, students were again required to give their informed consent. Participants were also informed that all data collected would be anonymous and that no names would be recorded when analysing data. The gatekeeper explained to the participants that participation was voluntary, and if at any time they would like to leave the study they may do so without consequence. The researcher was provided with only the anonymised transcripts of the semi-structured interviews. Once transcribed, all audio/digital recordings from semi-structured interviews were destroyed. All participants were given an identification number to safeguard their privacy.

### **8.3 Data Analysis and Findings**

The second stage of this case study sought to explore the potentiality of performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, in reducing or alleviating students' levels of FLA. The following discussion presents the data, analysis, and results for the second stage of this investigation. Firstly, the quantitative data analysis is presented. Participants' FLCAS scores post-performance are analysed. This includes results of the descriptive analyses followed by inferential statistics. Secondly, responses documented during qualitative analysis are used to substantiate and draw inferences about quantitative findings. Subsequently, results of analyses conducted to address secondary research questions that provide additional and supporting data for the second stage of the data analysis are presented. In order to perform statistical analyses, all data were entered into SPSS, version 27. Finally, the coding process procedure is presented, highlighting the open, axial, and selective code, that is to say, the core variable that connected all codes.

#### **8.3.1 Quantitative Data Analysis**

- *Adapted Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS; Horwitz et al. 1986) Performance Intervention*

As noted previously, the scoring system for the FLCAS awards between 1 to 5 points for each statement, depending on the extent to which participants agreed or disagreed with that statement. A participant's total score represents their level of FLA. The lowest possible score a participant could receive was 33 and the highest possible score was 165. The neutral mean was 82.5. The higher the score, the more anxious the participant. The 25<sup>th</sup> and the 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles were used to determine anxiety cut-off points. A score between 33 to 66 indicated low anxiety, 67 to 132 moderate anxiety, and 133 to 165 high anxiety. When final scores were computed, participants were categorised as having either low, moderate, or high anxiety. The maximum mean score that any FLCAS item could receive was 5. This would indicate that the item caused anxiety among all participants.

Participant responses were used to calculate a mean score for each individual FLCAS item. For example, a score of 28, when divided by the number of participants, 9, gives a mean score of 3.11. Horwitz (2008) specifies that 'students with averages around 3 should be considered slightly anxious, while students with averages below 3 are probably not very

anxious. Students who average near 4 and above are probably fairly anxious.<sup>967</sup> This point of reference was used to interpret participants' individual responses to each FLCAS item and also total scores for each item based on participants' combined responses.

To measure the level of FLA among the participants in this study, means for each adapted FLCAS item were calculated. The mean language anxiety score post-performance intervention for the nine participants was 99.55 (SD = 20.25), which indicated that the majority of participants were only moderately anxious. This is a significant decrease of 7.67 in student FLA scores compared to student mean FLA scores pre-performance intervention (M = 107.22). As displayed in Figure 8.12, the minimum FLCAS score post-performance was 74 and the maximum score was 133 (Range = 59). Eight participants were moderately anxious, and one participant was highly anxious.

The 33 items on the adapted FLCAS were also categorised into the three constructs of FLA. Eleven items on the scale assessed communication apprehension,<sup>968</sup> fifteen items assessed test anxiety<sup>969</sup> and, finally, seven items evaluated fear of negative evaluation.<sup>970</sup> The theatre praxis significantly reduced participants' FLA in two key areas: (1) Communication apprehension and (2) Test anxiety. The mean score for communication apprehension, post-performance intervention, was 2.73. This is a significant decrease of 0.69 compared to participants FLCAS scores pre-intervention (M = 3.42). The mean score for test anxiety, post-performance intervention, was 3.04. This is a decrease of 0.09 compared to participants FLCAS scores pre-intervention (M = 3.13). A slight increase in FLA, post-performance intervention, can however be noted in the category of fear of negative evaluation, which increased by 0.05 from pre- (M = 3.10) to post-performance intervention (M = 3.15). This finding will be explored and elucidated further later in the discussion.

Participants responded anxiously (mean 3 or slightly above\*) to 10 out of the 33 statements on the FLCAS and highly anxious (mean 3.5 or above\*\*) to 7 statements in particular. This is a significant reduction compared to participant responses pre-performance intervention (participants responded anxiously (mean 3 or slightly above) to 11 out of the 33 statements on the FLCAS and highly anxious (mean 3.5 or above) to 13 statements in particular). The overall mean anxiety scores for each adapted FLCAS item are shown in Table

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<sup>967</sup> Horwitz, *Becoming a language teacher...*, 235.

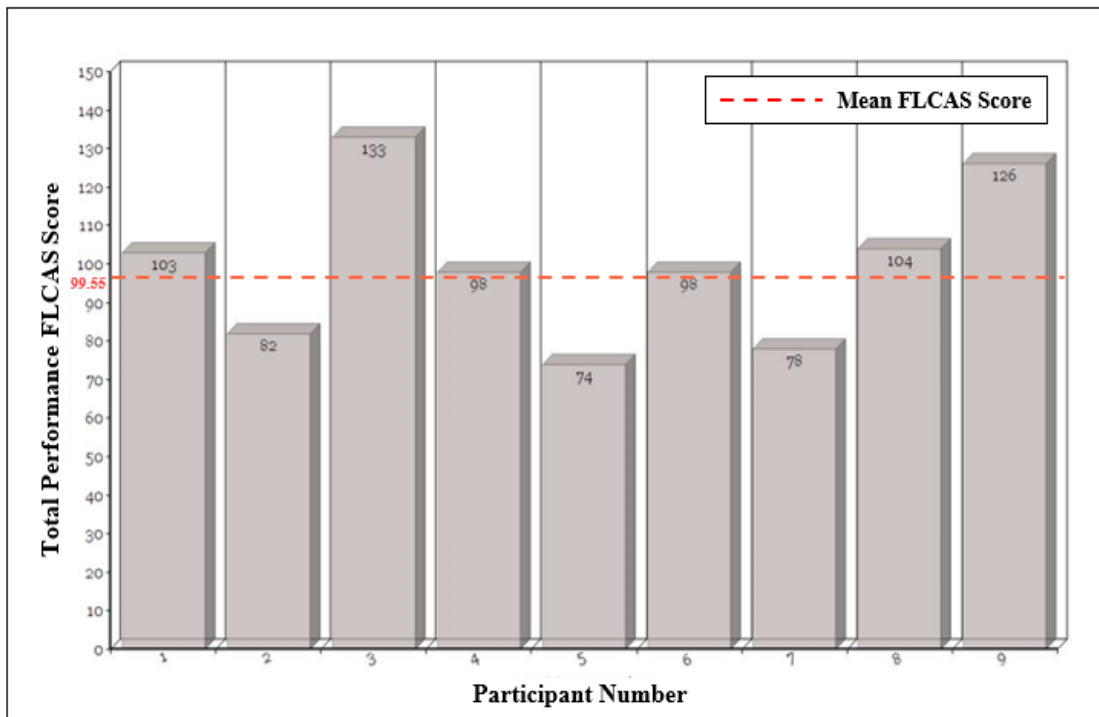
<sup>968</sup> Items that assessed communication apprehension include items 1, 4, 9, 14, 15, 18, 24, 27, 29, 30, and 32.

<sup>969</sup> Items that assessed test anxiety include items 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 25, 26, and 28.

<sup>970</sup> Items that assessed fear of evaluation include items 2, 7, 13, 19, 23, 31, and 33.



8.2. The average post-performance FLCAS score in this study was 3.01, which indicated that students had low levels of FLA. This was a significant reduction of 0.24 compared to the average FLCAS score of participants pre-performance (3.25).



**Figure 8.12** Total Participant Performance FLCAS Scores.

**Table 8.2 Mean FLA Score for each FLCAS Item.**

FLCAS Item	Mean
1. I felt quite sure of myself when I was speaking in the FP&PM.	2.11
2. I didn't worry about making mistakes in FP&PM.	3.55**
3. I trembled when I knew that I was going to be called on during the FP&PM.	3.33*
4. It frightened me when I didn't understand what the teacher was saying in the FP&PM	2.77
5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language performance classes in the future.	2.66
6. During the FP&PM, I found myself thinking about things that had nothing to do with the course.	2.77
7. I kept thinking that the other students were better than I was in the FP&PM.	3.44*
8. I was usually at ease during tests in the FP&PM.	3.55**
9. I started to panic when I had to speak without preparation in the FP&PM.	3.55**
10. I worried about the consequences of failing the FP&PM.	4.44**
11. I didn't understand why some students were so upset over the FP&PM.	2.44
12. In the FP&PM, I sometimes got so nervous that I forget things I knew.	2.77
13. It embarrassed me to volunteer answers in the FP&PM.	2.33
14. I would not be nervous speaking the French with native speakers after completing the FP&PM.	3.00*
15. I got upset when I didn't understand what the teacher was correcting in the FP&PM.	3.00*
16. Even if I was well prepared for the FP&PM, I felt anxious about it.	3.44*
17. I enjoyed going to the FP&PM.	2.77
18. I felt confident when I spoke in the FP&PM.	2.88

**Note:** FP&PM = French Production and Performance Module

\* = Mean participants' scores indicated that they were slightly anxious (mean 3 or slightly above).

\*\* = Mean participants' scores indicated that they were highly anxious (mean 3.5 or above).

*Table 8.2 Continued.*

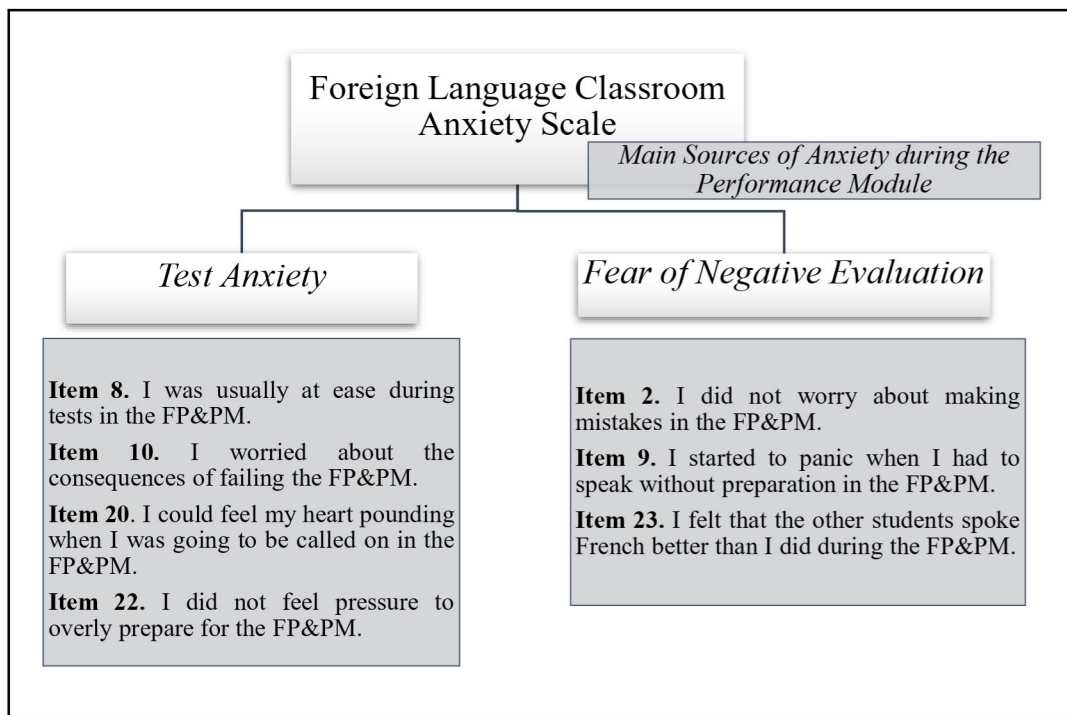
FLCAS Item	Mean
19. I was afraid that my language teacher was ready to correct every mistake I made in the FP&PM.	3.22*
20. I could feel my heart pounding when I was going to be called on in the FP&PM.	3.66**
21. The more I studied for tests in the FP&PM, the more confused I got.	2.77
22. I didn't feel pressure to overly prepare for the FP&PM.	3.66**
23. I felt that the other students spoke French better than I did during the FP&PM.	3.66**
24. I wasn't self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students in the FP&PM.	3.22*
25. The FP&PM moved so quickly, I was worried about getting left behind.	2.55
26. I didn't feel as tense and nervous in my FP&PM as I did in my other French classes.	3.11*
27. I got nervous and confused when I was speaking in the FP&PM.	2.77
28. When I was on my way to the FP&PM, I felt at ease and relaxed.	2.66
29. I got nervous when I did not understand every word the language teacher said in the FP&PM.	3.11*
30. I felt overwhelmed by the number of rules I had to learn to complete the FP&PM.	2.44
31. I was afraid that the other students would laugh at me when I spoke the foreign language in the FP&PM.	2.55
32. I would not be nervous speaking French with native speakers after completing the FP&PM.	3.00*
33. I didn't get nervous when the language teacher asked questions which I didn't prepare in advance during the FP&PM.	3.33*

**Note:** FP&PM = French Production and Performance Module

\* = Mean participants' scores indicated that they were slightly anxious (mean 3 or slightly above).

\*\* = Mean participants' scores indicated that they were highly anxious (mean 3.5 or above).

Figure 8.13 provides an overview of the 7 items on the FLCAS adapted for the French Production and Performance Module which participants responded to with high levels of FLA, and also the corresponding component of FLA. Significantly, participants did not respond with high levels of anxiety to any item under the category of communication apprehension. Participants responded with high levels of anxiety to four items under the category of test anxiety and three items under the category of fear of negative evaluation.



**Figure 8.13** Participants' Main Sources of FLA.

### 8.3.2 Qualitative Data Analysis

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the quantitative data presented, qualitative data gathered through questionnaires and semi-structured interviews is reported in the subsequent analysis.<sup>971</sup> The qualitative data, which includes descriptive narratives of participant beliefs, perceptions, experiences, and attitudes towards the French Production and Performance Module, sheds further light on data patterns identified in the quantitative analysis. In order to facilitate the coding process, presented at the end of the analysis, the discussion that follows has been structured around key themes that emerged from the data. These categories are presented in a narrative format together with evidence that reveals participants' original ideas and views. Subsequent to this analysis, the coding process highlights connections that were made between the open and axial codes and, ultimately, it presents the final selective code, the core variable that connected all codes, which emerged from the procedure.

#### 8.3.2.1 Initial Thoughts – *'At the beginning of the module, I was a bit sceptical.'*

A single common denominator typified views expressed by students at the outset of the French Production and Performance Module: 'I was sceptical.' Students' initial doubts and reservations about the module appear to have stemmed from their fear or lack of familiarity with the unknown, which in this context was the performance. Students explained that they had 'never done a module like it'/ 'had never done anything like that before' and, therefore, 'didn't know what it was going to entail' or 'didn't know how to approach it.' Seven out of the nine participants did have prior performing experience, albeit to different degrees, in the form of plays, debating, and musicals. The introduction and description of the French Production and Performance Module, however, led students to believe that it was 'out of [their] comfort zone'. This initial scepticism appeared to derive from three principal sources:

1.	<b>Language</b>	'I'd probably say it was the added language aspect.'
2.	<b>Performing Online</b>	'I didn't know how a live performance could be carried out while everything had to be done online.'
3.	<b>Year of Study</b>	'There was a lot riding on it.'

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<sup>971</sup> The responses, quotes, and excerpts presented in this section reflect research participants' beliefs, values, and perceptions of the language learning process in the Irish context. All participants gave their informed consent prior to data collection and agreed to the anonymous reproduction of their viewpoints. Direct references to participants' own words remain anonymous and no identifying information has been included.

Throughout the discussion that follows, these initial thoughts have been dissected further in order to gain important insight into students' experiences of the French Production and Performance Module.

**8.3.2.2 COVID-19 Virtual Dilemma – *'I probably think if it was in person, I would have been looking at it from another perspective, because you'd be standing in front of people and that's a different dynamic again.'***

As previously mentioned, in order to confront the impact of COVID-19, MIC was required to implement a significant paradigm shift to online teaching and learning. This had a marked effect on the French Production and Performance Module. The final production could not take place in the Blue Parlour on campus and students were not able to make use of costumes and props to bring their characters to life on stage. Students' opinions on and attitudes towards performing in an online environment can be divided into two main categories: (1) Attitudes immediately post-performance and (2) Attitudes on reflection.

Immediately post-performance, student questionnaire responses indicated that they would have preferred to perform on campus and in costume surrounded by their peers:

'It would have been better in person as it would have been a bigger performance.'
'We missed out on the real theatre experience of dressing up and dress rehearsals.'
'If it was in person, it would have been good craic.'
'I think we would have been egging each other on.'

However, before qualitative data collection took place via semi-structured interviews, students had more time to reflect upon and contemplate the performative experience as a whole. Surprisingly, attitudes towards performing online had changed considerably. On reflection, student responses revealed that performing online gave them a sense of confidence and control in the pedagogical process. Students expressed that because they were in their own safe environment, there was less 'outside input' and, thus, they could engage more and focus on the performative experience without the pressure of having all eyes on them. For example, one participant noted: 'Because I was at home in my room, I was focusing on how this was going

to work [performance] and how I was going to get across my acting online...In person, you would have been more anxious in front of people.’

The stripped back staging of the performance also contributed to students’ feelings of security in the pedagogical process: ‘It would have just been such a big thing on stage ... it would be more like a funfair.’ Student responses also suggest that because there was less distraction during the online performing experience, it helped them to reach their highest potential:

‘If it was in person, I might not have performed as well because I would have been distracted by everything else that was going on.’
‘It was like you knew your lines, you’re waiting for your cue, you were more focused. There wasn’t anything else distracting you.’
‘I would have been far more nervous [in person] and don’t think I would have done myself justice.’

The online performing experience, ultimately, reduced the sense of pressure students felt because it produced a low-stress supportive environment with which they had gained a familiarity. Interestingly, this familiarity was described by one student as ‘a sort of rhythm’: ‘As the module went on, a sort of rhythm developed, we would read, translate and then learn about the context of the content. I became comfortable with this rhythm.’ This highlights that consistency in the pedagogical process is a significant way to put learners at ease. At the outset of the module, students were unsure about how the performance could take place online or how it was going to be approached by the instructor. Students gradually developed a familiarity with the performative process and also with their co-actors, which played a significant role in reducing their initial fear of the unknown: ‘It was just you, the instructor, and your classmates.’

These findings further support the idea that the development of a safe and supportive environment is an important component of the pedagogical process when trying to alleviate FLA. While the online learning environment was not an original part of the French Production and Performance Module, findings highlight that it did in fact play a significant role in reducing learners’ FLA levels. These findings are consistent with other studies, conducted during the pandemic, which explored the effect of remote learning on learners’ levels of FLA, such as Wang and Zhang (2021) and Alla et al. (2020).

### 8.3.2.3 Embodying a Character Online – *‘I have to try and show I am in love with my voice.’*

In light of the shift to online learning, another matter of concern for students was the manner in which they were going to embody and portray a character in an online performance since they had less opportunity to use their whole body and respond to their surroundings:

‘I feel an in-person performance would have helped massively as it would have been easier to assume the character and anticipate the social cues.’
‘It’s very hard to express yourself sitting down in front of a screen.’

Nevertheless, on reflection, students emphasised that perhaps it was in overcoming this obstacle that proficiency and confidence grew in their French language speaking ability. Students described how the instructor highlighted the importance of voice and gave them the keys to help unlock their communicative ability over the course of the performative experience. This ranged from pronunciation exercises, focusing on key sounds in the French language such as the guttural R, vowel combinations (e.g., oe, eau, oeu etc.), and *la liaison*, to working on tone, register, and fluidity during character development.

Students also acknowledged that the voice and communication skills they gained through performance could also be put into practice away from the classroom. One student, for example, recalled that they were not aware of the extent to which they were speaking French in an unvaried tone, without harmony or variation in pitch, until they engaged in the French Production and Performance Module: ‘Even like when we first read it [the play] through, Loïc was like “you are supposed to be shocked” or “you are supposed to be in love” and I was just pure monotone the whole way through and I never like saw that before.’ The student went on to explain that from that point forward they focused on trying to get a ‘feel for voice’. Furthermore, student experiences of performing online made them aware that communication is multifaceted and does not wholly depend upon words uttered, but also the manner in which they are expressed: ‘I have learned that gestures, facial expressions and intonation all help when communicating.’ For instance, one of the students performing as *Le Dernier Jour* in the play explained that they relied on hand gestures more than usual, together with their voice, in order to embody the distraught nature of their character.



Significantly, a key aspect of the performative learning process that encouraged students' willingness to participate over the course of the module, and which also gave them the confidence to portray their character online, may be attributed to the manner in which the instructor organised and managed the online learning environment and, further, how constructive critique was delivered to the students. From the very beginning, students acknowledged that the instructor ensured everyone was on a level playing field and was given an equal opportunity to succeed: 'He gave everybody an equal chance to speak instead of picking on the stronger students all the time.' Thus, early on in the module, students already felt they were treated fairly and had adequate opportunities to practice before the final production, which positively impacted on their confidence in speaking the French language as the module progressed. The instructor also made sure that all students had their cameras turned on during each session. This was appreciated by students as it facilitated face-to-face interaction and ensured that students maintained a social presence in the online environment: 'I liked the fact that we all had to use our cameras so we could see each other and interact.'

Importantly, throughout the performative experience, students realised that mistakes were a natural and unavoidable part of the language learning process and started to relinquish the idea that perfection is the ultimate evidence of language ability: 'I learned during the module that it [French] is a language like any other, it is used to communicate and doesn't need to be perfect.' The manner in which constructive critique/feedback was delivered to the students played a significant role in their reconceptualisation of the language learning process. During the preparation phase, students appreciated that the instructor read the line first while in character (i.e., example of correct pronunciation, tone, register). The instructor then encouraged a student, at random selection, to perform the line and touched on areas where he or she could improve. Taking this feedback on board, the student was then given another opportunity to repeat the sentence in order to gain confidence in their language and performing ability: 'Loïc encouraged me to speak up, learn from mistakes and apply the correct strategy.' When working on a line with a specific student, the instructor also encouraged the other students to take the constructive critique on board and apply it when it was their turn and, therefore, did not single out any particular student or make them feel that their French language ability was inferior in comparison to their peers. During the rehearsals phase, the instructor followed a similar pattern; however, the students were now reading their allocated roles. Students also thought this was beneficial for enhancing their language and performance skill set leading up to the final production as they were able to apply the knowledge they gained

over the course of the module to their own lines and annotate and highlight their script accordingly. This coherent and uncomplicated process was a steppingstone that gave students the self-assurance needed in order to overcome communication apprehension in the French language, as evidenced by numerous student affirmations:

'I have definitely gained more confidence when speaking the language, and don't feel as nervous when I speak as I used to.'
'I felt that we all improved massively from the language side of things.'
'I made a conscious effort to improve my pronunciation and fluidity during the course of the semester.'
'I improved my fluidity and pronunciation through practice and the help of my lecturer's corrections.'
'The most beneficial part for me, personally, was all the reading aloud and working on my pronunciation and intonation.'
'I think that I'm less shy speaking because of the module now.'
'I am also a lot more confident now when I speak French.'
'I'm less shy speaking in front of my peers.'

It is encouraging to compare these findings to the previous work carried out in the area of performance-based language instruction. As highlighted by Bellezza (2018), it is important that affect attunement and flow are present in order to foster a rich performative experience for learners, which stimulates their interest and motivates them to learn. Students' willingness to participate in this novel learning experience, which ultimately enhanced their communication skills, appears to be a result of the positive social dynamics in the learning environment between the instructor and students and, further, the engaging teaching experience that stimulated 'flow' in the pedagogical process. Further, the immersive learning environment, wherein target language use was prioritised, played a key role in lowering the students' affective filter. These results substantiate those observed in earlier studies, such as Herrera and Murry (2016). Gibert's (2014) finding that a theatre praxis has the potential to 'lend meaning to language structures by letting students experience the language in concrete situations' was also substantiated in the present investigation. In this context, the notion of character

transformation as a 'persona' or 'mask' also played a significant role in reducing learners' communication apprehension.

#### **8.3.2.4 The Self – *'I wasn't me; I was a character.'***

Interestingly, students acknowledged that playing a character, or taking on the persona of a character, empowered them and built up the confidence they had in their French language proficiency. Compared to speaking normally in a traditionally taught module, students affirmed that when in character they felt that they performed better in the French language. One student intriguingly described this contrast as 'wearing a mask.' When wearing this 'mask' during the French Production and Performance Module, the student was no longer themselves, but was 'pretending to be someone else': 'They're not looking at you, as you see yourself, but as someone else.' This notion of a disguise or alter ego gave students a *façade* to express themselves freely and in a confident manner. For instance, some students, who were apprehensive about performing in the French language, asserted that the 'character' served as a means through which they could overcome their shyness: 'By putting on a persona I didn't feel as vulnerable when speaking the language and by focusing on trying to portray a character, it took away my focus from the language itself which helped me to not be as nervous as I normally would be.'

Another student explained that they had more courage to speak in the module because their character 'had to be bubbly and confident' and, therefore, they 'couldn't be shy'. It appears that by assuming the attributes of their characters – perhaps the most notable and universal attribute of all being that the characters were French and spoke French – students felt as though they were no longer being looked upon in their actual role (i.e., an Irish student of French in the third-level context), which gave them the boldness to communicate in French and refrain from scrutinising their performance: 'I wanted to feel that I was no longer myself but the character that I'm playing.' Students accentuated that they 'tried to be as French as possible', which involved 'putting aside the Irish accent': 'I felt that since I was playing a French character why not put on an accent.'

These findings are extremely insightful as regards the manner in which theatre performance holds the power to serve as a vehicle to assist students in forming a deeper connection between their subjective realities and realities of the 'other'. The notion of disguise

appears to have helped students to perceive, approach, and think about the target language and culture in new and innovative ways. As highlighted by Lichtblau (2009), when a theatre play is interpreted and brought to life through performance it becomes multi-dimensional. The student as a ‘performative inquirer’ did not merely perform as a character, they gained self-awareness and connected on a more profound physical, emotional, and intuitive level with their peers.

### 8.3.2.5 Teamwork – ‘*We were doing it together.*’

Although students were being assessed individually on their own performance, they all agreed that teamwork was an important component of the performative experience, which allowed the whole class to build a sense of community. Students expressed that the teamwork involved had an overall positive impact on their performative experience because it brought the class together even though they were not physically on campus. Outside of class time, students met regularly online to practice for the final production. One student, for example, explained that this was beneficial for them to get to know each other better and after practicing it was nice to chat, which was something they had not done since their second year of French Studies. The French Production and Performance Module was a new venture for all students and, therefore, they ‘always had each other’s backs’ because they were ‘all in the same boat.’

Teamwork served as a scaffold in the pedagogical process. Students engaged in peer learning, which made them more comfortable with each other and also enabled them to gain confidence in their language skills and performing ability:

‘I really did enjoy practicing with my classmates outside of class time, we learned from each other and helped each other also.’
‘It was great to get to know everyone better and to overcome the shyness of acting in front of each other.’
‘Teamwork allowed us to work together and feel more comfortable with our lines because we were doing it together.’
‘It was nice to learn off my peers and that’s how I became more confident.’

Peer-to-peer recognition was also meaningful to students. Expressions of praise from peers encouraged students and also gave them self-assurance: ‘It was really nice to get a slap on the back from your peers and for them to say “yeah, that was funny” or “yeah that was very good” while practicing.’ When students were asked what, in their opinion, was the most enjoyable or beneficial part of the French Production and Performance Module, many of them mentioned the camaraderie that developed through teamwork, which made them less anxious and self-conscious when rehearsing during class time and also for the final performance. It could, thus, be argued that students realised they could rely upon their classmates as a result of the familiarity and camaraderie that developed through teamwork. These findings have corroborated previous FLA intervention studies (e.g., Tsiplakides and Keramida 2009), which revealed that cooperative learning activities, in particular, contribute to the reduction of students’ language anxiety. Project work, in the present investigation, fostered peer encouragement and promoted the development of a supportive learning environment.

#### **8.3.2.6 The Instructor – *‘His knowledge was just like unbelievable...what he knew about translating and France in general.’***

As mentioned previously, students responded very well to the manner in which the module coordinator and instructor delivered constructive critique and feedback over the course of the semester. Students’ perceptions of the instructor and his teaching approach also had a significantly positive impact on their performative experience. Students felt that the instructor was very reassuring throughout the performative experience and did his utmost to accommodate the performance in light of the paradigm shift to online teaching and learning. One student, for example, explained that they ‘felt less anxious when the instructor was present as they were only looking out for [their] best interests’, while another stated that ‘Loïc was helpful in answering any questions about the module.’ Further, as the instructor was a French native, students gave considerable weight to his observations on pronunciation and remarks on French culture:

‘I felt that when I was corrected, the mistake I was learning from was something that would be noticed in France, and I took care to remember that.’
--

‘I felt very at ease being taught by Loïc as he was able to correct everything and had a huge cultural knowledge, which would exceed an anglophone speaker.’
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Consistent with previous FLA studies (e.g., Çağatay, 2015), students in the present study highlighted that because the instructor was a French native, they felt ‘a little more judged.’ They did, however, note that this perception was probably imaginary: ‘It’s [instructor judging them] probably all in my mind’. However, this ‘little bit of pressure’ also encouraged students to try ‘stand out for good reasons as opposed to bad ones’ and ‘put in a maximum effort’. When the instructor genuinely praised students’ efforts, it inspired and motivated them. As one student remarked: ‘When Loïc said “wow, that was great!” or “oh my god, so good”, I felt like I actually did a good job.’ By delivering positive selective praise to students in situations when it was legitimately deserved, it contributed to the development of students’ self-confidence and self-assurance as they were able to see themselves from someone else’s perspective – in this case an ideal or expert speaker of the French language.

The instructor’s enthusiasm for the French Production and Performance Module positively influenced students’ attitudes towards this novel teaching approach: ‘The instructor was very passionate about the play.... his excitement about it led us to be more excited about it.’ The instructor radiated energy, enthusiasm, passion, and dynamism, which stimulated students’ interest. Students noted that the teaching approach employed was ‘very interactive’ and gave them independence in their learning: ‘I felt because we were interacting more in class and speaking the language more, we were not just learning about culture but improving our language skills also.’ Ultimately, students felt that they were learning subconsciously: ‘We were learning without realising we were.’

Before students engaged in performance-based activities, the instructor introduced them to the background of the play. Students explained that they found this exercise enjoyable and also felt that they developed their intercultural awareness by examining the historical and cultural context of the play:

‘The lecturer did a very good job at examining the background of the play in great detail.’
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‘I feel I have learned more about the French culture as we studied several romantic and classical authors, and their plays in the module.’
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‘Learning new vocabulary in the play also led to discovering the way of life in France back in the 18 <sup>th</sup> Century for example, the hair styles, way of dressing, tradesmen, and transport.’
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Throughout this process, students accentuated that they developed their vocabulary and reading skills:

'The colloquial language was very interesting.'
'I liked the discussion of the text the most, it was very interesting as it had a lot of historical references, so I learned a lot.'
'Idiomatic expressions we learned are useful to everyday life.'

Familiarising students with the context of the play gave them important insight into the various political, cultural, historical, and artistic dimensions that framed the narrative, which gave them confidence in performing because they understood the backstory of their character and the circumstances surrounding their attitudes and beliefs.

### **8.3.2.7 Assessment – *'I think it was nicely balanced.'***

As noted previously, the assessment was divided into two parts: Assessment *of* learning (summative written assessment – 40%) and (2) Assessment *as* learning (performance-based assessment – 60%). Students' opinions of the assessment, both the traditional written assessment and the performance-based assessment, were largely positive. Students expressed that they believed the assessment format was 'laid out very well' and was 'fair and accurate'. As the traditional assessment was based upon the vocabulary in the play and context surrounding it, students felt that it was a meaningful way to test the knowledge they had gained throughout the preparation phase. Some students did, however, express that they believed their writing proficiency in French held them back from achieving a higher result in this exam. Students' responses indicated a preference for the performance-based assessment for two key reasons. Firstly, it was a manner in which their knowledge of the content, together with the French language, could be evaluated in a creative way: 'It was a great way to assess our understanding of the conversations being had by the characters.' Secondly, it was a manner in which they could positively regulate their self-related cognitions, as evidenced by students' positive future-oriented mood states: 'I knew what was coming and nothing was going to be unexpected.'

The fact that less 'what ifs', 'buts', and 'maybes' were associated with the performance-based assessment, appears to have impacted favourably on students' perceptions of

performativity in the language learning process because they were prepared to cope with upcoming situations. This conclusion was corroborated further when students were asked whether they felt more at ease during the performance-based assessment as opposed to a traditional oral examination: ‘You can prepare for the first one [performance] but are doubtless about what’s to come for the second [traditional oral examination].’ Thus, these findings suggest that the removal of students’ doubt or uncertainty surrounding language assessment through the practice of performance played a central role in alleviating their language anxiety and, as a result, their understanding of and capacity to encode the language improved, as evidenced by their lack of communication apprehension.

#### **8.3.2.8 Final Thoughts – ‘*Looking back, it was one of the best modules we did.*’**

Students’ final thoughts on the module, in contrast to their initial scepticism, were significantly more affirmative. At the outset, students’ lack of familiarity with the novel performative approach to teaching and assessment led them to have sceptical thoughts about the module. However, as the weeks progressed a ‘rhythm’ developed and students began to feel more comfortable. While students’ attitudes towards the French Production and Performance Module were largely positive, quantitative data confirmed that they did demonstrate higher levels of FLA with regard to ‘fear of negative evaluation.’ Although students’ opinions of the module assessment were favourable, quantitative data suggests that because students were in their final semester of French Studies, and this was a new form of assessment which they had never engaged with before, they felt more pressure to prepare and practice in order to succeed: ‘There was a lot riding on it.’ In this context, students explained that a ‘bit of positive competition’ developed, with each student trying their best to ‘impress’ their instructor and peers. This is one possible explanation to account for students’ increased anxiety in the area of ‘fear of negative evaluation’. Once again, it appears that unfamiliarity or uncertainty in the language learning process is a key factor that causes FLA to manifest itself. However, when uncertainty is addressed, students seem to become more secure with themselves in the language learning process (See Table 8.3 – Coding Process Breakdown) and, thus, are able to be fully present in, reap the benefits of, and enjoy the journey:

‘My favourite part of the module was the performance. Everyone was prepared and in good spirits.’
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<p>‘The most enjoyable part for me was the performance itself as we were able to test ourselves and our limits.’</p>
<p>‘I enjoyed reading and translating the play throughout the weeks.’</p>
<p>‘Having finished the final performance, it was nice to see everyone perform their part and it was very enjoyable.’</p>
<p>‘The most beneficial for me, personally, was all the reading aloud and working on my pronunciation and intonation.’</p>
<p>‘The final performance was my favourite part of the module as it was actually fun.’</p>

Table 8.3 Coding Process Breakdown.

<u>Open Codes</u>	<u>Properties</u>	<u>Examples of participants' words</u>	<u>Axial Codes</u>
<p><u>Reduced communication apprehension</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Students gained confidence in speaking ability (production).</li> <li>▪ Students felt as though they had adequate time to develop language skills.</li> <li>▪ Immersion in the French language.</li> <li>▪ Continuous practice in oral production and voice work.</li> <li>▪ Instructor feedback and constructive critique.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'I have definitely gained more confidence when speaking the language, I don't feel as nervous when I speak as I used to.'</li> <li>- 'I felt that we all improved massively from the language side of things.'</li> <li>- 'I made a conscious effort to improve my pronunciation and fluidity during the course of the semester.'</li> <li>- 'I improved my fluidity and pronunciation through practice and the help of my lecturer's corrections.'</li> <li>- 'I am also a lot more confident now when I speak French.'</li> <li>- 'I'm less shy speaking in front of my peers.'</li> </ul>	<p>Students gaining confidence in their ability to communicate through continuous practice.</p>
<p><u>Removing 'doubt'</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Performance assessment achievable for all students.</li> <li>▪ Development of a pattern in teaching approach made students comfortable.</li> <li>▪ Classroom environment relaxed atmosphere.</li> <li>▪ Module had key focus/direction, which</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'I knew what was coming and nothing was going to be unexpected.'</li> <li>- 'You can prepare for the first one [performance] but are doubtless about what's to come for the second [traditional oral examination].'</li> <li>- 'As the module went on, a sort of rhythm developed, we would read, translate and then learn about the context of the content. I became comfortable with this rhythm.'</li> <li>- 'It was more laid back. We were learning without realising we were.'</li> </ul>	<p>Students prepared to cope with upcoming events and, thus, enjoy the language learning process more.</p>

	gave students an achievable short-term goal.		
<p><u>Peer encouragement and constructive critique</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Positive peer evaluation.</li> <li>▪ All students on a level playing field.</li> <li>▪ Teamwork.</li> <li>▪ Constructive instructor evaluation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ‘We always had each other’s backs.’</li> <li>- ‘We were all in the same boat.’</li> <li>- ‘I felt less anxious when the instructor was present as they were only looking out for my best interests.’</li> <li>- ‘He gave everybody an equal chance to speak instead of picking on the stronger students all the time.’</li> <li>- ‘Teamwork allowed us to work together and feel more comfortable with our lines because we were doing it together.’</li> <li>- ‘It was really nice to get a slap on the back from your peers, and for them to say “yeah, that was funny” or “yeah that was very good” while practicing.’</li> </ul>	<p><b>Students building each other up through practice. Students appreciating and taking on board instructor’s constructive feedback for the future.</b></p>
<p><b><u>Selective Code</u> - Students’ familiarity with and awareness of the language learning process leads to positive self-focused cognitions.</b></p>			

## 8.4 Conclusion

This chapter presented, analysed, and interpreted the findings from the second stage of the present case study. The following CRQ framed this stage of the investigation: To what extent, when implemented, does performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, lower or alleviate students' FLA levels. Firstly, a comprehensive overview of the French Production and Performance Module was outlined. Secondly, the data collection procedures and instruments were described and, finally, both the qualitative and quantitative data was interpreted, and findings expounded.

In the context of the present investigation, students' levels of FLA were significantly reduced, most notably in the area of communication apprehension. Evidence gathered indicated that students' FLA was alleviated thanks to several interrelated components of the performative learning experience including:

• Having in-depth knowledge on the background to the play.
• Having comprehensive knowledge about their character.
• Development of communicative proficiency and voice training.
• Reassurance that students could ask any questions to their instructor.
• Closeness with peers, in this case, co-actors.
• The 'fun' and 'creative' aspect of performance.
• Ample time to practice and rehearse.
• Removal of uncertainty surrounding the examination.
• Small intimate audience.
• An achievable short-term goal students could work towards.
• Sense of accomplishment and achievement at the end of the process.

The overriding finding in the second phase of this investigation revealed that these factors contributed significantly to students' comfort with and awareness of the language learning process, which resulted in positive self-focused cognitions and, by extension, mitigated the adverse effects of FLA. In contrast to traditional modules, the familiarity students gained with the pedagogical process throughout the theatre praxis gradually reduced their apprehension and permitted them to engage fully with the module, encode more input and, ultimately, feel more confident in their ability to produce, communicate, and perform in the French language.

# **CONCLUSION AND** **RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Acting is one of the most potent means of learning. Thought, word, and act linked together make an impression such as nothing else can make. In this direction lies the salvation of our schools.

**(Phillip A. Coggin 1956)<sup>972</sup>**

The present investigation contemplated the innovative potentialities of performative pedagogy within the processes of L2 acquisition. In this context, it explored a pedagogical reorientation in language education, which integrated language teaching and learning with performative pedagogy, thus blurring disciplinary boundaries and paving the way for the emergence of a third space in the language classroom, wherein language education was re-envisioned as a creative, holistic, and performative experience. More specifically, it considered to what extent the pedagogic benefits of teaching through theatre might serve to alleviate the symptoms of FLA in the Irish third-level context.

This exploration took the form of a pre-post case study which centred on two principal research questions. Firstly, this study sought to explore the extent to which final year students of French in the Irish third-level context experience FLA, and the principal factors that trigger this reaction. Secondly, it endeavoured to investigate the extent to which performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, lowered or alleviated students' FLA levels. In order to address these CRQs, this thesis has examined the process of L2 acquisition in a holistic manner. More specifically, it has explored the psychology of language learning by interrogating interdisciplinary literature that illuminates the psychological construct of FLA. Within this context, each chapter has highlighted the role of distinct but interrelated variables, components, and factors that impact upon the onset, heightening, and alleviation of this language learning phenomenon.

Chapters one and two highlighted the complexity of the L2 acquisition process, while drawing attention to the importance of concepts such as identity, culture, interaction, the 'dialogic', and pedagogic practice in shaping the perceptions and experiences of the language learner. Chapter Three emphasised the interrelation between language anxiety and several psychological and philosophical concepts and constructs such as situation-specific anxiety,

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<sup>972</sup> Coggin, *Drama and Education. An Historical Survey from Ancient Greece to the Present Day*, 232.

negative self-focused cognition, the ‘self’, the ‘other’, and the ‘ego’. Chapter Four transitioned the investigation from theoretical discussion to concrete description by exploring the multi-layered ecology and diverse environmental factors that inform the dynamic interplay between the learning context and language learner. Several interrelated ‘engines of development’ were identified as important mechanisms that impact upon foreign language learning in the Irish context, including the history of language in Ireland, language policy and planning, language curriculum and pedagogical practices, and perceptions of language.<sup>973</sup> In this regard, the status of *Gaeilge* notably added a further layer of complexity to language development in the Irish context. The Irish language is compartmentalised from other modern foreign languages in policy, which accentuates a discord between Ireland’s aim to safeguard its native language and to excel on the global stage with respect to foreign language learning. This notion of compartmentalisation was also highlighted in the present findings. Students emphasised that, in their opinion, the Irish language is taught as a subject and not as a language, especially when contrasted with teaching practices applied in foreign language teaching. This finding invites further inquiry into where the teaching of *Gaeilge* fits in the broader area of L2 acquisition in the Irish context.

Research findings from the data presented also shed light on the complex psychological phenomenon that is FLA. This is particularly significant given that there has been no previous research carried out on language anxiety within the Irish context. The case study established that FLA is, indeed, experienced by students in the Irish third-level context. The investigation produced results which corroborate the findings of a great deal of the previous work on FLA carried out in other research contexts and countries. The findings observed in this study highlighted that communication apprehension is the principal way in which this situation-specific anxiety manifests itself among students in the Irish third-level context. These findings are consistent with those of Çağatay (2015), Bilá (2010), and Horwitz et al. (1986) and further support the idea that communication apprehension is one of the greatest barriers to successful L2 language acquisition.

Pre-intervention findings highlighted the influence of empathy, familiarity, understanding, forming dialogic relationships, and self-confidence on language anxiety levels. Although the present study explored FLA in relation to the French language, it is possible that some of these findings may be transferable when exploring other foreign languages in the Irish

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<sup>973</sup> Urie Bronfenbrenner and Gary W. Evans, “Developmental science in the 21st century: Emerging questions, theoretical models, research designs and empirical findings,” *Social Development* 9, no. 1 (2000): 118.

context. Nevertheless, it is important to note that FLA studies on other languages may also yield different results and provide further insight into the phenomenon in Ireland, particularly, if FLA is investigated in relation to a language that may appear more ‘alien’ to the learner (e.g., Asian languages such as Chinese, Mandarin, Japanese).

Another important point to note from the findings relates to the manner in which the online learning environment and virtual performance space impacted upon student perceptions and levels of FLA. The global pandemic necessitated a complete shift to online programme delivery, and this resulted in a somewhat ‘unforeseen’ focus on and examination of the importance of technology in the L2 acquisition process of case study participants. Although not a component of the original research design, this development gave rise to interesting insights during the investigation, perhaps most notably during the innovative pedagogical intervention.

While the idea of pedagogical innovation in teaching practice appears to be moving forward at primary and second-level through initiatives such as Aistear,<sup>974</sup> the “Say Yes to Languages” primary school sampler module, the new Framework for Junior Cycle, CLIL, communicative language teaching and, more broadly speaking, through arts education and arts-in-education practices, it seems that innovative pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning have not yet been channelled to such an extent at third-level. In this context, the case study examined the potential for pedagogical innovation in language education in the Irish third-level context through performative pedagogy. In doing so, it also evaluated the potential it holds to alleviate students’ levels of FLA. While it was anticipated that the performance-based intervention would assist in alleviating language anxiety to some degree, it was encouraging to discover the extent to which it specifically mitigated learners’ communication apprehension. This case study adds to a growing body of literature on the synergy between performative pedagogy and language education, drawing attention to the manner in which it serves as a constructive tool that may facilitate an experiential, embodied, and dialogic learning experience.

Findings highlighted significant ways in which language anxiety may be reduced in and through performance. For example, a strong association was found between reduced levels of FLA and the development of communicative proficiency and voice training, the establishment

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<sup>974</sup> Aistear (The Irish word for a ‘journey’) is the early childhood curriculum framework for children from birth up to the age of six years. It is centered upon the themes of well-being, identity and belonging, communicating, exploring and thinking.



of reassurance and empathetic support between student and teacher/peers, and the integration of a 'fun' and 'creative' medium to teach language, which gave students ample time to come to grips with and practice new material. Further, performance assisted in removing uncertainty surrounding the examination process by providing learners with an achievable short-term goal that they could work towards. In this regard, performance, perhaps most importantly, encouraged students to have an individual and collective sense of accomplishment and achievement at the end of the process, which increased their self-confidence and encouraged them to have a positive outlook on the language learning process and their proficiency.

The case study also provided additional evidence with respect to transitioning performance from stage to screen and, moreover, the important role it played in alleviating students' language anxiety. While the embodiment of a character provided students with one 'veil' to overcome their communication apprehension, the screen served as another 'mask' that helped them to reach their highest potential. The screen made them feel safe and at ease in their learning environment, highlighting the manner in which technology served as a second degree of distance or a safety net for students in the language learning process. This observation was an interesting by-product of the investigation and is also potentially valuable to wider scholarship in the field of SLA. Technology is universal. Its accessibility, flexibility, and ever-evolving nature means that it holds vast potential to enhance, facilitate, and mediate language acquisition in ways that were not possible in the past. Another possible area of future research would be to explore if similar data patterns and trends are observed when applying performance praxes to reduce FLA in a physical classroom in contrast to a virtual classroom. This would foreseeably provide further insight into the role of the 'screen' in masking students' apprehensiveness in the language learning process and would be extremely beneficial to both researchers and practitioners.

Although the present investigation was subject to some limitations which restrict generalisability of findings, namely, the sample size and gender balance, case study research permits transferability of the principles and insight gained from the case to other situations. Thus, this exploration does have several practical applications for multiple stakeholders in the educational process, which may sow the seeds of future research on FLA and, more broadly speaking, on L2 acquisition in the Irish context with a wider demographic.

The study revealed that FLA is, indeed, an issue that requires attention in the educational sphere. Language educators, at present, may be unaware of the complex and

emotional nature of language learning, if they have never experienced negative emotions during the language learning process. Therefore, this exploration may assist educators in identifying indicators of FLA in their own students and provide them with certain strategies and techniques they could potentially employ in their classroom to foster a positive language learning environment. Collectively, the findings in this study highlight a need to advance knowledge of language anxiety and the affective dimension of the language acquisition process. In this regard, it is recommended that higher education courses highlight the emotional side of language learning in their programmes in order for future educators to gain an awareness of both the facilitative and debilitating impact that emotion may have on the language acquisition process. This could be achieved when interrogating frameworks of L2 acquisition and language pedagogy in more general terms.

On a more practical level, the framework and research methodology employed as part of this case study may serve as a tool across the Irish context to investigate FLA and determine whether similar trends and patterns are revealed in the data gathered. This case study could potentially create the space for an action research project in order to encourage collaborative exchange and effectuate personal and organisational change. The findings from this study have emphasised the importance of the student voice, listening to their unique and personal experiences, and exploring innovative ways to help them in the language acquisition process. While it is extremely important to foster positive language learning attitudes among the younger population, it is also just as important to encourage an optimistic, constructive, and productive climate for language learners in higher education, who may go on to become future language educators. In this respect, it is recommended that language planning, policy, and strategy makers consider implementing a similar initiative to the “Say Yes to Languages” Primary School Sampler Module in the Irish third-level context in order to extend the reach of favourable language learning opportunities. Several other performance praxes could be harnessed to facilitate and broaden the scope of such an initiative. For example, Dr. Guyon expressed that he believed similar learning outcomes could be achieved with drama (e.g., role plays), music, spoken word, visual arts and dance.

This investigation is not claiming to be the *réponse ferme et définitive* to addressing the impact of language anxiety in the Irish third-level context. However, the arguments, interpretations, and interdisciplinary research presented in this thesis have, importantly, set the stage to fill or bridge a pedagogic gap between ‘process’ (i.e., how an L2 is acquired) and ‘product’ (i.e., the successful acquisition of an L2), by highlighting that emotion is a central

element mediating the transition from point A to point B and, thus, its significance and consequence cannot be understated or ignored in the 'very' big picture that is language learning.

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# **APPENDICES**

## Appendix A

### MIREC Letter of Approval

 <p><b>MIC</b> MARY IMMACULATE COLLEGE COLÁISTE MHUIRE GAN SMÁL</p>	<p><b>Mary Immaculate College Research Ethics Committee</b> <b>MIREC-4: MIREC Chair Decision Form</b></p>
APPLICATION NO.	A19-061 - FINAL
<b>1. PROJECT TITLE</b>	
Foreign Language Anxiety in the Irish Third Level Context and the Potential of Performative Pedagogies for Learners of French.	
<b>2. APPLICANT</b>	
Name:	Sarah Clancy
Department / Centre / Other:	French Studies
Position:	Postgraduate Researcher
<b>3. DECISION OF MIREC CHAIR</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ethical clearance through MIREC is required.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ethical clearance through MIREC is not required and therefore the researcher need take no further action in this regard.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Ethical clearance is required and granted. Referral to MIREC is not necessary.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ethical clearance is required but the full MIREC process is not. Ethical clearance is therefore granted if required for external funding applications and the researcher need take no further action in this regard.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Insufficient information provided by applicant / Amendments required.
<b>4. REASON(S) FOR DECISION</b>	
A19-061 – Sarah Clancy – Foreign Language Anxiety in the Irish Third Level Context and the Potential of Performative Pedagogies for Learners of French. I have reviewed this revised application and I believe it satisfies MIREC requirements. It is, therefore, approved.	
<b>5. DECLARATION (MIREC CHAIR)</b>	
Name (Print):	Dr Áine Lawlor
Signature:	
Date:	6th January 2019
MIREC-4 Rev 3	Page 1 of 1



## **Appendix B**

### **Participant Information Letter**



### **Foreign Language Anxiety in the Irish Third-Level Context and the Potential of Performative Pedagogy for Learners of French**

#### **What is the study about?**

Have you ever felt uneasy while speaking French as a foreign language? Have you put this uneasiness down to a strict teacher or the language being too difficult? Research in recent years has labelled this apprehensiveness towards foreign language learning as foreign language anxiety (FLA) (Horwitz, Horwitz and Cope, 1986). The current study will focus on how foreign language anxiety affects students of French throughout the course of their language study at university and how it may be alleviated so students may reach their full potential when learning a foreign language.

#### **Who is undertaking the study?**

My name is Sarah Clancy and I am a Postgraduate student attending Mary Immaculate College. I am presently completing a PhD by research in the Department French Studies under the supervision of Dr. Mairéad Ní Bhriain. The current study will form part of my thesis.

#### **Why is it being undertaken?**

FLA studies principally investigate students learning English and overlook the causes of FLA in English speakers learning a foreign language. Insight into Irish students' FLA would expand knowledge on how to alleviate FLA and facilitate educational intervention so students may thrive in the foreign language learning classroom.

#### **What is involved for the participant (time, location, etc.)?**

The study will implement a pre-post case study design that will begin in semester one of your final year of French Studies and will be followed up in semester two of your final year of French Studies. In semester one, you will be required to complete a short questionnaire that measures your level of foreign language anxiety and respond to some open-ended questions. In semester two, you will be required to complete a short open-ended questionnaire and take part in a focus group to give your opinions and perspectives on a performative French module. Questionnaires will take approximately 15 minutes to complete and focus groups will take approximately 30 minutes.

Questionnaires will be conducted online, and focus groups in semester two will take place online at pre-arranged times via Microsoft Teams.

**Right to withdraw / Anonymity / Confidentiality**

Your anonymity is assured, and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason and without consequence. All information gathered will remain confidential and will not be released to any third party. A random ID number will be generated for each participant, and it is this number rather than the participant's name which will be held with their data to maintain their anonymity.

**How will the information be used / disseminated?**

Your data will be combined with that of the other participants in this study and used to form the results section of my thesis. Summary data only will appear in the thesis, individual participant data will not be shown.

**What will happen to the data after research has been completed?**

In accordance with the MIC Record Retention Schedule all research data will be stored for the duration of the project plus three years.

**Contact details:**

If at any time you have any queries / issues with regard to this study, my contact details and my supervisors are as follows:

**Principal Investigator:** Sarah Clancy

**Email:** Sarah.Clancy@mic.ul.ie

**Supervisor:** Dr. Mairéad Ní Bhriain

**Email:** Mairead.NiBhriain@mic.ul.ie

If you have concerns about this study and wish to contact someone independent, you may contact: MIREC Administrator, Research and Graduate School, Mary Immaculate College, South Circular Road, Limerick. Telephone: 061-204980 / E-mail: mirec@mic.ul.ie

*Thank you for your interest in the study.*

## Appendix C

### Participant Consent Form



#### Foreign Language Anxiety in the Irish Third-Level Context and the Potential of Performative Pedagogy for Learners of French

Dear Participant,

As outlined in the participant information letter the current study will investigate how foreign language anxiety affects students of French throughout the course of their language learning at university and how it may be alleviated through performative teaching methods. Details of what the study involves for the participant are contained in the participant information letter and instruction sheets. The participant information letter and instruction sheets should be read fully and carefully before consenting to take part in the case study. Your anonymity is assured, and you are free to withdraw from the experiment at any time without personal consequence. All information gathered will remain confidential and will not be released to any third party. In accordance with the MIC Data Retention Policy all anonymised data may be retained indefinitely.

*Please read the following statements before signing the consent form.*

- I confirm that I am over 18 years of age.
- I have read and understood the participant information letter and participant instruction sheets.
- I understand what the project is about, and what the results will be used for.
- I am fully aware of all of the procedures involving myself, and of any risks and benefits associated with the study.
- I know that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the project at any stage without giving any reason.
- I am aware that my results will be kept confidential.

**Name (PRINTED):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name (Signature):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix D**

### **Participant Debriefing Form**



#### **Foreign Language Anxiety in the Irish Third-Level Context and the Potential of Performative Pedagogy for Learners of French**

Dear participant,

Thank you very much for taking the time to participate in this research study. This sheet will provide you with full details of the study in which you participated.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the extent to which students of French in the Irish third-level context experience foreign language anxiety, and the factors that triggered this reaction in the language learning process. This study also sought to explore the potentiality of performative pedagogy, enacted through a theatre praxis, in reducing students' foreign language anxiety levels. The study was divided into two principal stages. In stage I, you completed a semi-structured interview and the following questionnaires in order to gain insight into your perceptions of the language learning process, and to assess your baseline foreign language anxiety levels: (1) Socio-demographic Questionnaire, (2) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS; Horwitz et al. 1986), and (3) Students' Attitudes Towards ICT in French Language Learning Questionnaire. In stage II, you completed another semi-structured interview and a modified version of the FLCAS in order to reassess your foreign language anxiety levels and perceptions of the performative language learning experience after completing the French Production and Performance Module.

Thank you again for taking part. If there is anything you would like to discuss in relation to this study, please feel free to do so by contacting the principal researcher. If you would like to withdraw your data, please speak to the researcher now or contact them later.

**Name of Researcher:** Sarah Clancy

**Email:** Sarah.Clancy@mic.ul.ie

## Appendix E

### Socio-Demographic Questionnaire

#### Participant Instructions :

Please read each question carefully and respond by either ticking the appropriate response or by providing your answer in the text box provided. Please ensure that you have answered all questions before returning the questionnaire to the investigator.

---

**1. Please indicate your gender.**

Male                       Female                       Rather not indicate

**2. Please indicate your age bracket.**

- a. 18-24
- b. 25-29
- c. 40-54
- d. 55-69
- e. Over 70

**3. What is your native language?**

**4. Please indicate the languages that you are currently studying/have studied at MIC:**

**5. What was the first foreign language that you learned?**

**6. Where did you study the first foreign language you learned as recorded in question 5 (e.g., at home, primary school, private lessons)?**

**7. At what age did you learn this foreign language?**

**8. Did you attend a Gael Scoil or are you from an Irish speaking area (Gaeltacht)?**

Gael Scoil:    Yes     No   
Gaeltacht:    Yes     No

**9. Have you studied or are you currently studying the Irish language? If so, where did you study/are you studying it? (primary school, secondary school – please list all places where you have studied Irish in the text box provided).**

I studied the Irish language in the past:      Yes                       No

I am still studying the Irish language:      Yes                       No

Places where I have studied the Irish language:

**10. Do you consider the Irish language as:**

- a. A second language
- b. A foreign language
- c. Ireland's native language
- d. Other (please specify):

**11. What statement would best describe your Irish language learning experience:**

- a. Strongly positive
- b. Mostly positive
- c. Neither positive nor negative
- d. Mostly negative
- e. Strongly negative
- f. Other (please specify):

**12. Please note some key factors that have influenced your response to question 11 (e.g., teacher, learning style, assessments etc.).**

**13. How many years have you been studying the French language?**

**14. What statement would best describe your French language learning experience:**

- a. Strongly positive
- b. Mostly positive
- c. Neither positive nor negative
- d. Mostly negative
- e. Strongly negative
- f. Other (please specify):

**15. Please note some key factors that have influenced your response to question 14 (e.g., teacher, learning style, assessments etc.).**

**16. Have you ever taken part in a performance (e.g., playing an instrument, acting etc...)? If you answered yes, can you briefly describe this experience.**

**17. Can you recall if you have ever learned a school/college subject through a performative medium (e.g., music, a play)? If you answered yes, can you briefly describe this experience.**

**18. Have you ever heard of performative pedagogies?**

Yes

No

**19. If you answered *yes* to question 18, can you explain what you understand by the term performative pedagogies?**

**20. What do you consider to be traditional methods of teaching and learning the French language?**

**21. When learning the French language, have you primarily been taught by native French speakers, or by speakers of another nationality?**

a. Native French speakers

b. Other nationality/nationalities (please specify):

**22. When learning the French language, have you primarily been taught by male or female teachers?**

a. Male teachers

b. Female teachers

c. An even mix of both

**23. When learning French, are you more at ease in the classroom if you are being taught by a native French speaker, an anglophone teacher, or a teacher who is the same nationality as you?**

a. Native French speaker

b. Anglophone teacher

c. Teacher who is the same nationality as me

d. I am at ease in all circumstances

***Can you briefly explain your response?***

**24. When learning French, are you more at ease in the classroom if you are being taught by a male or female teacher?**

- a. Male teacher
- b. Female teacher
- c. I am at ease in either circumstance

**25. Please rate how confident you are in each of the four French language skills.**

	<b>Extremely Confident</b>	<b>Fairly Confident</b>	<b>Somewhat Confident</b>	<b>Not Confident at all</b>
<b>Speaking</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Listening</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Reading</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Writing</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**26. In your opinion, is the classroom the best place to learn?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

*Can you briefly explain your response?*

**27. In your French language classes, do you prefer to work in groups or individually?**

- a. I prefer group work
- b. I prefer to work individually

*Can you briefly explain your response?*



**28. Can a good teacher/teaching method influence how well you enjoy learning a language?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

*Can you briefly explain your response?*

**29. In your opinion, is it better to learn the French language from a native speaker or non-native speaker of the language?**

- a. Native speaker
- b. Non-native speaker

*Can you briefly explain your response?*

**30. In your opinion, what is the best way to study French as a foreign language?**

**31. Throughout your French study at MIC, what was your overall impression of the course delivery?**

**32. To speak the French language well, how important is it to know something about the culture of the country?**

- a. Extremely important
- b. Very important
- c. Somewhat important
- d. Not very important
- e. Not important at all

*Can you briefly explain your response?*

**33. If you have been on Erasmus placement in a French speaking country, what was your opinion of the language course delivery in the French university system compared to the Irish system? You can use extra space if required.**

**34. Do you feel that your Erasmus placement helped you to improve your French language competencies?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

***If you answered yes, can you state which language abilities you developed (reading, writing, oral, listening)? If you answered no, can you explain why the Erasmus placement did not help you to improve your language ability.***

**35. From your experience as a French language student, what do you think are the greatest challenges that learners of French face in the Irish education system?**

## Appendix F

### Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS; Horwitz et al. 1986)

#### Participant Instructions:

Throughout your French studies at MIC, you have completed many French content modules, which have been taught in what is considered to be a *\*traditional* manner (e.g., content-based lectures such as The French and Love, The Trials and Traumas of Wartime France, and Writing the Modern Self).

Please respond to the following questionnaire based on your experience of *traditional* French language instruction. Read each statement about foreign language learning carefully, then tick the **one response** that best represents how you feel about that statement.

*\*Traditional language teaching is primarily associated with teacher-centred delivery of instruction to classes of students who are the receivers of information.*

---

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. I <i>don't</i> worry about making mistakes in language class.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>14. I would <i>not</i> be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>17. I often feel like not going to my language class.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>22. I <i>don't</i> feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## Appendix G

### Questionnaire on Attitudes Towards ICT in French Language Learning

#### Participant Instructions:

Due to current circumstances, you have had to use technology-based tools (e.g., Moodle, Microsoft Teams) to learn the French language. Please read each statement about using ICT\* in French foreign language learning carefully, then tick **one response** that best represents how you feel about that statement.

\*Information and Communications Technology

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**Before beginning the questionnaire, please list the technology-based tools or online learning platforms/resources that you have used to learn French at university and at home.**

**1. At university:**

**2. At home:**

1. I am comfortable using technology in my French language classes.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. I think that getting information from ICT is better than using printed materials/textbooks.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. I think that ICT improves my overall French language learning experience.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. I think that the use of ICT allows me to take greater control of my French language learning.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. I would like to use ICT more in French language learning.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. I feel more confident speaking in French online than face-to-face with my language teacher.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. I feel more confident speaking in French online than face-to-face with other students in my class.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. I feel anxious when I have to use the French language in an online setting.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. I think French language learning through ICT is more effective than face-to-face classes with my teacher.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Using ICT helps me to improve my French listening skills.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. ICT makes French language lessons more interesting than traditional module instruction.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. ICT makes French language learning easier for independent learning.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. ICT helps me to improve my French speaking skills.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. ICT is a useful tool for developing my writing skills in French.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. I get more useful feedback in online French lessons.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>16. I am confident working with and using computers for my French language lessons.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>17. ICT is a stress-free environment to learn the French language.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>18. Using ICT for French language lessons makes me feel tense and uncomfortable.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>19. I think using technology to learn French is more beneficial compared to traditional language instruction in the classroom.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>20. Using ICT makes French language learning more interesting for me.</b>				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix H

### Letter of Approval from Head of Department of French Studies

07/04/2022

Dear Dr Guyon,

I would like to express my thanks to you for allowing me to observe and employ the FR4777 French Production and Performance Module in my doctoral research, and for completing an interview with me. I appreciate you taking the time to share your thoughts and provide invaluable insights regarding the design of the module.

At present, I am preparing to complete the methodology component of my thesis based on the data gathered from your module. The final thesis will be completed by the month of May, 2022. As per GDPR guidelines, I am writing today to ask for your permission to include some images, extracts of activities/exercises from your PowerPoint presentations, extracts from the external examiners' reports, and previously published images of the various performances throughout the years.

I understand that you control the rights to these resources. The use of these resources will only be used for educational/research purposes, and upon successful completion of this thesis, will be published on the MIRR digital repository. I would be very grateful if you could grant permission for the use of these resources for my doctoral research. All resources will be credited to you. *If you are willing to grant me permission to reprint the resources referenced above, could you please give your official confirmation by signing in the space provided below so that I may have your formal permission for my records.*

If you have any question or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Thank you for considering this request.

Kind regards,

Signature: *Sarah Clancy*

Date: *07/04/2022*

#### **Permission to Grant Use of Resources for Doctoral Research**

- By signing below, I hereby grant permission to reprint the resources referenced above for educational/research purposes in the doctoral thesis, and for these materials to be published on the MIRR digital repository upon successful completion of the doctoral thesis.

19/04/2022

**X** Loïc Guyon

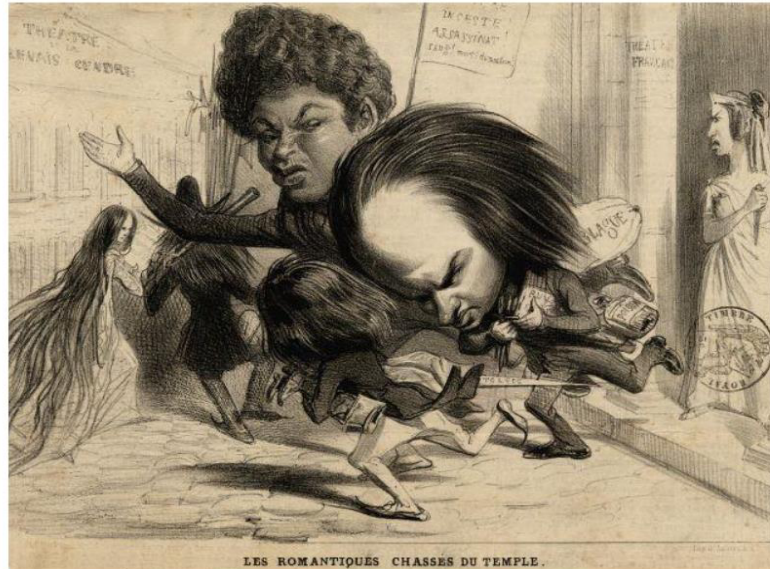
Dr Loïc Guyon  
Head of Department of French Studies (MIC)  
Signed by: Dr Loïc Guyon

## Appendix I

### French Production and Performance (FR4777) Module Outline 2020/2021

FR4777

FRENCH PRODUCTION & PERFORMANCE



De Barray, 'Les Romantiques chassés du Temple', in *La caricature provisoire*, n°8, 1838.

#### **Course Description**

This final-year module aims at developing the students' knowledge of French cultural history and improving their proficiency in French via a wide range of exercises and methods including the stage performance of a theatre play. Students will be introduced to the text and context of an authentic French theatre play. In the course of the semester, students will be required to read the play and will be completing a number of translation and vocabulary exercises on the play to further their understanding of the text. They will also complete a number of pronunciation exercises and learn some basic acting techniques which will enable them to rehearse and perform the various roles which will have been allocated to them.

#### **Timetable**

**Lectures:** Wednesdays at 2pm  
Fridays at 10am and 11am

**Lecturer/coordinator:** Dr Loïc Guyon

**Final-year coordinator:** Dr Loïc Guyon ([loic.guyon@mic.ul.ie](mailto:loic.guyon@mic.ul.ie))

**FR4777 FRENCH PRODUCTION & PERFORMANCE**

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

**Upon completion of this module students should be able to:**

- Differentiate between various genres, trends and techniques constitutive of the French theatrical production
- Use a wider range of vocabulary and idiom expressions and speak more fluently in French
- Communicate confidently in public
- Use gesture and body posture to communicate more efficiently in public

**Assessment**

**Continuous assessment**

This module is assessed by continuous assessment only.

**I. Written exam 40% of module**

A written exam will take place on Friday 26 March (week 9) at 10am. This exam will consist of a short translation exercise aimed at testing the range of your newly acquired vocabulary, followed by a few open questions to be answered in French dealing with various aspects of the cultural context in which the play was written.

**II. Performance exam 60% of module**

Following a few rehearsal sessions, students will be asked to stage an online live performance of certain scenes of the play in front of the examiners. This performance will take place on Friday 23 April at 10am (week 12) and will be recorded. This exam will assess the students' communication skills as well as the fluency of their French and the accuracy of their pronunciation and intonation.

**Repeat examination (August 2021)**

A written exam of the same format as the in-term one	40%
A live performance of certain scenes of the play (the examiners will give students their cues)	60%
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>

N.B. As with all modules in French, students who miss an in-term assessment may apply for an I-grade according to standard College procedures. I-grades will be cleared at the Annual Repeat examinations in August 2021.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

- Delavigne, C. (1829), *Marino Faliero* [available on Moodle as a Pdf document]
- Hugo V. (1829), *Les Orientales* : [http://www.poetes.com/textes/hugo\\_or.pdf](http://www.poetes.com/textes/hugo_or.pdf)
- Hugo, V. (1829), *Le dernier jour d'un condamné* : <https://beq.ebooksgratuits.com/vents/hugo-claude.pdf>
- Nodier, C. (1821), *Smarra, ou Les démons de la nuit* : [https://ebooks-bnr.com/ebooks/pdf4/nodier\\_smarra.pdf](https://ebooks-bnr.com/ebooks/pdf4/nodier_smarra.pdf)
- Simonnin, A. & Vanderbuch, L. (1829), *Le Doge et Le Dernier Jour d'un Condamné, ou Le canon d'alarme* [available on Moodle as a Pdf document]

SECONDARY SOURCES [optional reading]

- Charliac, L. and Motron, A.-C. (2014) *Phonétique progressive du français*, Paris, Clé International.
- Howl, J. (2008) *100 Projects to Strengthen your Acting Skills*, London: Baron's Educational Series.
- Viala, A. (2014) *Histoire du théâtre*, Paris, PUF, Que Sais-Je ?



**FR4777 FRENCH PRODUCTION & PERFORMANCE**

INDICATIVE LECTURE SCHEDULE

Week	Single lecture	Double lecture
1	Presentation of the module	General introduction to the play. Translation exercise on scene I and introduction to Charles Nodier's <i>Smarra</i>
2	Translation exercise on scene II	Translation exercise on scene III
3	Translation exercise (part 1) on scene IV. Introduction to Beaumarchais's Figaro character	Translation exercise (part 2) on scene IV and introduction to Victor Hugo's <i>Les Orientales</i> (analysis of the poem <i>Clair de Lune</i> )
4	Translation exercise on scene V (part 1)	Translation exercise on scene V (part 2) and introduction to Lamartine's <i>Les invocations</i>
5	Translation exercise on scene VI	Translation exercise on scene VII and VIII and introduction to Victor Hugo's <i>Le dernier jour d'un condamné</i>
6	Translation exercise on scene IX	Translation exercise on scene X, XI and XII
7	Translation exercise on scene XIII and XIV	Translation exercise on scene XV, XVI and XVII
8	<b>NO CLASS (ST PATRICK'S DAY)</b>	Charlotte Corday in 19 <sup>th</sup> -century French theatre  Translation exercise on scene XVIII and XIX
9	Conclusion	<b>Written exam</b>
10	<b>NO CLASS (EASTER MONDAY)</b>	Practical acting techniques  Group rehearsals
11	Group rehearsals	Group rehearsals
12	Final rehearsal	<b>Performance exam</b>

### **ATTENDANCE**

In the Department of French Studies we regard the learning process in the classroom as integral to your progression towards a good degree result and we emphasize the importance of **full attendance and active participation** at lectures and tutorials.

Attendance:

- Allows teaching staff to monitor closely your progress and to build up a picture of your individual strengths and achievements. This gives the best and fullest basis for appropriate support or intervention in relation to formally assessed work.
- Gives you the best context within which to develop confidence and skills in language and/or speaking as an element of formally assessed work.
- Considerably increases the enjoyment and value of the learning experience for the group as a whole. Students provide an important learning resource for each other.
- Represents an acknowledgement that lecturers/tutors have prepared work and made themselves available to give you the benefit of their expertise and knowledge of the subject area.
- Allows teaching staff to build up a picture of a student's strengths and achievements as the basis for valuable references either during or after the completion of the degree programme.

**Failure to attend classes puts the quality of your degree at risk.**

*Please note that you should also endeavour to improve your French by going to the Franco-German house during the times indicated on the FGH schedule posted on Moodle and on the department noticeboard.*

## Appendix J

### **Adapted Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS; Horwitz et al., 1986) Performance Intervention**

#### **Participant Instructions:**

In your final year of French Studies at MIC, you completed a module entitled *French Production and Performance*. As part of this module, you were introduced to French theatre and took part in a live performance of a French play in an online setting. You also developed your communication and pronunciation skills while acquiring vocabulary and developing your translation skills.

Please respond to the following questionnaire solely based on your experience of the *French Production and Performance* module. Read each statement carefully, then tick the **one response** that best represents how you feel about that statement or by providing your answer in the text box provided.

---

<b>1.</b> I felt quite sure of myself when I was speaking in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>2.</b> The <i>French Production and Performance</i> module was a largely positive learning experience.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>3.</b> I <i>didn't</i> worry about making mistakes in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. I felt a sense of accomplishment during my performance.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. The performance module gave me the opportunity to learn from my peers.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. While rehearsing for the performance, teamwork allowed the whole class to build a sense of community.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. I trembled when I knew that I was going to be called on during the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. It frightened me when I didn't understand what the teacher was saying in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. I think the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module content was more interesting than some traditional French modules I completed.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>10.</b> I kept thinking that the other students were better than I was in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>11.</b> I was usually at ease during tests in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>12.</b> I started to panic when I had to speak without preparation in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>13.</b> I worried about the consequences of failing the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>14.</b> I didn't understand why some students were so upset over the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>15.</b> In the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module, I sometimes got so nervous that I forget things I knew.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>16.</b> I didn't mind volunteering answers in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>17.</b> I got upset when I didn't understand what the teacher was correcting in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>18.</b> Even if I was well prepared for the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module, I felt anxious about it.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>19.</b> I enjoyed going to the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>20.</b> I felt confident when I spoke in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. I was afraid that my language teacher was ready to correct every mistake I made in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

22. I could feel my heart pounding when I was going to be called on in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

23. The more I studied for tests in <i>French Production and Performance</i> module, the more confused I got.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

24. I <i>didn't</i> feel pressure to overly prepare for the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

25. I <i>wasn't</i> self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

26. I <i>didn't</i> feel as tense and nervous in my <i>French Production and Performance</i> module as I did in my other French classes.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

27. I got nervous and confused when I was speaking in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

28. When I was on my way to the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module, I felt at ease and relaxed.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

29. I got nervous when I didn't understand every word the language teacher said in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

30. I felt overwhelmed by the number of rules you had to learn to complete the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



31. I was afraid that the other students would laugh at me when I spoke the foreign language in the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

32. I <i>didn't</i> get nervous when the language teacher asked questions which I didn't prepare in advance during the <i>French Production and Performance</i> module.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

33. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language performance classes in the future.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Appendix K

### Questionnaire on Students' Opinions and Perceptions of the French Production and Performance Module

1. What was your opinion of the module at the outset of the semester (e.g., were you afraid/nervous/sceptical/excited)? Did your opinion of the module change over the semester? Please explain your response.
  
2. While rehearsing for the performance, teamwork allowed the whole class to build a sense of community.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. The performance module gave me the opportunity to learn from my peers.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. Teamwork was a large component of the French Production and Performance module. Did this affect your overall learning experience in a positive or negative manner?
  
5. I felt a sense of accomplishment during my performance.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. **The French Production and Performance module was a largely positive learning experience.**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. **I think the French Production and Performance module content was more interesting than some traditional French modules I completed.**

<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. **Do you feel that you developed your French language skills during the French Production and Performance module? If so, which skills and how? (e.g., grammar, syntax, fluidity, self-confidence, vocabulary, pronunciation, intonation etc.).**
9. **Do you feel that this module helped you to gain awareness/more confidence in the French language? How/In what ways?**
10. **Do you feel that you developed your intercultural knowledge/knowledge of French culture and customs during this module? If so, how?**
11. **How does the French Production and Performance module compare to your previous French modules?/What did you think of teaching approach used in the French Production and Performance module compared to traditional modules?**
12. **Do you feel that you perform better in the French language when “in character” as opposed to speaking in a traditionally taught module? Can you briefly explain your response?**
13. **In your opinion, what was the most enjoyable or beneficial part of the French Production and Performance module?**

- 14. In your opinion, what was the most challenging part of the French Production and Performance module?**
- 15. Which activity did you like the most during the module and which activity was the most challenging for you? (e.g., final performance, discussion of the text, translating, rehearsals etc.)**
- 16. What other benefits did you get from this module? (e.g., improved self-confidence, cultural benefits, less shy speaking, discovery of theatre etc.).**
- 17. Do you feel that the technological element of this module improved the learning experience? If so, how?**
- 18. What was your opinion of teaching and acting out theatre in an online setting?**
- 19. When rehearsing and performing, did you make an effort to put on a French accent? (why/why not?)**
- 20. Did you feel more or less anxious when the instructor was present for rehearsals or during any other specific point of the module? If so, why?**
- 21. Did you feel more or less anxious/self-conscious when rehearsing in front of your peers? Please briefly explain your response.**
- 22. At any point throughout the module, did you every explicitly discuss with classmates or your instructor any worries you may have had in relation to the module?**
- 23. Did your instructor use any teaching method/approach which you thought made the learning experience more interesting or less intimidating?**

**24. In your opinion, was your instructor reassuring during the module?**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>Somewhat</b>	<b>No</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**25. What was your opinion of the text the play was based on “Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d’un condamné, ou le Canon d’alarme”? (e.g., useful vocabulary, interesting, challenging etc.).**

**26. What was your opinion of the assessment for this module?**

**27. In previous years, prior to Covid-19, the final performance was acted out on stage and all actors were in costume and had access to props. Do you feel this would have helped you in your final performance? If so, in what ways?**

**28. Would you have felt more or less at ease (or more/less self-confident) if this module was taught by an anglophone speaker or an instructor who was the same nationality as you? (or were you at ease being taught by a native French speaker?) Please briefly explain your response.**

**29. Do you have any suggestions or critiques towards the module? How it could be improved?**

**30. When speaking the French language, do you try to maintain your “Irish identity” in some ways? Please explain briefly.**

**31. Why did you decide to study the French language? (e.g., professional/personal reasons)**

**32. Do you feel a personal connection with the French language? If yes, in what ways? If no, why not?**

## Appendix L

### Post-Performance Semi-Structured Interview Questions

**Note for Gatekeeper from Principal Researcher:** Please inform the participants that all responses will remain anonymous. The researcher will only be provided with the transcription of the audio. All names/identifiers will be removed and will be replaced by a participant number. If at any time the participant would like to leave the study they may do so without consequence. Participation is voluntary. Today, the researcher would like to have your impressions, opinions, advice, expertise, and insight into your experiences of the French Production and Performance Module.

1.	Could you tell me about your language learning experiences (from your earliest memory/anything that comes to mind)?
2.	Did you notice any differences in teaching approaches for the Irish language and French language?
3.	What do you think about the way languages are perceived in Ireland?
4.	<i>“Why are students so poor at Irish after 12 years of school? Critics say the language is badly taught but new approaches aim to make it fun and engaging.”</i> This is a quote from a recent newspaper publication. Student engagement with the Irish language has often been critiqued in the media. What is your opinion on this statement?
5.	Did you prefer learning Irish or French? Why? (Primary, Second-level, Third-level experience).
6.	How did you feel when learning these languages/did you look forward to your classes?/Which subjects did you get better marks in?
7.	Could you speak to me about your French language learning experience at MIC. Do any modules stand out in your memory? Why?
8.	Content Modules: FR4746 – Reason and Sensibility vs. FR4777 French Production & Performance (What were your impressions of the assessment? Were you ever nervous, or worried going to these classes? Why/Why not? What course did you have to work the most at?)
9.	Did your perception of an instructor ever impact or influence your enjoyment of a French language learning experience?
10.	Had you any previous performance experience before completing FR4777?
11.	What were your initial impressions of the module?
12.	Did the ‘acting’ aspect impact on your language learning experience (e.g., French competence, level of engagement, willingness to speak, overall enjoyment?) Why?

<b>13.</b>	How did you feel in character? Do you think you performed better when in character? If so, why? Would costume and a stage have influenced this further?
<b>14.</b>	What were your opinions on 'acting' online? Did it help you in any way? Was it easier? Why?
<b>15.</b>	What was your opinion of the assessment of this module (written exam vs. performance exam)?
<b>16.</b>	Were you ever eager to impress the course instructor? How did this impact on your language learning experience?
<b>17.</b>	Overall, did you think FR4777 was a good experience? Why? (What added value did it bring to your French language learning experience?)
<b>18.</b>	Do you/Have you ever suffered from FLA (nervous/apprehensive) at any point when learning a language? If so, when, what language, why?
<b>19.</b>	Did you ever feel you were being judged when speaking in the French language (by peers/teacher)? If so, why?
<b>20.</b>	What in your opinion could teachers do to help students who suffer from FLA, or who find language learning stressful? What methods could be used? Would you use drama or performance practices to teach a language in the future?

## Appendix M

### **Module Coordinator and Designer Semi-Structured Interview Questions**

<b>1.</b>	What was your inspiration behind the FR4777 module?
<b>2.</b>	What were your aims and objectives in developing the FR4777 module?
<b>3.</b>	When you first introduced the FR4777 module, did it replace another module on offer? If so, why did you decide to substitute a traditional module for a performance-based module?
<b>4.</b>	Do you/did you have any prior performance experience?
<b>5.</b>	Do you subscribe to any particular ‘method’ of second language acquisition?
<b>6.</b>	What skills did you envision students would develop throughout the module?
<b>7.</b>	Do you feel that the paradigm shift to online teaching and learning during COVID-19 impacted upon the module? If so, in what ways?
<b>8.</b>	What was your delivery approach? / Did you feel that you had to adapt your delivery of the module due to the pivot to online teaching?
<b>9.</b>	How did you integrate or encourage students to perform behind the screen?
<b>10.</b>	Did you feel that integrating theatre, and more specifically, character roles facilitated students’ proficiency in the French language? If so, in what ways?
<b>11.</b>	What was your approach to assessment? (Traditional component + Performance-based component)
<b>12.</b>	What was your approach to correction/feedback?
<b>13.</b>	What were the success parameters that informed the module?
<b>14.</b>	Do the feel that the new module altered your rapport with students or reveal previously unknown strengths/weaknesses of students?
<b>15.</b>	As the years have gone by, have you changed any elements of the module since the first production, in 2017?
<b>16.</b>	Do you feel that other language educators, with little performance experience, could replicate or carry out an innovative module in a similar way? What advice would you give them?
<b>17.</b>	Have you ever felt that your native speaker status may impact/has impacted on students’ perceptions of the language learning process?
<b>18.</b>	Do you think that because you are a native speaker of the French language, it makes you more critical of student errors/mistakes?



<b>19.</b>	Have you ever felt that your position in the Department of French Studies may impact on students' perceptions of the language learning process? (e.g., trying to impress/fear of making mistakes because of your status)
<b>20.</b>	Prior to this investigation, were you familiar with or had you ever heard of foreign language anxiety?
<b>21.</b>	Do you think that you have ever experienced foreign language anxiety as a language learner?
<b>22.</b>	When developing the module, did you ever consider that performance could play a role in either increasing or decreasing student nervousness or apprehensiveness during the language learning process?
<b>23.</b>	In your opinion, did you observe an increase in anxiety/stress levels as assessments approached? / Was there any aspect of the assessment that caused more anxiety among students?
<b>24.</b>	Have you carried out any student feedback questionnaires since the beginning of the module? Were there any comments of note?
<b>25.</b>	Do you believe that only theatre can be used to reduce FLA, or would other performative pedagogies work?

Appendix N

Research Journal Part I – Idea and Thought Development

*Research Journal*  
**Office DEPOT.**

writing pad  
ruled  
bloc-notes - ligné  
notizblock - liniert

*Foreign Language Anxiety  
in the Irish Third-Level  
Context and the potential  
of Performative Pedagogy  
for Learners of French.*

*SARAH CLANCY  
Dept. of  
French Studies  
PhD.*

*(2019 – 2022)*

- SLA
- FLA
- Methods
- Performance
- Coding
- Patterns
- Ideas
- Developments

A4+  
70 g/m<sup>2</sup>  
100  
4

100% QUALITY ASSURED  
EU Ecolabel: FR/046/001  
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8 717868 176281 >  
6721973

Purpose } Lasakhuri + Cornwell - hybrid /  
Mixed methods study - MM RQ <sup>integrated</sup>  
Combinational. <sub>Correl Q</sub>

Q1 Des Q2 Exptl. ✓

◦ Type of Q asked determines study conducting. ✓

◦ Two phase study - 1<sup>st</sup> builds on 2<sup>nd</sup> stage ✓

Study conducted at a point when classes moved online / prior to this all students had experience traditional, teacher classroom based.

(What did the 1<sup>st</sup> phase involve?  
2<sup>nd</sup> phase involve?)

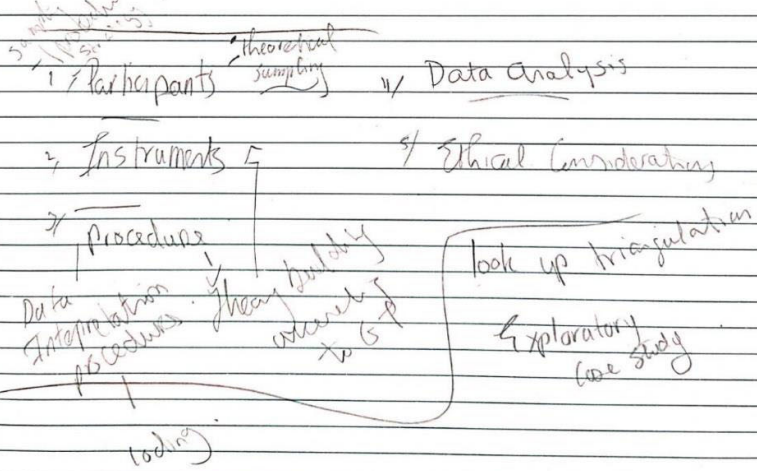
⇒ The RQ had to be feasible Resources. ✓

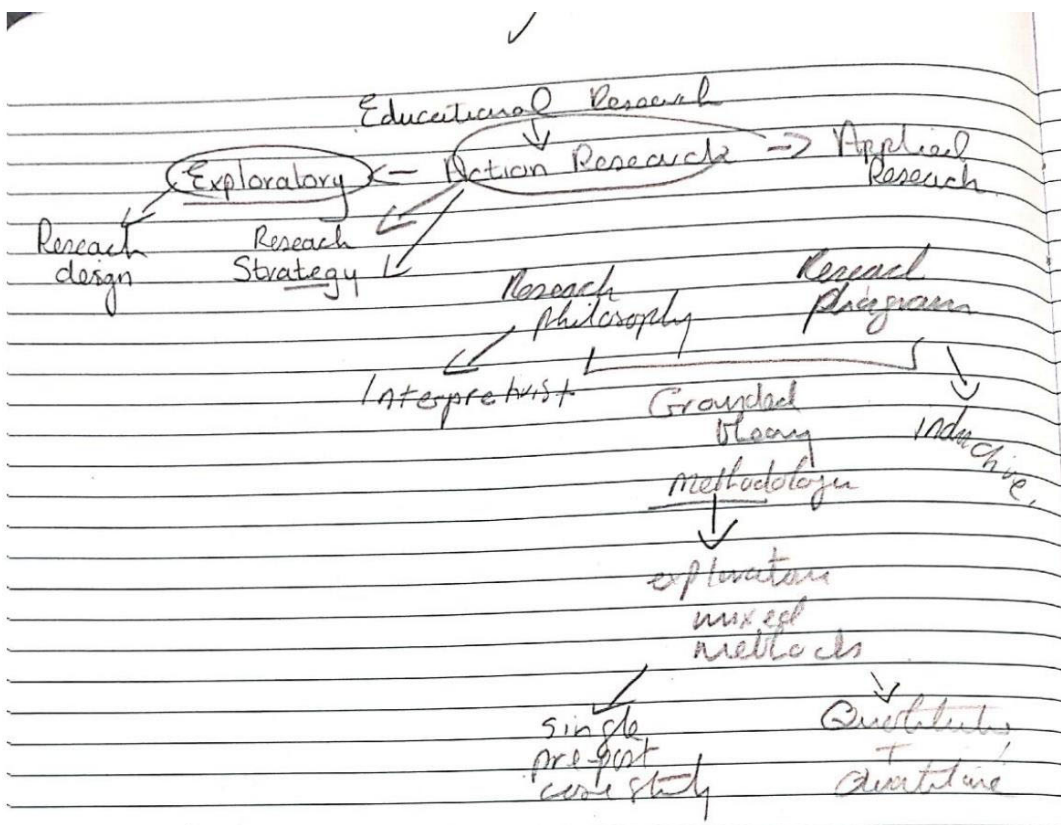
⇒ aim clear / concise + well framed RQ.

data

# Tables

## Participatory Biographical data + Characteristics





Inductive  
paradigm

Research strategy - GP  
methodological genre Interpretation  
Inductive paradigm  
interpretivist +

positivist philosophy

interpretivist research philosophy

→ What is research design?

→ } Intro - final design to present a pre-post case study, adopting mixed methods approach derived using grounded theory principles.

→ Throughout the research the aim was to adopt methods that were straightforward + practical within the limitations or resources available in terms of time, skill and expertise.

→ Building theory through case research.

→ addition to earlier theoretical perspectives.

→ G + field of study

↓ Methodology

① Purpose of Research

Design research, necessary to consider an appropriate theory or philosophy.

purpose of research clearly links to the philosophy adopted, as it enables the understanding of experience, perception + viewpoints of participants.

- Define - what is the aim of research. ✓

- Define - what is the research design? ✓

- Define - what is the methodology? ✓

- Inductive methodology that attempts to bridge the gap between research & theory

[IGT] - socio-ecological educational learning } influenced by IGT

Triangulation



# Grounded Theory

4 design framework

Why use GT?

What is the aim of research in general?

What is the research design?

What is methodology?

(GT)

- flexible
- appropriate little is known
- aim / construct an explanatory theory
- generate theory grounded in the data

(1)  
Glaser  
&  
Strauss  
introduced  
it

(2)  
Constant  
Comparative  
method

(3)  
How do  
I position  
myself  
philosophically?  
+  
purpose  
of study

(4)  
Elicited  
Extant  
data

"GT represents both a method of inquiry & a resultant product of that inquiry"

(5) axial  
selective  
coding  
Coding  
process

(6) theoretical  
sampling

(7) Anvil  
+ i-joke

Micro

Meso

Exo

Macro

sub  
themes

~ Questionnaires printed

Chapter 4

4.0 Introduction ✓

4.1 Project Design ✓

RQ + hypotheses.

4.1.1 Research Purpose ✓

4.1.2 Research Participants ○

4.1.3 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures ○

4.1.4 Ethical Considerations ○

4.2 Data Analysis and Research Findings I ○

4.3 Conclusions

4.3.1 Research Limitations

4.3.2 Implications and Recommendations for future research ○

The psych stressor activates Ciara's  
anxious emotional reaction by  
hyperactivity of the stress res. in the brain.

Several internal processes get  
underway - when Ciara is  
pursued

Ciara chooses to fight, mutters  
phrases off 'je suis allé en Espagne,  
j'ai passé 3 semaines -- j'ai  
sorti -- ah he realizes he  
committed an error - physical  
indicators of anxiety begin to  
emerge

-When Ciara hears Mr. Lyden say  
'D'accord, merci Ciara' - travelling  
sur les temps' Reinze  
he thinks - okay it's over,  
please don't ask me anything else

Monsieur le clerc greets the class as normal, a big 'Bonjour & Java' to which Lue hears murmured replies of 'ça va bien'. He then goes on to tell students that as promised today 'we will be focusing on oral production' for the rest of term even.

[Ciarin thinks of 'God here we go!']

→ After going through as that (possible words come up), he says okay everyone, lets each go around and tell each other what we did last year for our summer holidays. I remember he careful not to mix up your tense, (parce que vous n'avez pas)

▶ This is all it takes to trigger Ciarin's language anxiety - his adaptive reaction was produce in response to an object stimulus (Chavvy to produce (obj.) referred to as a psych stressor. (Jen, ...)

In Ciarin's case, he was probably negative evaluation from his teacher and peers. He recalls previous experiences.

mapray vignette (Ciarán says  
from MA)

~~2/2/21~~

Ciarán wakes up as usual @ 8 am ready  
to head to school college. He gets brushed  
hirsted, dressed, <sup>sets</sup> and packs his bag.

While having his break-fast <sup>start the morning off</sup>  
he remembers that he has <sup>with his usual</sup>  
a double French Language tutorial in  
Monsieur Leclere that evening.

→ Ciarán begins to anticipate and dread this  
impending negative situation - his future oriented  
mood state.

Throughout the day, Ciarán goes along  
with his other classes, and tutorials; however  
at 4 pm comes the exam. Ciarán must face his  
French day-end. He considers  
skipping the class and making up an  
excuse; however, his mind can't do it  
too late, so he stays all scurry  
inside.

he thinks  
to himself  
'Oh god, I am  
going to have  
to speak in  
front of everyone'

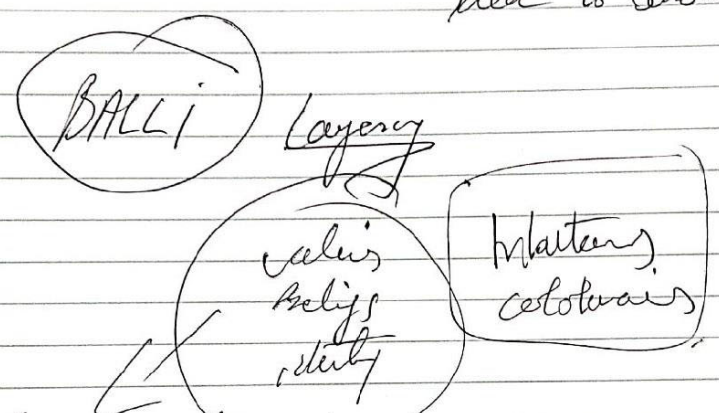
I remember the best  
time I used the wrong term, and I felt like a fool.

Goal universal - concrete  
emphasis

factory  
case  
study  
of  
land

Dynamic - where I am at  
→ Technology

idea to construct.



Empty full circle.

levels of variables  
interrogates where belong @  
data.

---

identits perhaps / virtual

environment / diff calis  
as  
CS -

Clinical/physical

↳ Manifestation of Anxiety:

↳ Documenting the Intangible.

Experimental program identical  
but this is where  
its success lies.

frequencies  
→ level  
→ 7 sit - specific  
→ fumble test  
→ measurement

took these numbers & developed  
by construct key names  
end up.



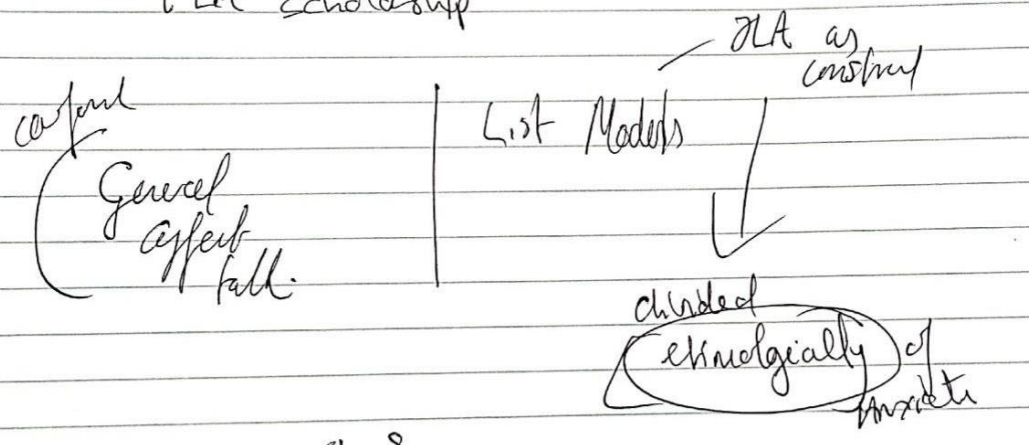


FLA Chapter.

Clear FLA mechanism Model } psych construct.

- To understand on general level - anxiety.

- FLA scholarship



ideas  
concepts

(Evolution of anxiety with that scholarship emergent discourse on FLA as a

Breakdown of the basis.

3 important no

from H et al.

ST framework allows us to draw upon  
 & explore significant mediators &  
 facilitators of the SLA, <sup>located</sup> <sup>located</sup>  
 in the learner's environment,  
 or ecosystem, that psych + linguistic  
 don't permit.

where input is obtained <sup>receptors - to</sup> <sup>communicative</sup> <sup>competence</sup>  
 created in the  
 context  
 of the  
 present  
 , investigate

negotiation of <sup>namely, identity</sup> <sup>culture</sup>  
 meaning

new strategies <sup>communication</sup> <sup>both</sup>  
 of technology. <sup>within</sup> <sup>facross</sup>  
 learning spaces from  
 the physical  
 to virtual.

Collaborative Act  
 Shared by (ML) / poster comm  
 context

what can others do?

test for others?

not time to do.

overturn?

~~use as test~~  
not time to do.

gender.

correlation process.

anglophone scholars.

writes  
research.

use framework of analysis

different demographic.

gender balance

influence over of research

Scholarship

Case study  
early  
sets

public  
practice.

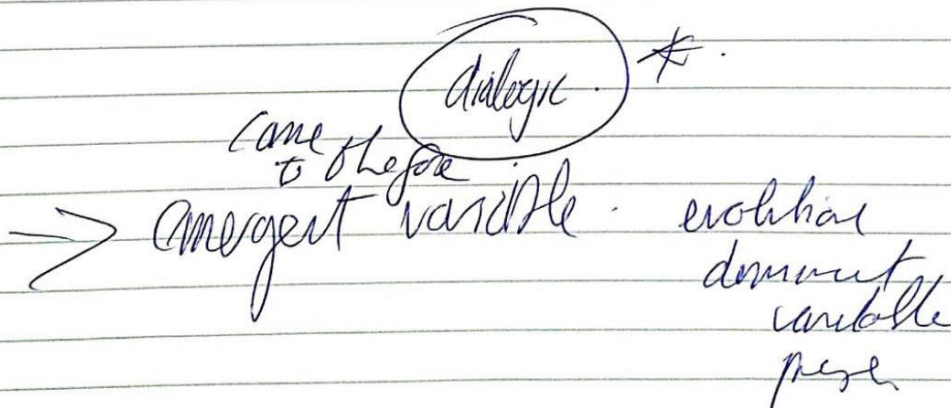
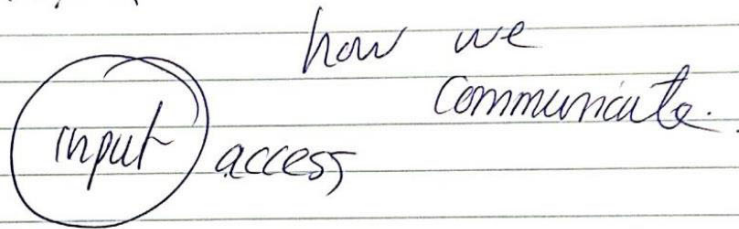
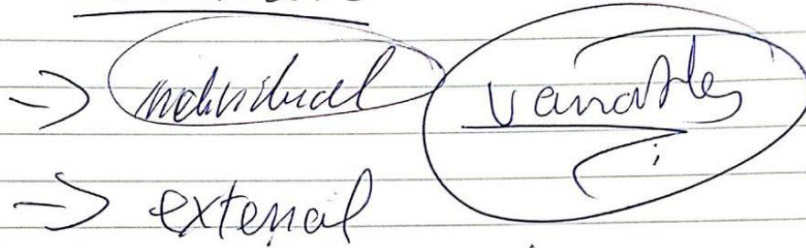
all say!?

Stakeholder  
can't reform

Intro

Background

Environment



chap 4.

Cultural landscape.  
Edi

environment  
CS

individual

collective

language culture  
unclunor  
Demographic.

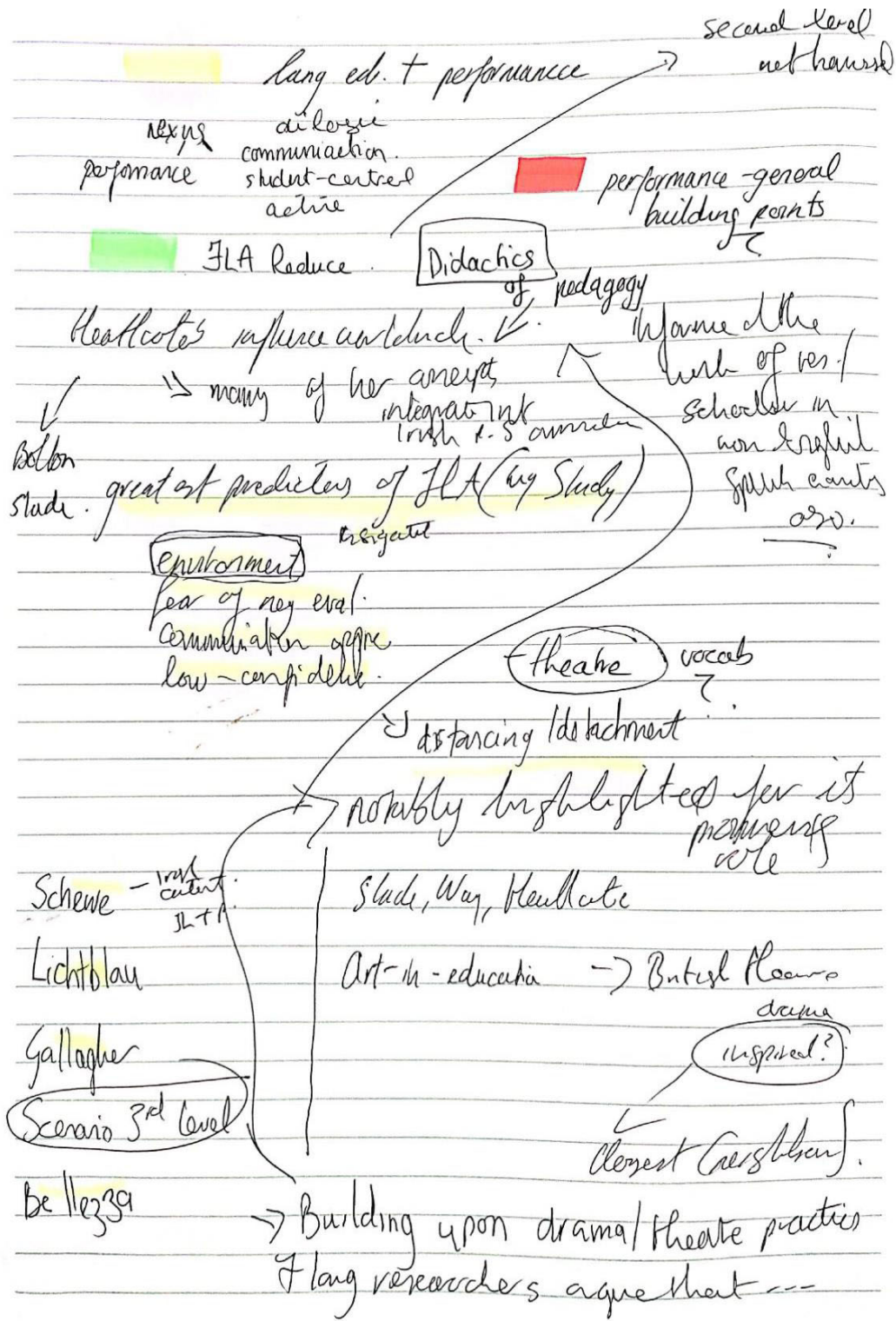
extended variables

with this emerg  
concepts.

→ interaction  
variables

affetive  
com.

variety  
identity, other  
communication



Thesis Meeting  
Context

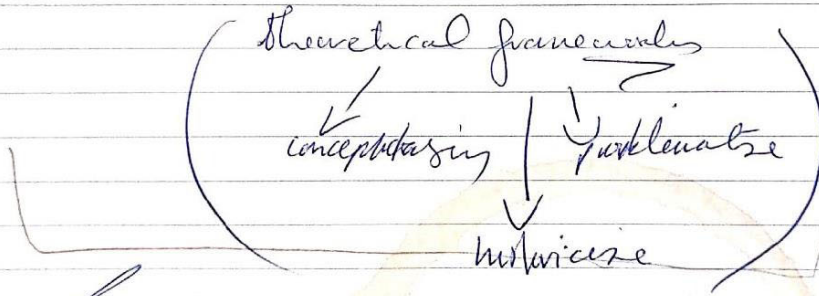
Intro

Conclusion

Dispersed lit over thesis  
general intro.  
 corpus / main scholars.

- RQ
- Logic
- corpus

other peoples data gathering framework

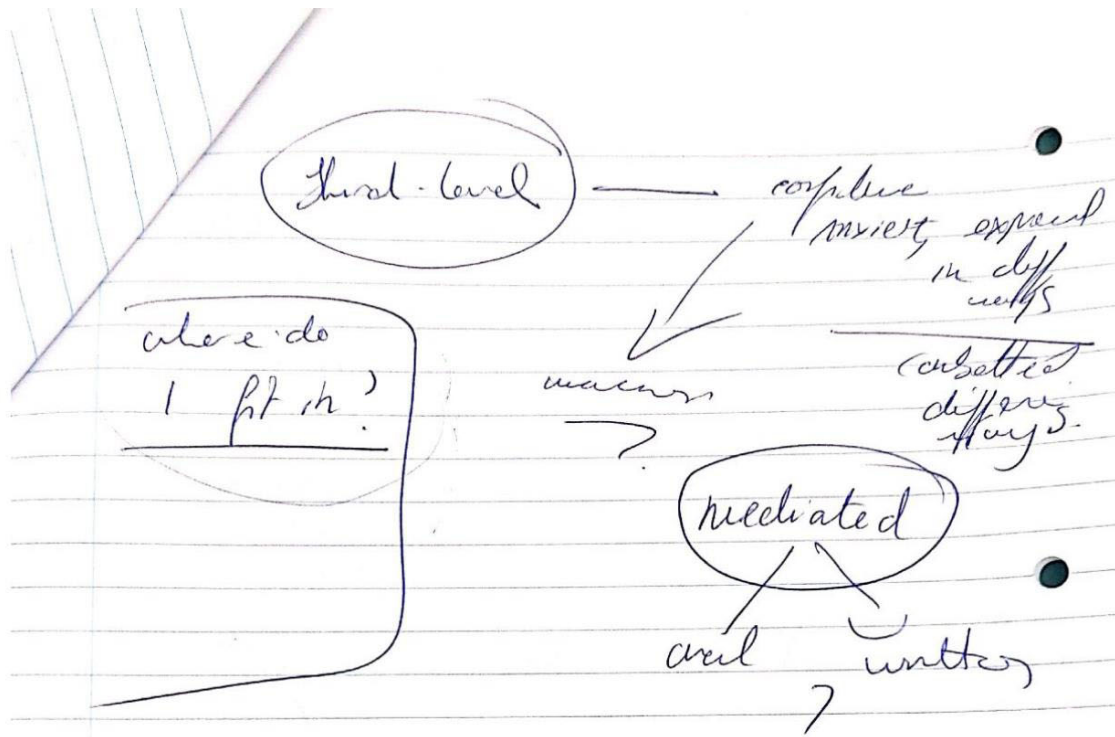


largely my RQ  
corpus info

Intro...  
main dis - specific attention is  
accorded to scholars  
\* \* 43 \*

Process { method used to navigate to corpus, theory & research





General conceptual intro.

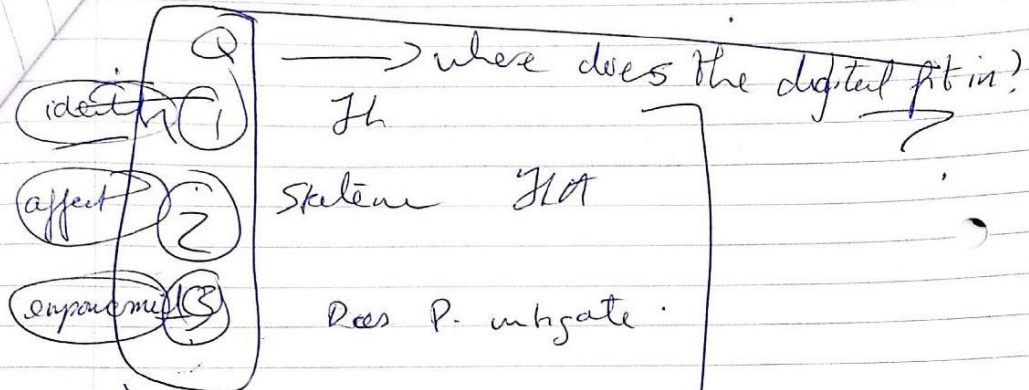
exploratory  
process



pedagogical  
innovate.

Signal

Other Digital  
media



processes  
not  
products

↑  
Unpaid work

setting scene.  
Player  
audience

Process of JLA  
multifaceted.  
lack of consensus  
certain areas.

regardless of SKA  
approach

setting further  
influence

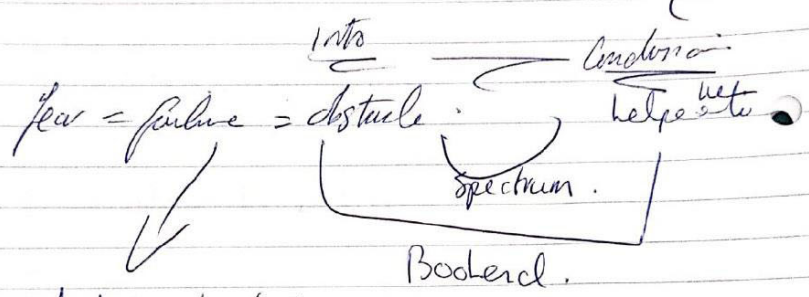
Social  
global  
sociopolitical  
context

affect  
identity  
context



★  
 Beyond of the digital.  
 covid - Technology

SLA - influenced by digital part.  
 not focused, but now is



what is it not.

impact on long term  
 in a new way

establish  
 SLA methods

what? ?  
 plan? ?  
 why? ?

→ sign of SLA.

context

Conceptually flu  
Practice - pedagogy

narrative

edu. landscape

support

ans.

border

modalities

3rd level

shift

- not at

final

stage

Role of play

after growth

perceptions

Climate shift

→ conclusion

new Ireland  
open space

French

pregnated  
relationship

Brexit

third  
level

3rd level

→ long repetitive

French are study

→ theoretical

specifically to various of A's

'less foreigners'

less alien

ending

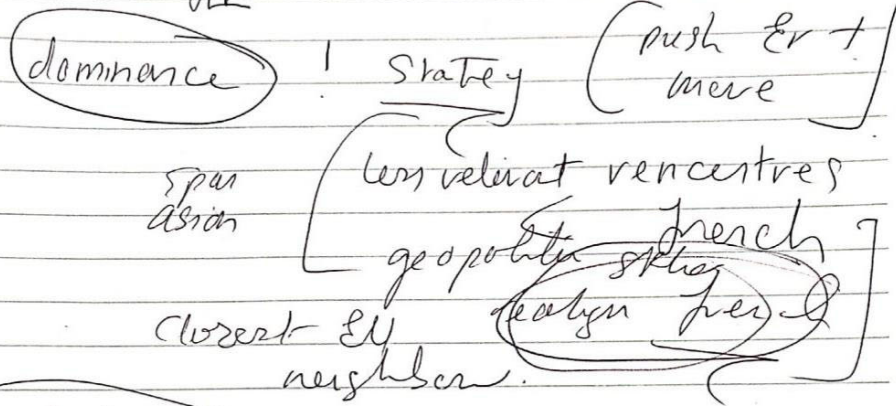
T4

They have  
Beck

evolution of land. science say

anglophone in EU  
diag. vel. e. other  
lag.

Dynamic of relation  
Twe + friend  
as JLL  
French  
Business  
link



anglophone  
francophon  
diaspora

- no trad.  
metabi  
cultural  
cause of  
self

markets

COVID  
insulin

rapid  
culture

metted of delivery  
noted it anxiety  
can't leave country

desire

# GUI PPLS

Microsystem family tree sphere  
 provide models for comparison  
 reinforcement of Yerkes mechanism  
 lay learning

One of the most evident examples of  
 this influence can be highlighted by one  
 of the research participants who sat

full circle

★ <sup>quite</sup> Meso - similar/different & contradictory  
 socialization experiences  
 (norms / expectations are conveyed  
 learn more easily)

Eco per. illustrates the complexity  
 of studying the Irish language

Bi-directional chronosystem

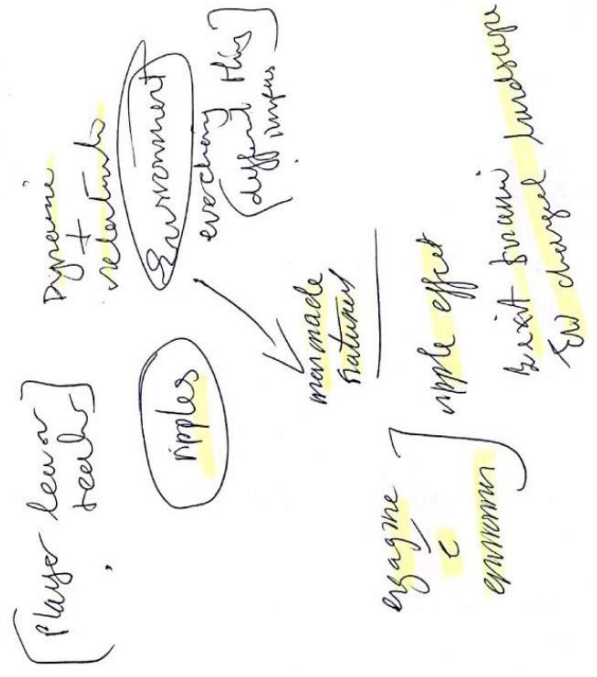
present context MB.  
 proximal processes.

time

form  
 power  
 control  
 +  
 direction

landscape - history  
 (trajectory looking back to when  
 created historically  
 → nature)

border porous - overall water elements



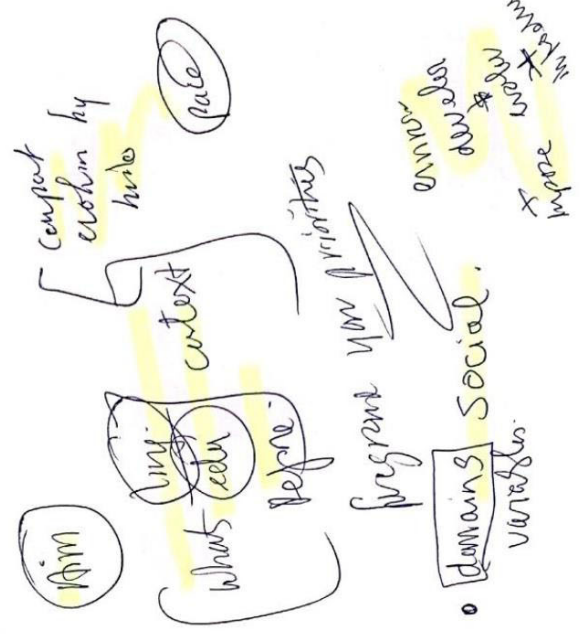
History  
 Ite  
 +  
 GA

start  
 → faces organically  
 slowly  
 accepts

→ External trigger to help

(Next EU) Policy

→ clearly visible & these elements



migratory phenomenon

③ global level

Bring together

UCL

UCML

Modern law  
why modern

Researching

push against optimism

gender norms / comparing

gov. discharging 51% engage in humanities (law)

can we do to make gov. better?

bottom-up approach to gov. policy

learner autonomy - learners appreciate when you want  
to hear about their needs

community of practice



Uni adapt 5 needs are.

HRC.

Ana Medeiros.

- transitions - erase barriers
- LL lifelong skill - constant engagement
- langs are living

dichotomy (girls vs boys).  
\* eradicate barriers.  
increase incrementally.

hosts + guest (lang + culture)

pleasurable subject

① peles L1 - L2  
multi + cog. PA. Federico  
not just feelings  
addition  
+ aspect of cog. process

② Polarisation goals vs. needs.  
approach ind/special comm  
agent of change.

③ Policy - key. local level / national / global  
community

mobility / citizenship  
create citizens

# Shaping futures for ML in HE

## Panel Debate

University Council of ML

dispel doom + gloom re FL.  
long isn't in freefall

articulating disciplinary field  
field with many many parts

● cultural study + lang lang

---

vantage point ensure p/s

best, more easily learn lang.

brain + affect friendly.

● (University + every "nature of least"  
need to know what to expect).

Science, Cog load

"How we can best blend lang future  
integrate blended lang"

Professional practices, & perspectives  
in the ending @ B level also possible  
+ beyond

"The New Normal"

Autonomously.

Teaching presence is directly related to  
social & cog presence. Ethical case design,  
facilitation & direction.

Seeking solidarity & collaboration.

decolonising scholarly knowledge. (locus of  
examination).

lang used for gatekeeping.

= global realities.

PhD

Online lang learn during pandemic: seq, act, reflect

Emergency remote teaching

not online lang perse → alternative

Covid-19 as an Opportunity

"internalisation @ home"

Stakeholders

DE vs. FRT → doesn't replicate the same circumstances -

Strategies for effective online teaching - exp. from teaching during Covid-19 pandemic.

raise student cog. engagement

# Alter long term memory - probing

Structural

phonological

many times over.  $\leftarrow$  input flooding

highly engaging activities.

$\rightarrow$  interpersonal listening nurturer / provider

"hear with our eyes"

oral input supported by transcript

segmenting words (brain allows)

unanalysed chunks - reverse engineer

Beq vs. adv. @ uni

listening as modelling [ lam ]  $\rightarrow$  transfer input  
reading. [ ram ]  $\rightarrow$  output

where do they get the lang from

level of  
meaning / lang

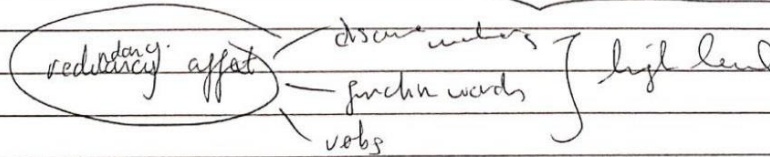
brain form

+ meaning cont  
from some  
ppl.

Prece reading  
in text exp.  
post reading  
output.

teach text at every level of  
gram, sound, lexic, discourse  
syntax.

1. no. of activities adapted level.
2. How you exploit a text
3. Process based approach



sentence builders.

12:50 (In conversation with

~~Qualify~~ / ~~Confirmation~~ of the curriculum -  
(Confirfy) / ~~Confirmation~~ (IPE)

↳ Build a curr. long seq normally den SS  
PPP.

AS modelling      Processing input      Output

Process-based approach.

Curr. inclusive. - asking to communicate  
participate.

Extraneous  
cognitive  
load

↳ Combine sub + explicit together - seeing as  
opportunities

Bombard  $\bar{e}$  some patterns      formal priming.  
- input "prowdy"  
↳ 98% comprehensible

- Start explicit: - model pattern.
- exploit structural priming

Lang. degrees in 'crisis' - Can we pursue prof. through curricular development.

- Narrative from Gov.
- Vulnerable time. (Lang) - arts + humanities
- Proxi for.
- Lang - elitist >
- celebrating multi/bilingualism.

Online debating in a FL / fostering Comm + inclusivity in Covid times.

Body lang. - Comm. beyond the screen.  
new skills - innovative ways.  
- apex ~  
theatrical / rehearsed techniques.

Assessing (online) assessment  
Assessment, autonomy, + L2 identity

- Schema → why / prime  
How
- Disassociate meaning / performance
- Arbitrary + disposable assignments
- Decoupled → performance act as acquisition  
rigidity (inhibit critical thinking)
- focused on grade vs. personal performance
- → Misalignment / teaching + assessing
- Clarity in course design - stages of journey clear - long
- "idea of future" → move away from idea of validation <sup>task</sup> motivation
- Embed LO + AO at start
  - individual exp. } grade equivalent among learners
  - comm. purpose } neurotypic
- Continuum vs. Spectrum.
- Affective response.
- → Enquiry based case study.
- find a way into L2 identity.
- create an audience
- PRIME
- aligned, amenable + student centered outcome



## Packet

- Blended environment (sharing VLE / assessment challenges)
- communities shared what they were doing  
webinars, blogs, books (help get through a crisis)
- In person / hybrid → blended HyFlex - fully present
- Self directed
- Think hard - what are we worried about? sketches across physical + virtual dimensions
- → one thing emergency situation?
- → what really matters.
- Learning analogy.

Co-Intentional Edu. - under network. content instrument.

- Virtual Exchange (eXams) - Interdisciplinary
- Disposable assignment! David Wiley (2013)
- Open Edu Res <sup>vs</sup> Open Practice
- realism - need to be realistic (cross borders)
- → Mentoring design Blanche & Hase. (Learning design)

keyno

key modification

French lang. teaching

(amusing a better future than dark matter)

- Critical lens Cognitive load.
- voice over the Internet / history exp effective over Internet. "smooth language"
- \* Computer mediated communication
- Virtual exchange.
- Ed-tech exponent achieve ends.
- power dynamics stuff is s/s<sup>+</sup>
- certain of edu. tech.
- stages of the journey
- space to participate & not be overwhelmed.
- "early adopters" - "pivot online"
- Academic background is in .....
- Audrey Watters → Teaching Machines
- Parallels in .....
- 1900's - tech in classroom (contextual circumstances are the year)
- "personalized learning" ?
- rich context, emerged from account resonated é me
- Dark matter "behaviorist" - ed-tech history (industrialization)
- that discourse is still there
- teaching - training  
openy mind - management J?
- Laura academic (letting light into higher edu)  
elementary. classroom needs change (help)
- Why do I do what I do. (affectivism)
- set our boundaries, not everything at once / pragmatist
- a part of the domain we are in.

Meeting the Challenge  
JLA.

Lexicon

note series titles

CMP within SE edu.

A new frontier.

emergent potentiality  
vs.  
fixed solution

space for  
players to enter.  
rearrange  
rearrange  
acts left to  
follow.

can we

provides a model.

The student experience (Alongside)

universally. → focus groups.  
exam situation

data anecdotal reception] problematic  
background.  
~~demographic~~

Case study part 1 - Distance learning.

safe place  
location. ←  
Being exposed.

Generational dealing  
with.  
meditation.

fear of my judgement  
identity ← 

- ridiculed
- embarrassed
- unstable

Self / other. (Ineq. encounter). power  
dynamics

performing to you each other. flatter  
hierarchy ← empowerment  
disempowerment.

Shift innovative real practice.

voiced exp  
or board } are we  
                  } process of SLA  
                  } +  
                  } approaches.

+

state of being. ?

↓  
That -

presumably not L2 teaching.  
part 2 → Leane.

possibility  
further  
linguistic  
more consideration.  
personality  
hair  
more  
strongly  
Big factors.

equation der  
cut  
solution

interrogation studied  
exp

tip of ice berg.

rich tapestry of phenomena  
consistent frameworks.

acknowledges.  
Context specific.  
will be distorted. ★ f2. pedagogy

The applicability of geographical location.

and its challenges

Setting the scene.

Broad strokes

Busy field.  
gaps

[Sig before purpose]

Hot topic: not.  
global. - huge scholars.

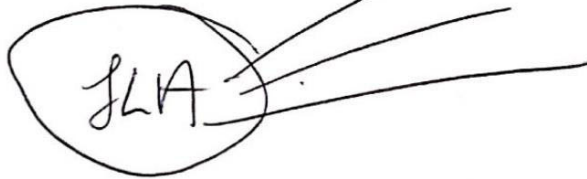
what's in store.  
signposts

disciplines  
general → specific

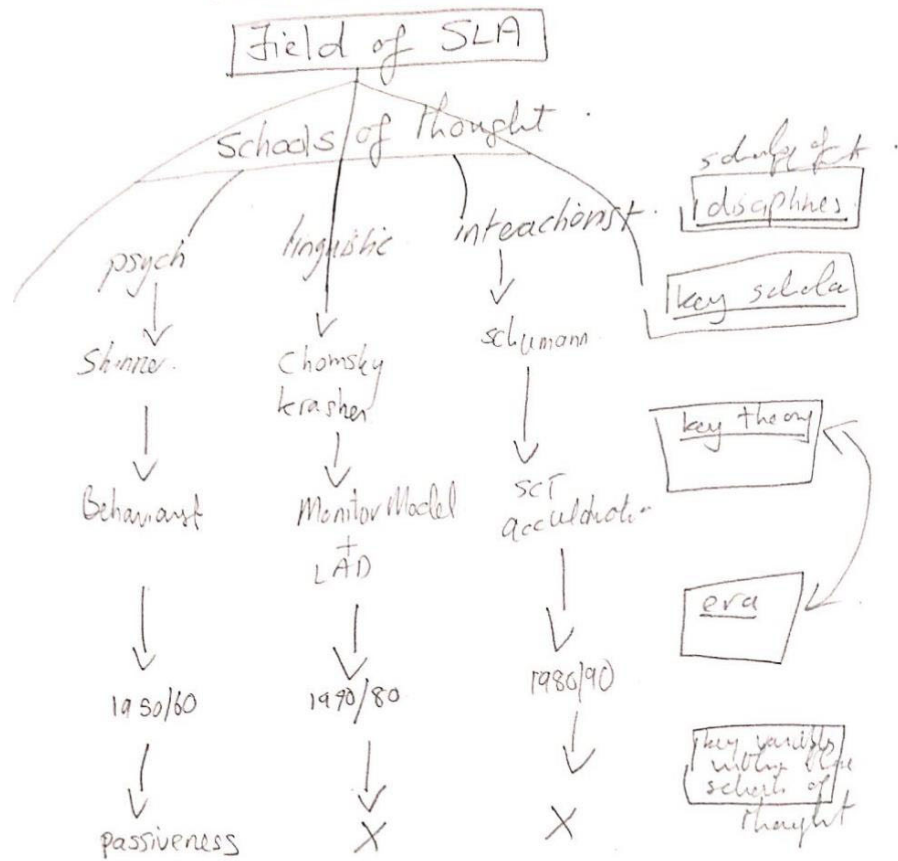
feeling for field  
of study.

~~engage to shift in perspective~~

view to identify (isolate  
variable.  
to focus  
on new  
approach.)



Section 1 edit



Categorisation <sup>to</sup> of the field of SLA  
approach



57

problematic terminology  
locate vs. navigating

Phil  
Basically:

situate  
research  
in different  
fields of  
study

object  
of  
study

agency  
affect  
passive

furnish

lexicon soon  
reminiscent provide  
laying terminology  
terms which will  
become central  
in later chapters.

not central to early perspectives,  
they arise ...

Who/What are the key scholars/works that inform each section of the investigation?

Part 1

**Chapter 1.** Key scholars in the field of SLA/SLA theorists (Ortega, Skinner, Chomsky, Krashen, Vygotsky, Schumann, Ochs & Schieffelin).

**Chapter 2.** Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, MacIntyre & Gardner, Bigdeli & Bai / SLA scholars such as Schumann & Krashen (affective dimensions in theoretical frameworks)

Part 2 –

**Chapter 3.** Language Policy and Planning documents. (Bronfenbrenner, Britta Jung, Bruen)

**Chapter 4.** Glaser and Strauss (Grounded Theory principles) + Other FLA researchers' methodological frameworks that informed the design of my study.

Part 3 –

**Chapter 5.** Shewe, Gallagher, drama/theatre in educator trailblazers (Way, Heathcote etc...)  
+ Data gathered in the present investigation

*mediator of the learning process* ← *technology used in diverse ways*

How will the 'digital' / 'technology' element be introduced/layered in each section of the investigation?

'The Digital Conundrum'

1. COVID (Paradigm shift to online teaching and learning)

Section 1

**Chapter 1.** SLA pedagogy informed by the digital – goes hand in hand with immersive/interactionist approaches to language education.

**Chapter 2.** Has research demonstrated different experiences of FLA based on distance learning/technology-based foreign language learning?

Section 2

**Chapter 3.** How has/Has the digital/technology been integrated into language learning process in the Irish context?

**Chapter 4.** Impact of COVID on the methodology/research design process.

*gkl*

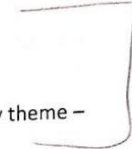
*tech is both used to conduct SLA research*  
*mediates SLA processes + products*

## Introduction

### What? Why? How?

?

conclusion



#### What are the three key components/areas that inform my thesis?

- 1) Foreign Language Learning (Key theme – identity)
- 2) Foreign Language Anxiety (Key theme – affect)
- 3) Innovation in Foreign Language Pedagogy (i.e., performative pedagogy) (Key theme – empowerment)

#### What makes up my corpus?

- 1) Research questions framing the study
- 2) Other theoretical/data gathering frameworks
- 3) French production and performance module

None other studies

#### How do I intend to use this corpus?

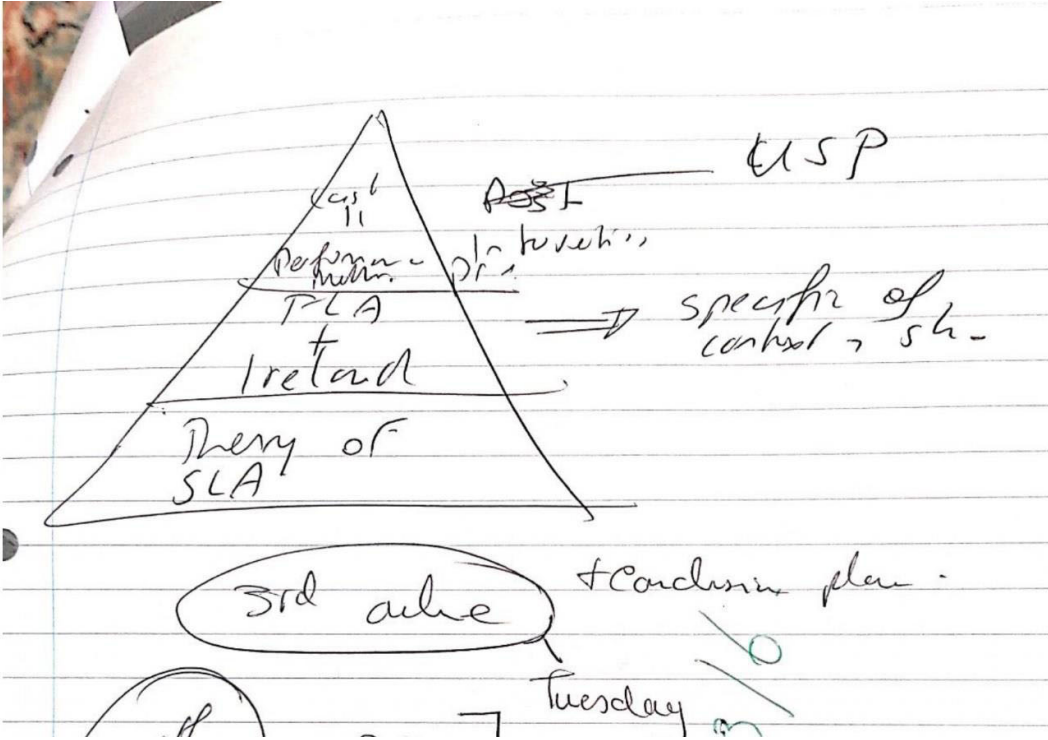
- 1) Historicise
- 2) Conceptualise
- 3) Problematise

#### How is the literature explored/corpus presented?

- Interdisciplinary study
- Integrated literature review
- Layering corpus in order to address the key research questions

#### Process

- Exploratory process.
- What method has been employed to navigate the corpus, theory, and research?
- Why third-level? FLA experienced/manifests itself in different ways and can be combatted in different ways. FLA shown to peak at intermediate level of language study. Considerable insight thus to be gained at third level, language learners more aware of their emotions/reactions to language learning process. Primary level – probably unaware/without inhibitions. Second level – transitional period (potential for FLA to develop) – third level students can provide important information on this.



with scholastic research as  
referred as: . . . . .

performance level of ~~that~~  
→ param.

FLA + performance.

general →  
FLA  
performance  
~~result~~ → unrelated  
parameters.

Review + Q's.  
Class activities.

Context

→ closer Ireland (not a lot of it)

→ home Irish context. workable!

(Parameters describe)

the → as follows

Time level, Personal, National.  
Personal trajectory (political changes).

Selling out the parameters

withy done

✓ Day Connect  
✓ Eul. <sup>canal</sup>  
✓ Post-text.

correctly undergo evolution  
landscape

✓ end of  
monopoly  
Irish language.

provides a rich case study

historically adds to complexity.  
is Irish language + text.

evolving  
→ biling <sup>linguistic</sup> system dynamics.

for a more scientific perspective.

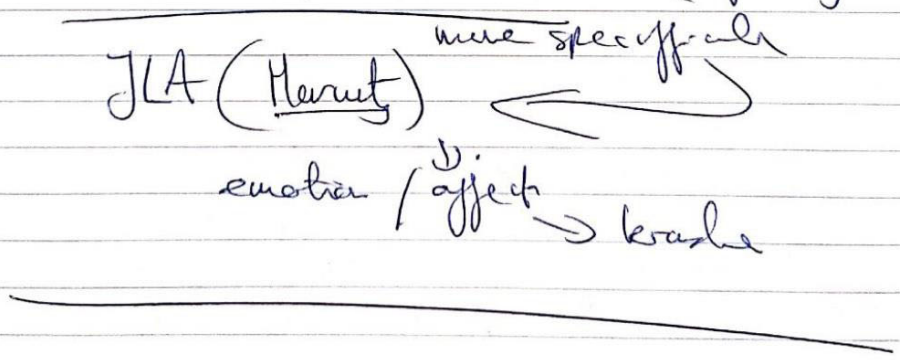
→ reception of Irish language needed!

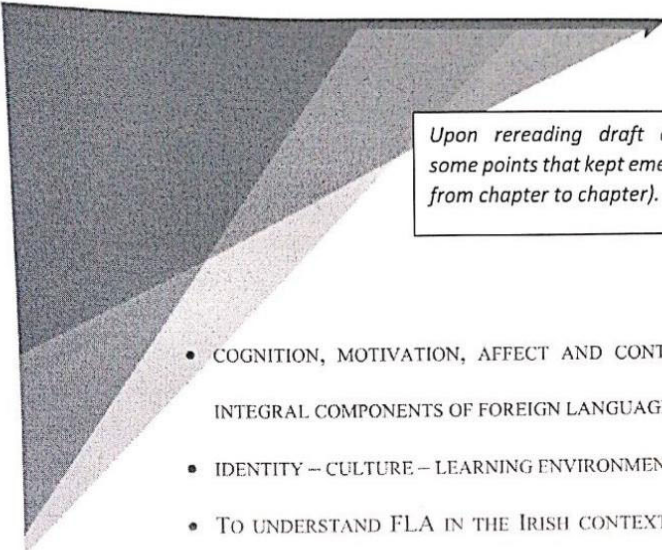
- Meeting April 28th -

Citation — Impl Context (process + Affect.) (soul, identity)  
Learning lang.  
look!  
(lang. context)

- LL complex.
- LL is learned
- high flows
- key players.

navigate landscape to a variety of disciplines  
→ fields (great within: discourse)  
filter.  
great figure of history ed.





*Upon rereading draft chapters produced, some points that kept emerging (linking points from chapter to chapter).*

- COGNITION, MOTIVATION, AFFECT AND CONTEXT ARE INSEPARABLE AND INTEGRAL COMPONENTS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY
- IDENTITY – CULTURE – LEARNING ENVIRONMENT – ANXIETY
- TO UNDERSTAND FLA IN THE IRISH CONTEXT (NEED TO OBSERVE SOCIAL, CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL CONTEXT).
- GROUNDING/ANCHORING (IDENTITY (THE SELF) & THE OTHER).
- LANGUAGE AND THE SELF ARE INTIMATELY BOUND (LEARNING L2 = IDENTITY BEING THREATENED).
- THIRD-LEVEL STUDENTS (HAVE DEVELOPED A STRONG SENSE OF SELF-AWARENESS/SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS).
- CONNECT/BOND TO THE LANGUAGE BEING LEARNED/LEARNING ENVIRONMENT? (MOTIVATION/THE OTHER/OTHERNESS – WHO/WHAT AM I IN THIS NEW LANGUAGE?).
- LACK OF PROFICIENCY IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE (NEGATIVE SELF-RELATED COGNITION/ANTICIPATION OF FAILURE DUE TO FLA).
- HOW DOES THE STUDENT ORIENT HIM/HERSELF TO ANXIETY? (BODY & MIND)
- KRASHEN & CHOMSKY (LANGUAGE ACQUISITION DEVICE + AFFECTIVE FILTER HYPOTHESIS).
- LINGUISTIC COMPETENCY VS LANGUAGE PERFORMANCE.



good exp [added value]

Performance  
arts  
practice } (3P)

what is key  
method

Pod 1<sup>st</sup> as we've seen  
anxious?

[ ]

[ Fear of Neg  
evaluation

prob gauge status

teacher fear ~~and neg~~

→ .

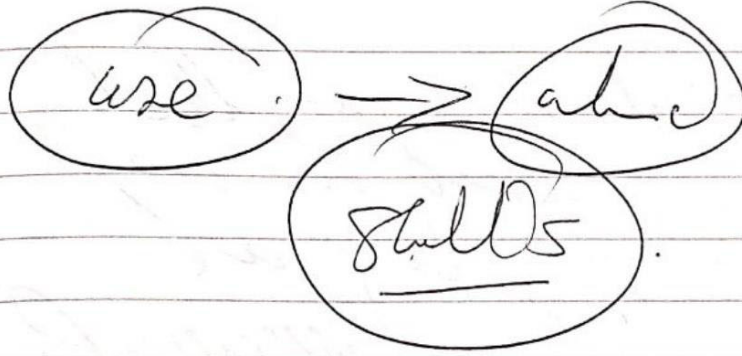
copy to improve  
doppt ← better

what do you think  
about the way  
they are  
perceived  
in Ireland?

Why do you see this?

assess

importance of your  
advice  
exp.



As you think you  
suff from PCA  
what

---

why / what  
feasible  
what  
could.

---

Medication anxiety  
online  
easier why? ← (Rehabil screen)

quest → controlled news  
or  
day

normal exam  
sit

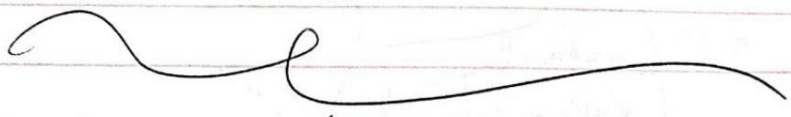
person like / was  
feel

Character

playing a little bit

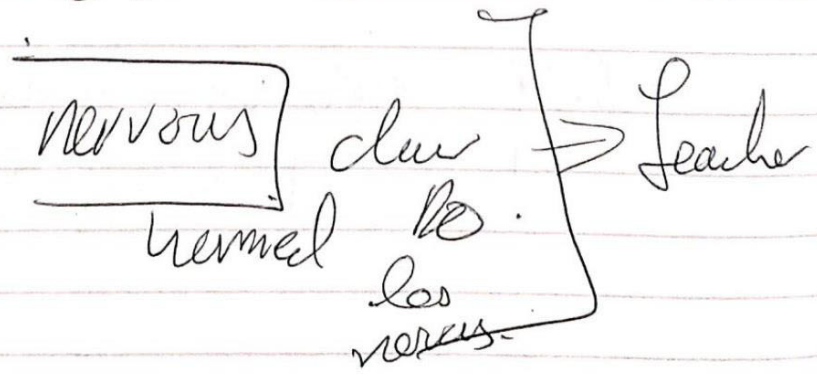
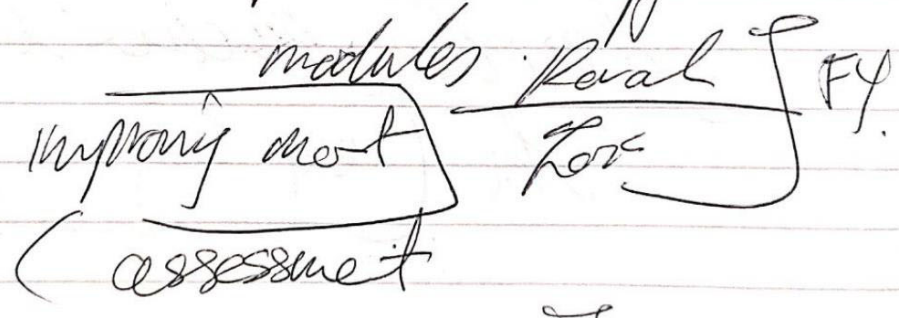
} make  
up

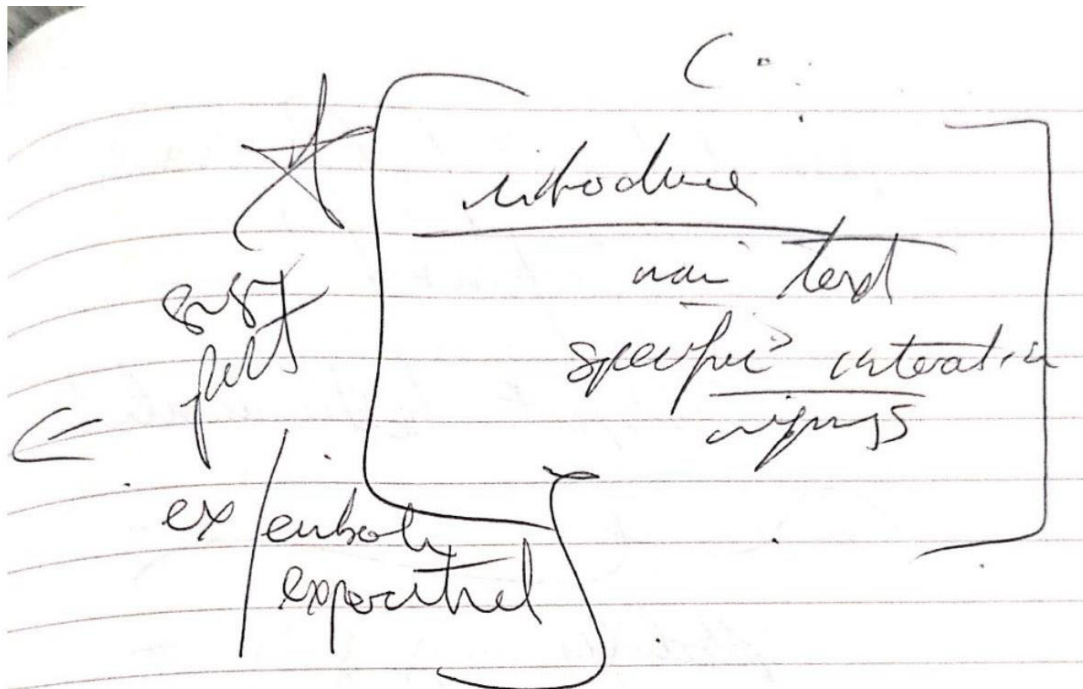
how did you feel?  
led forward?  
what subject better marks?



Modules.

compare period 2 diff  
modules





---

describe new hyp.

~ Sk. (exp lang veg earliest memory).

- Diff. work as done  
learn's approach.

What are terms sent  
acknowledged kindly  
prohibitive Mansory  
nature  
has as disarmed  
person

JHA  
+  
Theatre

2nd 1/2 case study  
with specificity

↓  
Ideas map onto corpus.

ethe

function of  
textuality



Innovation

define

problematic

(Road led to prison)

Melancholy of the soldier

ever early

(based on creative control)

Stepping Stone is a broader evolution

3  
Kerang  
initial  
proposal

how do I situate myself  
+ how do we call  
edu. fun +  
wecc. marks  
for 3rd level  
starting

but affect  
JLA

check his / clear her dis  
pt + complete

+ how work  
pts in discipline

causes JLA

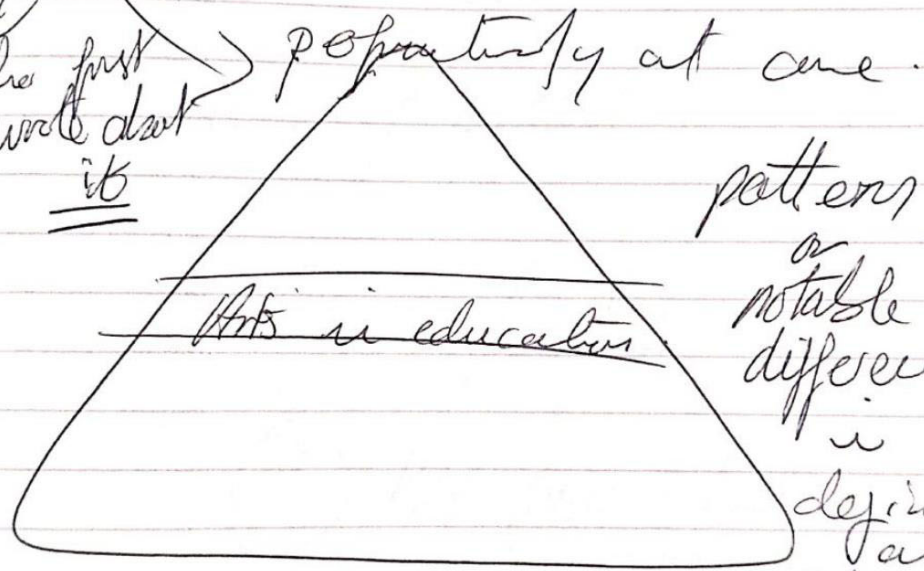
USP  
pull together

common traits

common  
thread

reformative ped.  
- what is it  
- who are the main scholars.

who first  
wrote about  
it



patterns  
or  
notable  
differences  
in  
departs  
or  
observations  
(if any)

Micro

— sub category

Meso

+  
Propositions

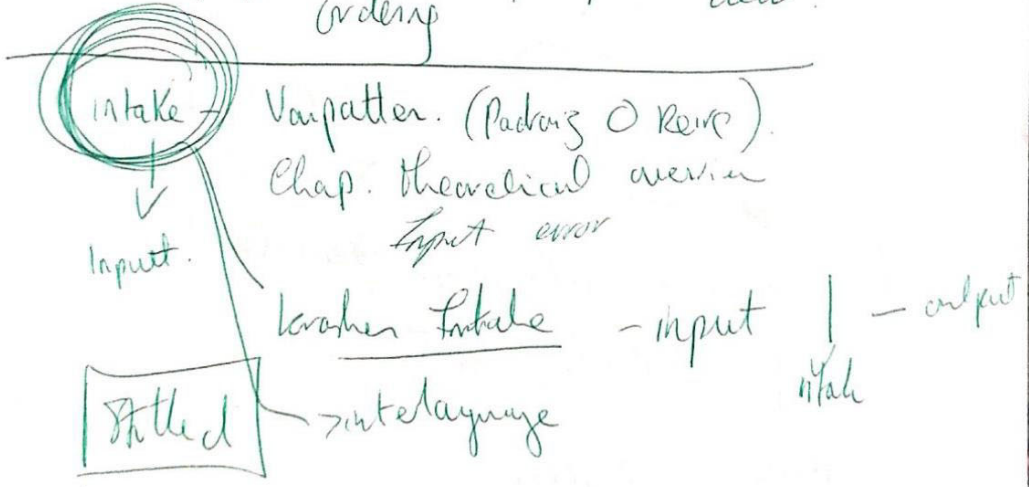
Exo

Macro

Lindeyer to make narrative flow.  
 - pull thread (structure and light).  
 → L1 / L2 coherence.

Variables in L1 & L2 acquisition  
 → sub leading equal imp

- (i) Relevance
- (ii) Ordering > present really dear.



L2 community of practice (space perform space)  
 parallel scale.  
 = My narrative -

Meeting  $\bar{e}$  - 1<sup>st</sup> December.

→ Think of how strongest - chronology  
narrative conflict (Beh → internal).

→ Structure: krashev grouped ← where  
he fits.

→ Behaviorist / interactionist.  
added value → observe. Theoretically  
product formal ↓ process informal.

engagement  $\bar{e}$  literature

innate - fit (Self confidence internalized)

~ Chomsky & Krashen ~

→ narrative - intellectual process.  
think unrelated to study

→ further you argument - would to strengthen  
argue

→ Cycles / rather dualism / contrast  
manner. (variable  
guage.

Context in which written & produced (Htt)

(Space) In inter-subject etymology  
multiplicity of terms -  
Levy - Levy

Dialogical feedback affect process  
Safe Space Showcase identity  
laying

Contributors to research.

Auto balance. (PP) (S) key concept  
3 main

individual/collective  
Lang - identity - affect  
culture.

ethical  
implications.

Anxiety - Love

appeal  
subordinate  
to id

JHA (perception)  
of self.

Lay + Self knowl.

impair perception  
of self.

divergent

identity

self

social  
construct  
recon.

lay. - education: perception  
of self.

mediation

light effect (N.S.)

Cohea  
programme

EL - developmental  
observation.

through phy / affective

pedagogic  
affective  
in board

new  
threads



foreground

neg / pos. ⇒ potentiality?

connection

Theme/Q.

Affect

Other

Self

Identity

Person

→ realm of affect

affective/emotive

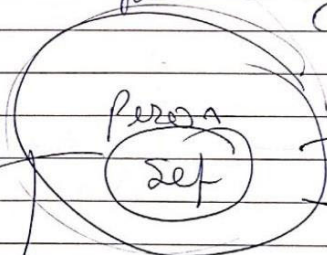
Body  
cut  
scene

Variable

identity  
Self  
Other

formation of identity

→ result



define role

LL - power dynamic

other

variables

are  
culture  
edu.  
lang.

identity layering process

self

truth  
power

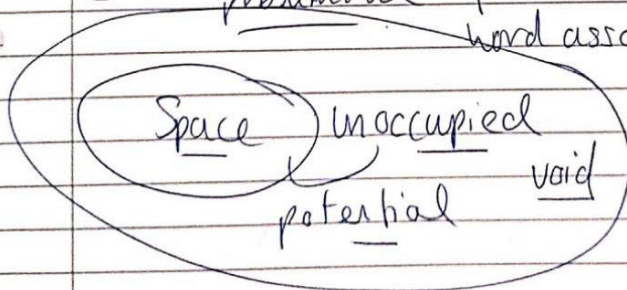
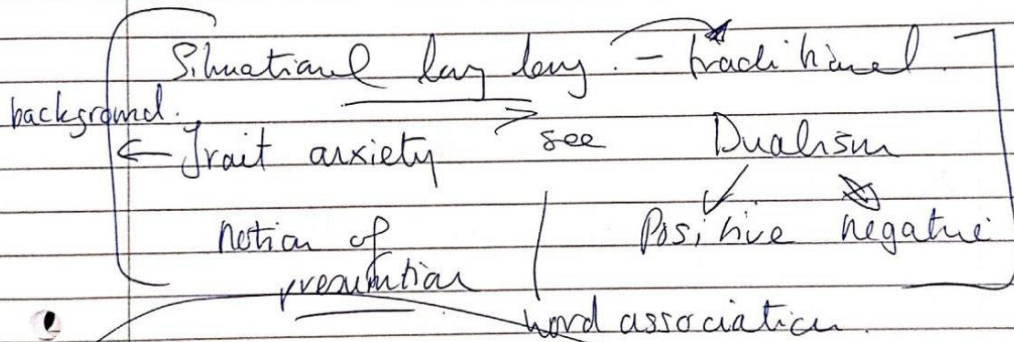
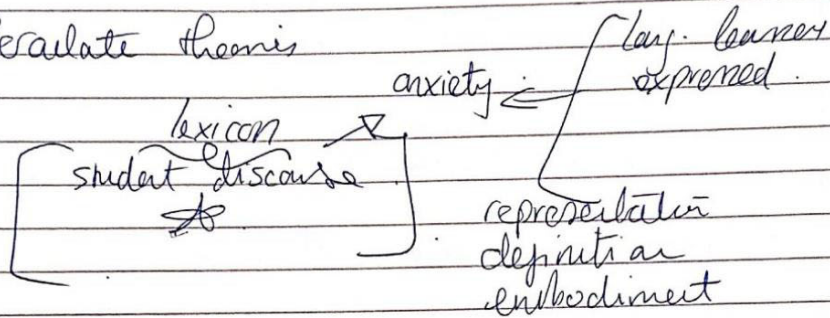
LL of

Meeting 12/05/21

G's interesting came up on rereading.

Problematised 'Anxiety' / terminology

Percolate themes



\* Ethical Considerations

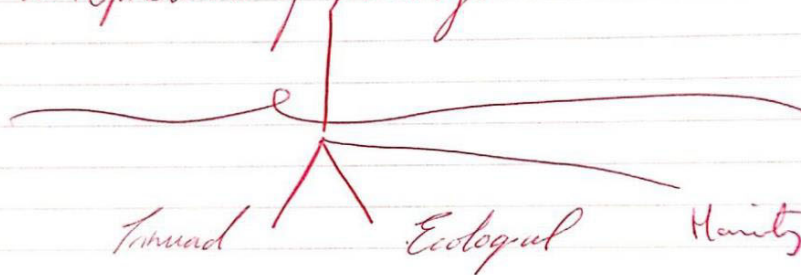
- Informed Consent
- Data Storage

5. Findings

- Average of total seal responses

(What themes emerged)

6. Interpretation of findings



7. Conclusions

- Limitations

8. Recommendations for further study

9. Implications

## Methodology (Start, research Q + Hypotheses)

\* What type of research methodology was required?  
e.g. action research

### \* Project Design

→ Research participants (2 key, 7 adv)  
(approx hours of French  
a week).  
(final year) - other  
lang's  
mention

→ the interventions (as set out in table below).  
cycle (1 academic term).  
12 wks / Sept - Apr.

→ FM's following some programme of study

→ Pre-intervention Q<sup>naire</sup> wk (7)

→ Post-intervention Q<sup>'s</sup> - carried out in wk (11)  
+ form g - of intervention cycle

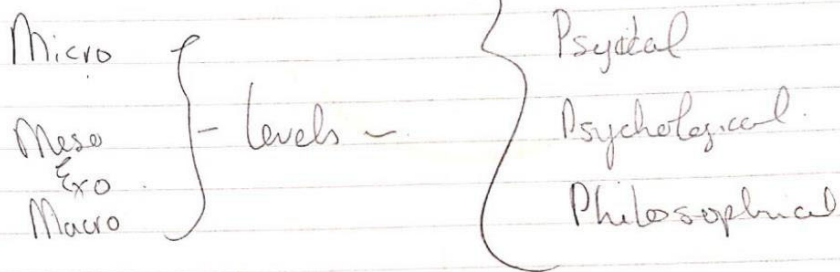
\* (Pre-Intervention Questionnaire)  
\* Data Collection Instruments  
(mixed methods)  
→ Questionnaires / pre-post  
(open-questions (narrative))

### \* Data Analysis

→ Likert → statistically

→ pre-defined QEG's (codified)

- Background variables / Rubric



Micro - Immediate surroundings  
Educator  
Learner background  
Skills

Meso - Outside frame of immediate environment  
- past experiences  
- encounters outside of the classroom

Exo - "Between Settings Processes"  
- curriculum design  
- course assessment

Macro - Societal organization  
3rd level

## 1. Affectivity in Foreign Language Learning

### 1.1 Anxiety: Definitions and Classifications

### 1.2 Theoretical Framework: Theoretical Models to Explain FLA

### 1.3 Measuring FLA: The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

1.1

- In order to best understand the concepts of FLA, it is important to first be familiar with the more general forms of anxiety. Affective variable. Broader concept of anxiety.
- First theory of anxiety (Spielberger) / Two main definitions of FLA (Horwitz 86"/Gardner 94")
- What do these definitions tell us about FLA?
- Debilitating vs. Facilitating anxiety (important distinguishing feature) – Shinge p. 10
- Definitions of FLA by Horwitz & Gardner still used 'authorities on the subject'
- In the field of SLA, how is anxiety regarded?
- How does FLA differ from other forms of anxiety (state/trait/situation-specific)/Treated as a separate issue.
- Who provides definitions for anxiety?
- In the pedagogical field, how is anxiety categorized?

1.2

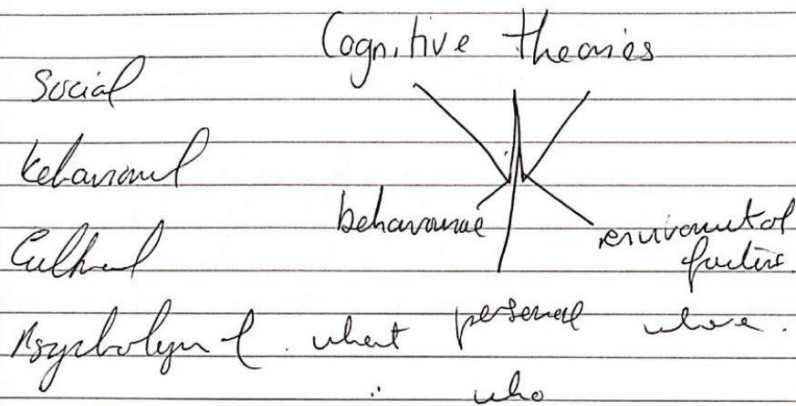
- Theory of FLA by Horwitz et al. – Components of FLA/Multifaceted.
- Why is FLA unique?
- Since the 1950's – consider the impact of FLA
- The psychology of anxiety is important in providing a concise definition of the problem.
- Psychoanalytical theory
- Adolescent vs. Adult anxiety (Intro chapter 1)
- Social anxiety.

1.3

- Anxiety scale. How to reliably test? FLCAS.

Q''  
teaching philosophy.

orientations



association

Situational Specific → Behavioural  
Performance - being out of context.  
Learning context.

Learning + Development

Situated learning theory.

\* Learning is more than an accumulation  
of knowledge. \*

pedagogy      psychology

o SLA site has a large measure of emotion + subjectivity embedded.

o Where + how learn to teach langs?

Reflection

4) What is SLA?

L1/L2 Issues to Consider  
styles vs. methods.

philosophy

power-dynamics

circumspect view  
of methods.

emphasising individual  
variables.

What kind of pedagogues teaching + learning  
do these fall into?

Culture associated = SLT.

Methodology

Action research  
Reflection  
practice.

Multiplicity

performance

reflection or Practice?

reciprocal practice (p. 35 - tuakana-teina.

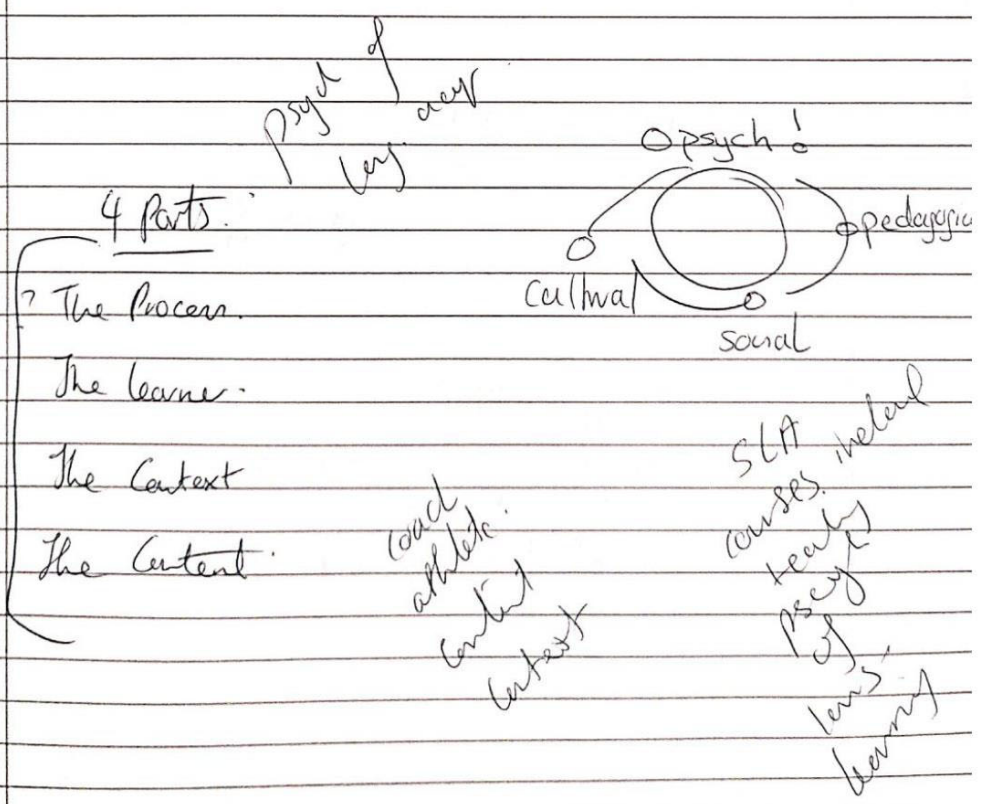
Quality:

Social, affective, cognitive (subjective aspects  
of SLTeaching process).

Q- What is anxiety in your opinion

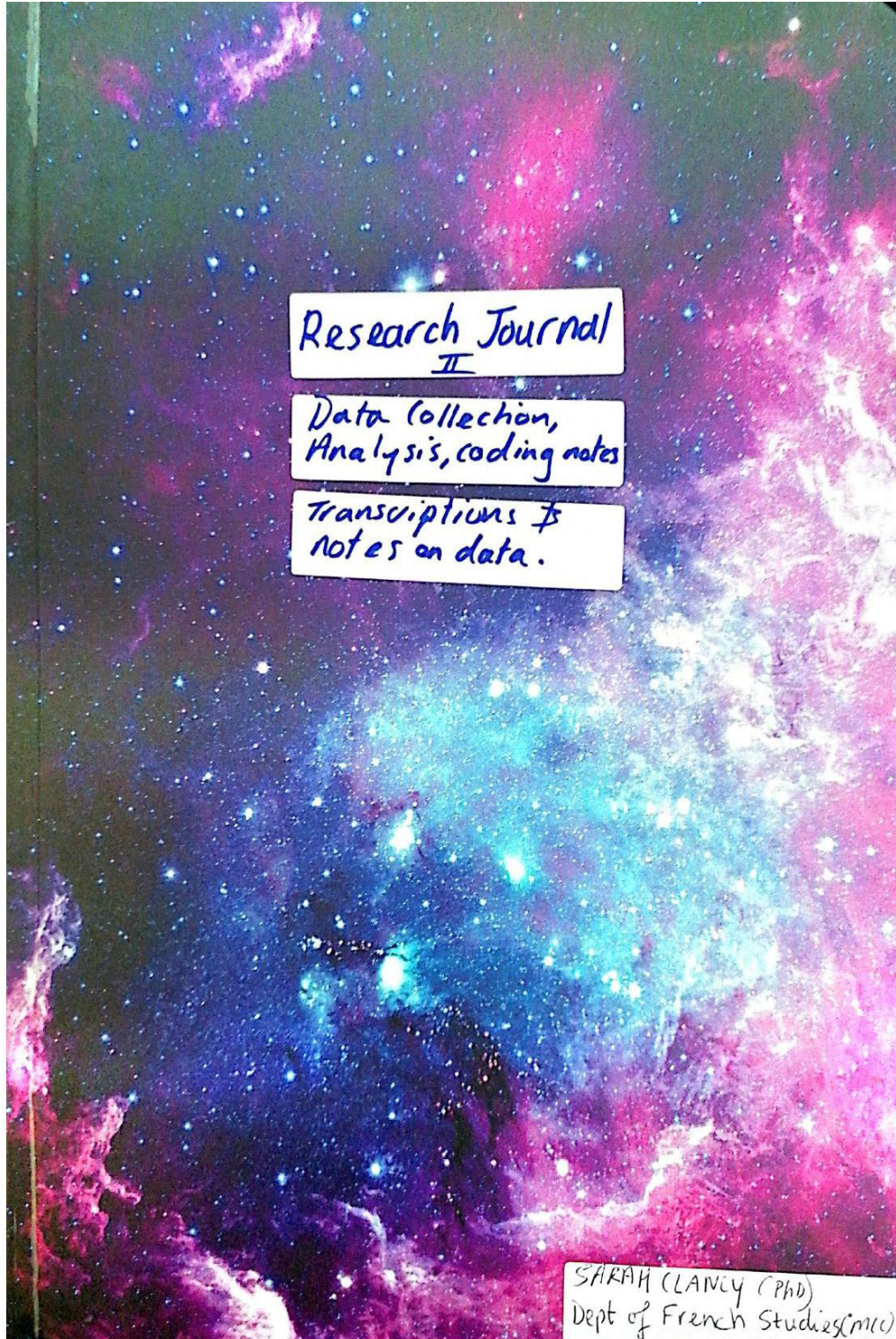


- Part 1
  - ↳ Introduction
  - ↳ Methodology
  - ↳ SLA - Affect - FLA
- Part 2 Case Study #1 + Context
  - ↳ Identity + Data Interpretation
  - ↳ Performance
- Part 3 Case Study #2 Performance Intervention
  - ↳ Findings + Interpretation / Discussion
  - ↳ Conclusion + Recommendations
- Part 4
  - ↳ Bibliography
  - ↳ Appendix



Appendix O

**Research Journal Part II – Research Methodology and Notes**



Historical Context

La pièce. - elle-même

diviser en actes.

↓  
scènes.

Un tailleur.

Une Perruque / Un coiffeur  
Une didascalie - stage direction  
Un oratoire - piece of furniture

Qu'est-ce que ça veut dire ?

Personnage qui apparaît sur scène.

Donner / régler son compte à un employé / licencier qqqn.

je vais lui régler son compte (PS)

Compte tenu du fait que vous devez jouer la pièce à la fin du semestre, vous devez apprendre votre rôle.

il trav. bcp. il y trouve son compte.

La mode.

/ Un chœur - chœurs / chœur.

(vaudeville).

L'air tune.

composure / word  
tune / webs  
air -

interative.  
prachie pronunciation.

ans  
x  
5  
de service cheveux  
[aux]

un affront  
-> insult.

# Week 1 - French Production + Performance.

→ idea of what is expected ext.  
 (video / images - costume). - Blue Parlor.  
 - clip of previous performance.

→ impersonate character / not read  
 learn by heart  
 focus on prod. inten.  
 play role.

→ in French speaking

→ Analysis of image / caricature.

A. Dumas | V. Hugo.  
 m. Rachel  
 classical actress.

Art NB 19<sup>th</sup> 1815

1820 1830  
 La Restauration.

1789  
 La révolution.  
 Bastille

abolition of  
monarchy.

1799-1804  
 Le consulat.  
 Napoléon B. (10 ans)

1804-1814.  
 Le premier Empire.

- Political context

Romantic  
 Art  
 sphere.

Industrial  
 economic

1789  
 political.

constitutional  
 moment

mettre tu  
 camera

vous vous  
 en souvenez  
 peut-être

sur cette  
 image.

chasse qq  
 du q.2 part

Contexte  
 historique  
 dans lequel

être au  
 pouvoir.

comme  
 comme.

## Analyse de l'image

~ The instructor (image) (Background/recall prior knowledge) <sup>curriculum</sup>

- By asking creative questions that lead to imaginative reconstructions, the learner had to challenge their taken for granted knowledge and attune to their unconscious knowledge. (Lichtblau)

This process oriented, activity

performative drives activity  
inquiry

provided a channel through which learners could envision alternate existences.

## Translates

~ Reading + translated the script, the instructor facilitated embodied, interactive explanations of the text and also key themes (death paratext).

by looking at the narrative off the written page and in a tangible physical space. → Students were required to enter segments of the narrative imaginatively, as if they were curiously experiencing them.

~ Interested in student growth, inclusivity, change, creativity & justice, the instructor was receptive to dialogue, emergent knowledge & unplanned curricular decisions (e.g. online harassment).



factotum - does everything

Chartraine - to hum

le chagrin - sorrow

(12) allume - light up (cigarette)

un sot - an idiot

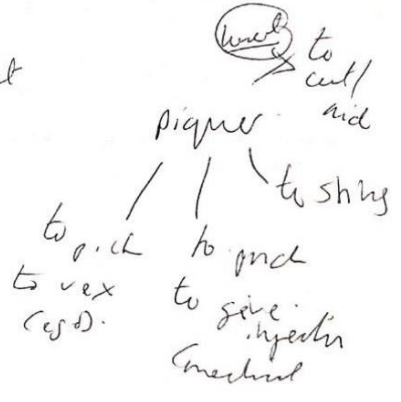
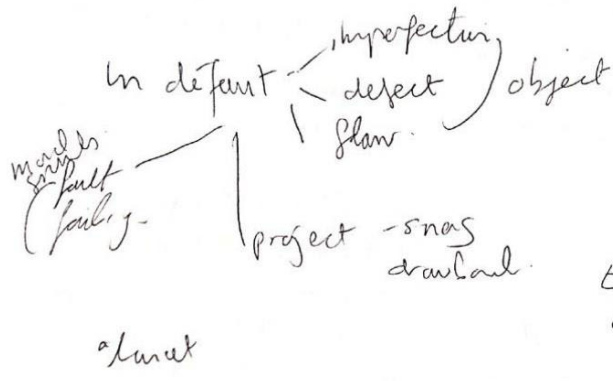
la paresse - laziness

se disputer qqc avec qqn -

partager - share

un coquin - scoundrel / rogue / rascal  
coquine

honte  
honneur  
toujours honore



- avoir de la besogne - to have work to do.

- être besogneux - to be busy

vous êtes un mauvais sujet

où est le miel  
where is the  
honey

mettre qqn au pas : to bring sb to heel  
to rein sb in

- un freluquet - whip-snapper

- un caquet - a cackle / la sottise - ferme ton caquet  
- shut the flip

Week 2

Five Roles (Q why role in particular?)

{ 3, 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 }

no script / by heart / pronunciation  
imitation.

Répartition des  
rôles

me très  
étroite

Tuesday following on:

se garantir → se protéger.

imagery (transport, outfits, room).

- manque - manqué

- il n'en manque pas

si on  
retourne  
au texte

Strong / Romantic fond of exoticism

[vocab - exuber / kidnaps  
foul / tolle - crazy / mad.  
à mon <sup>son</sup> égal] <sup>bourgeois</sup> <sup>middle</sup> <sup>class</sup>

je vais  
demander  
à ...

principes  
exaltés

endings of  
words

Monsieur<sup>x</sup>  
conduite<sup>x</sup> - mute @

vos vieux auteurs.

names of writers classical romantic writer / character

Hyacinth - in between.

un valet - man servant.

[apothicaine - un pharmacien]

un / une  
erhennethen / go hetten  
ese

insolent  
in a queue / in a queue.

more / more.

e.g. curies - episcure



Il n'en est pas resté (liasse).

Une recette

un patron <sup>boss</sup>  
a model (Taylor)  
pattern?

congédiés.

consuants  
mais au moins

ou difficult

romanthe <sup>romantic</sup>  
book. - Charles Noddy

un sorcière

scene II + III - vocals  
search

Why assign each student  
to role?

1775  
dix sept cent soixante quinze  
mille sept cent soixante quinze

translate + pronounce

justement  
↓  
précisément

un songe  
romantique  
un rêve

un prisonnier  
ou l'homme en exil



Week 4 # Not about product about process

voc - préconiser - to recommend.  
 recommander -  
 on peut pas attendre plus longtemps.

amener - self  
 propre - self  
 enivres - to intoxicate.  
 ivre - drunk.

tromper - unfaithful (love)  
 (context) to deceive s/o (other context)  
 - behind / scathing / cutting  
 tranchant - sharp / cutting.

une louange - a praise  
 plat / fade - bland. dull / boring.  
 un niais - a simpleton / idiot.

tomber à bras raccourcis. sur qqn  
 → lay into s/o. (beat into a pulp).  
 barbouiller - to scribble  
 griffonner - scribble.

salir - to spoil (sale) - dirty.  
 être se sentir barbouillé(e) - to feel unwell / nauseated / queasy.

un comptoir - a counter  
 un notaire - solicitor / a notary.  
 une étude - where they work  
 de notaire.

un vaudeville - fun / comedy  
 genre / light. singing / music.  
 retourner - put upside down.  
 to turn over.  
 to return.

Play reflection of the literature / dispute at home.  
 romans en série - serial novels.  
 romantics / classics  
 generations of writers  
 (in middle ppl who don't belong to both sides) 19th - democratization of poetry.

Figaro - literary critic  
 si fait - si / en fait si - actually.

un hommage - a praise  
 un louange.  
 applaudir - applaud / des applaudissements - applause.

s'écrire - say's I (je m'écris).  
 obscur - to darker / obscure. adj.  
 le front - forehead.

un  
 (M)  
 les ouvrages.  
 dans

ébouriffer - to dazzle (make dazzle)

assombrir - to deepen

Vanter - to praise excessively

un pédant - a pedant

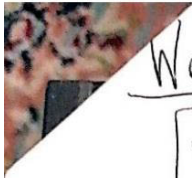
gâiment - cheerfully

monter à la tête - rushed to his/her head

une recette.

un coup d'œil - at a glance.

L'orgueil - pride.



# Week 5

vieilles citations  
ugh

on s'était arrêtés ici

Terses  
Beaucoup lu / étudié

quérir - to heal/cure 100% sûr  
le pouls - the pulse (tâter/prendre le pouls à qq) take sb's pulse  
précipitez - hurried  
context <sup>hurry</sup> précipitez  
fast / rapid (pulse)

file x chimère - fanciful / chimerical  
in journal - a diary (adj) intime  
a newspaper

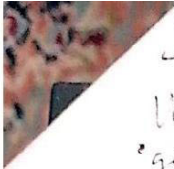
Le combat pour l'abolition de la peine de mort en France.

intéressant x | toutes les nuit |

se dépêcher = hurry up  
contrarie = annoy sb. / bother sb.  
être contrarié - to be annoyed.  
me plaidome - a plea.

finir sa toilette - have a wash  
faire un peu / un brin de toilette - have a quick wash

est-ce que  
vous avez  
des questions  
là dessus



Week 6

Un fort succès d'estime  
• good critique / doing well

Un regard  
• a hand

Donner / avoir la pomme / avoir la palme  
- to win a prize

renommé / les renommés - le succès

être gendé à vue - to be in police custody

l'histoire de vice: just for fun

le scélérat - a scoundrel

être avieux - to be very

avoir un bon cœur - to be kind hearted

avoir basse - in a low / lashed voice

avoir qqc à se mettre sous le dent - to have sth to eat

de grosse - to fatten

une cascade - million  
Bamb

proclamer = chantonner dit - aka  
= to m.

no important  
- nervous

hausser les épaules - shrug

se ravachier - to die  
- a ghost

se rendre - to stiffen up / to brace / steel myself

s'échauffer - to become heated / worked up

to go to a  
bit of trouble  
to do sth

- se donner de la  
peine pour faire qqc

arracher - to tear  
up

un placet = une pétition.

avec malice - in a cheeky way

exaspérer - to provoke s/o.

avec emphase: bombast / pomposity / pompously etc -

un novateur / une novatrice - an innovator

envahir - to invade

déborder - to overflow

un vêtement - a garment / a piece of clothing

le ruff - ruff heap

détrôner - to dethrone.

avoir du toupet - to have nerve / cheek.

Un toupet - a quiff

Un impie - an impious person

un saüléant - a rascal

Crier haro sur - to rail against

Un gigot - leg of lamb.

Une plume - a feather / quill

tailler: to cut / pare / shape

---

## Week 6

- un sot - an idiot  
(entendre to hear  
x2 meaning but (meaning of request - to understand  
of laws.)
- aux armes - take up arms!  
nation anthem - in hymne national
- Tais-toi - shut up (imperative)  
Taisez-vous (plural)
- avoir tort - to be wrong
- fourbe - treacherous  
deceitful
- querelle - quarrel / une querelle - an argument
- seigneur - feudal lord
- seigneur - show off
- me lier - a league (unit of measure)
- faire la queue - wait in line  
une queue
- un barreau - an executive
- un partisan - a supporter
- faire qqc (rire) à la barbe de qqn  
au nez
- faire des ravages - wreak havoc  
(arrow) - to break hearts
- percer - to pierce / drill  
to make a name  
for oneself.
- s'insinuer - to insinuate oneself  
dans to worm one's way into sb.
- un témoin - a witness  
Témoignage - witness
- avoir cupidité  
(une cupidité)  
- a type
- scrupule  
- feels
- faire cause commune avec qqn  
- to make  
common cause /  
to take sides  
c/s/b.

Les Orientals = z'exotisme

Muyó - modernize poetry

Brayer - to grind.

cuillère - to pick

puiser - in print - or well.

une strophe - paragraph of verses

→ syllables  
meter  
pattern.

wk 8 -

faible = bland

s'évaporer - to vanish  
to evaporate

l'aveugle - down

déséchec - to dry out  
(sec/sèche) - dry

concert - concert

Intrépide - fearless

Un rempart - a fortification

Des gens - to point at

L'emporter - to succeed, win

faire merveille - to make  
wonders

diligent(e) - prompt / speedy

sournois / sournoisement - deceitfully

marcher au feu - march towards the front

'Que' May

ne faire qu'un saut d'un endroit à un autre.  
- to come directly from one place to another

Une infortune: a misfortune

Verrier par des prunes  
compter des prunes / to come/ count for nothing

un badaud le - a stroller / avian onlooker

un équipage - a carriage

une mèche - a fuse

comme il fut - of good  
standing

fête qm - to celebrate sth

7 mettre de la grâce - to do sth  
gracefully

j'en conviens - I admit  
to admit

s'écrier - exclaim

d'ailleurs - moreover  
besides

faire attendre - to be  
kept waiting

un fiacre - a hackney  
cab

en chiffonnie - a ragman

un fer - a machete /  
bo pine

faire une croix - to tick  
a box

tree sa révérence -  
to bow cut /  
take one's leave

se froter à  
qm - to rub  
shoulders  
%o

à grand  
pas  
- rapidly

faire long feu - to fail to  
shoot

8 weeks of text analysis



May pretext of Paul Lunter 1967 Week 11

- period of expansion of use (Green)
- pronunciation & interaction / sound. (difficult for natives to understand)

Secret

G7) Imp when st can be improved.

Reason: no ideas follow

'R'

/ pronunciation sounds not needed' mention.

'conducteur' /y/

coffure

'fille'

'veille'

veg

(pauls)

Guarkis

égard.

\* soufflet

\* rompent

ask re feedback when performing.

But remember led this reflect your performance

How did you find the rehearsal process

recordings  
- not too fast

S (p) ~ groupe de syllable  
 u (prononcé au pas) ~ pause (l'effet dramatique)  
 ~ entraînement vocalique  
 ~ roman de syllable, l'uno, vous, de u, u (instable)  
 Mary Immaculate College - University of LIMERICK - IRLANDE  
 = do not let voice drop  
 au (forme) ke au  
 bu (voyelle nasale)

Module FR4777 - French Production & Performance - Loïc Guyon

Contribution Odile Ledru-Menot - Mars 2017

@ Codage et méthodologie

déprimé  
triste

rythme sync.

SCÈNE III

SMARRA, VIEUX-VERS.

1	SM	<p>avant que <i>Vieux-Vers</i> ne paraisse.</p> <p>Enfin, voilà ma maison sur un bon pied ! Il était temps ; car, en vérité, mon mari avec ses vieilles idées...</p>
2	VV	<p>dans la coulisse, criant bien fort.</p> <p>C'est indigne !...C'est affreux !...Où est-elle?...où est-elle?...où est ma femme ?</p>
3	SM	<p>gaîment.</p> <p>Il est furieux, jé m'y attendais !</p>
4	VV	<p>entrant furieux.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Air du Château de mon Oncle.</p> <p>Est-ce possible ? grands dieux !</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Congédier, à mes yeux, Tous nos gens de ces lieux, Sous prétexte qu'ils sont vieux ! Madame, que direz-vous,</p> <p>[page 6]</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Pour excuser entre nous L'affront que, sans raison, Vous faites à ma maison ?</p>
5	SM	<p>Le siècle me guide ; Il est si rapide !...</p>
6	VV	<p>Je n'en disconviens pas, Le siècle marche à grand pas,</p>

		<p>Mais en galant homme,  J'ai pensé  Qu'en somme,  Si le siècle est pressé,  Il faut le laisser  Passer.</p> <p>(Parlé) Mais jé regrette tous mes anciens serviteurs !</p> <p>(ENSEMBLE)</p>
7	VV	Est-ce possible ? grands dieux ! etc.
8	SM	<p>Quel mal ai-je fait, grands dieux !  En appelant en ces lieux  Des artistes fameux !...  Nous avons tant besoin d'eux !...  Monsieur, que me direz-vous,  Pour excuser le courroux  Qu'à mes yeux sans raison,  Vous avez dans la maison ?</p>
9	VV	<p>Je ne m'étonne plus maintenant que vous vouliez me forcer de déménager, à  quitter la rue Saint-Jacques où je suis depuis quarante ans !</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>exclamement</i></p>
10	SM	Je veux aller demeurer de l'autre côté de l'eau, dans les beaux quartiers.
11	VV	Dans les beaux quartiers ?... Comme si la rue Saint-Jacques n'était pas une fort belle rue... bien longue !...
12	SM	Fort belle, vraiment ! Il n'y a pas seulement de ces beaux passages élégans, où de riches boutiques...
13	VV	<p>[page 7]</p> <p>Des passages ? nous pouvons nous en passer ; il y en a assez dans les autres quartiers de la capitale.</p>
14	SM	<p>Pas seulement un trottoir pour se garantir des voitures ! Et dieu merci, il n'en manque pas !... C'est pas que jé m'en plains, au moins !... J'aime tout ce qui fait innovation !</p>
15	-	<p>Air de Garick.</p> <p>Citadines, cabriolets,</p>

		Des Tricycles, des Ecosaises, Des omnibus, des Wiskis, des Bogheis, Des Fiacles et des Béarnaises, <del>des</del> Carolines, <i>et caetera</i> , C'est romantique !...
16	VV	<i>riant.</i>  Oui, ma bonne, J'approuve fort ces entreprises là ; Lorsqu'en voiture tout le monde ira, On n'écrasera plus personne.
17	SM	Riez, ** riez, ** cela n'empêche pas qu'hier, ** lorsque le conducteur des Ecosaises me tendit la main pour monter dans sa voiture, j'ai cru voir Fingal qui enlevait Asléga.
18	VV	Vous êtes folle !... et ce sont vos idées romanesques qui ont tourné la tête à ma pauvre fille.
19	SM	Qu'est-ce à dire, Monsieur ?
20	VV	Je ne parle pas de vos principes à mon égard. J'aime à croire que votre conduite, envers moi, n'a rien de... de romantique. Mais il n'en est pas moins vrai que vous exaltez la tête de ma fille avec vos auteurs de l'école moderne.
21	SM	Cela varie au moins dans son esprit la monotonie de vos vieux auteurs poudreux.
22	VV	<i>vivement.</i> Auteurs poudreux !... Est-ce à cause de ma coiffure, serait-ce une personnalité, Madame de Vieux-Vers ?
23	SM	[page 8] Encore ce nom !... Vous savez bien que j'ai adopté celui de Smarra, et votre fille que vous nommiez...
24	VV	Je la nommais Esther.
25	SM	Elle s'appellera Clair de Lune. Mais cela me fait penser qu'elle est indisposée, cette chère enfant !... Elle a passé une nuit affreuse !
26	VV	Je connais un médecin qui la guérira... C'est un garçon bien gai, bien extravagant...

## SCENE V

LES MÊMES, CLAIR DE LUNE, ayant sous son bras un volume de Racine,  
et à la main une brochure des Orientales.

1	CLAIR DE LUNE	<p style="text-align: center;">La voyez-vous passer la nuée au flanc noir, Tantôt pâle, tantôt rouge et splendide à voir ? Les vents soufflent d'une voix grêle, Et rompent l'eau qui coule en perles sur leur aile.</p>
2	SM	Te voilà éveillée** de bonne heure, chère enfant ?
	CL	<p>déclamant. Recevez mon hommage matinal, ô vous que le Ciel a donnée pour seconde compagne à l'auteur de mes jours ! (Smarra l'embrasse.)</p>
3		<p style="text-align: center;">Air : Vaudeville de Voltaire.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Salut, ruisseaux ! salut, bosquets ! Salut, soleil ! salut, fontaines ! Salut, déserts ! Salut, forêts ! Salut, près, champs, montagnes, plaines !... VV, à part, à Figaro. Ainsi qu'elle fait chaque jour, Ma fille va, la chose est sûre, Avant de me dire bonjour, Saluer toute la nature.</p>
4	CL	Salut !... [page 13]
5	VV	Eh bien ! Esther, est-ce que tu ne dis rien, ce matin ?
6	CL	Si... Bonjour, papa. Aux petits oiseaux il donne la pâture, Et sa bonfé s'étend sur toute la nature.
7	F	à part Voilà une demoiselle qui mange à deux rateliers.
8	SM	Tâche donc de te défaire de ces vieilles citations...
9	VV	C'est bien, ma fille, du Racine, du Corneille, du Cicéron, ne sors pas de là.
10	CL	Vous serez satisfaits tous les deux. (A son père.) J'ai traduit les lettres d'Atticus. (A sa mère.) Je traduis aussi les Orientales, je commence à les expliquer assez bien.

11	VV	Tu as donc beaucoup [lu], beaucoup étudié ?
12	CL	Ne m'en parlez pas, j'en suis toute malade.
13	SM	Voilà M. Figaro qui t <del>é</del> guérira.
14	F	à <i>Vieux-Vers</i> . Voulez-vous permettre que je lui tâte le pouls ?
15	VV	Avec plaisir...
16	F	tâtant le pouls à <i>Clair de Lune</i> . Le pouls est agité, les pulsations sont précipitées... Vous aimez, jeune fille ?...
17	CL	Hélas...oui...je l'avoue...j'aime un être chimérique...un être fantastique...j'aime un être diabolique...enfin, j'aime un objet que l'on appelle le <i>Dernier jour d'un condamné</i> .
18	F	Je le connais beaucoup, c'est un personnage intéressant...il n'est pas gai, par exemple**.
19	CL	J'en rêve toutes les nuits. [page 14]
20	F	Cela fait votre éloge
21	CL	Je veux pleurer avec lui.
22	F	Je puis vous procurer ce plaisir.
23	CL	Pauvre jeune homme, il n'a plus que cinq heures !...
24	F	En ce cas, dépêchez-vous !
25	VV	à <i>Smarra</i> . Vous voyez**, Madame, que vos idées folles vont la conduire...
26	F	Il ne faut pas contrarier les malades...laissez-moi faire.
27	VV	Patience ! patience ! nous allons être vengés...La bonne cause a trouvé des défenseurs, M. Figaro.
28	SM	à <i>Figaro</i> . Ne répondez pas à mon mari...il ne sait ce qu'il dit...
29	F	à <i>Clair de Lune</i> . Allez, ma chère amie, allez faire un peu de toilette, et je vais vous conduire auprès de l'être qui vous a tourné la tête. ( <i>A part</i> .) C'est un autre malade que je traite et que j'espère guérir en lui conduisant cette jeune fille qui n'est pas mal folle non plus.

SCENE IX

LE DERNIER JOUR, seul, puis VALENTIN.

1	LDJ	Condamné !...Voilà six semaines que j'habite avec cette [page 19] pensée !...Mon esprit est en prison dans une idée...et mon corps est en prison dans une prison...Jé n'ai plus qu'une pensée, qu'une conviction, qu'une certitude, c'est que je suis condamné ! ^
2	V	entrant. Bonjour, mon criminel.
3	LDJ	Ah ! ah ! c'est vous?...Bonjour. Dites-moi, est-ce pour aujourd'hui ?
4	V	Jé n'en sais rien, mon criminel, mais une chose est certaine, c'est que si ça n'est pas pour aujourd'hui, c'est pour un autre jour.
5	LDJ	On m'avait dit que c'était pour aujourd'hui à midi.
6	V	Si c'est pour aujourd'hui à midi, comme on vous a fait le plaisir de vous le dire, vous n'avez plus que deux heures.
7	LDJ	soupirant. Que deux heures !...c'est bien peu !
8	V	Pourtant en se dépêchant, on peut faire encore bien des petites choses.
9	LDJ	Vous croyez** ?
10	V	Au fait, votre position de condamné a son agrément. Pour intéresser, vous n'avez pas besoin d'intérêt, ni d'intrigue, ni d'amour, ni même d'esprit. Vous n'avez qu'à dire : Messieurs et Mesdames, je suis Le dernier jour d'un condamné, on est content, et on vous dévore.
11	LDJ	C'est vrai...Il faut dire aussi que le goût a fait des progrès.
12	V	Parbleu ! s'il en a fait ! Les voleurs, Cartouche, Mandrin, étaient drôles ; les forçats purs et les forçats libérés étaient bien gentils ; on n'a pas eu à se plaindre des empoisonneurs, des chauffeurs et des bourreaux.
13	LDJ	De sorte que j'arrive au bon moment ? [page 20]

14	-	Air : <i>Vaudeville de l'Ours et le Pacha.</i>  Votre mérite est bien réel, Le public s'habitue au crime ; Vous avez pour un criminel, Un fort joli succès d'estime ; Les brigands qu'on connaît déjà, Chacun leur tour ont eu la pomme, A présent, c'est vous qu'on renomme, Car, à côté de ces gens-là, Vous d'vez paraître un honnête homme.
15		Ah ça ! mais, dites-moi, mon criminel, depuis que je vous garde à vue... là, je ne sais pas encore de quoi vous êtes coupable. Nous avons donc fait des bêtises, quoi ? Un petit assassinat, histoire de rire ? Vous m'avez dit, l'homme n'est pas parfait... Vous êtes un scélérat, chacun a ses ridicules.
16	LDJ	Vous êtes bien curieux, soldat ! Mais je m'en vais vous dire une chose... Personne ne sait ce que j'ai fait, ni moi non plus, et vous ne le saurez pas plus que les autres. <i>msis f.</i>
17	V	C'est juste ; pardon, mon criminel.
18	LDJ	Il n'y a pas d'offense.
19		Air de la Robe et des Bottes. Je ne veux pas dire la cause De mon destin infortuné. <i>cf. msis f.</i>
20	V	Faut croire' pourtant qu'vous avez fait quéqu'chose, Puisque vous êtes condamné ?
21	LDJ	Si mon malheur a pour vous quelques charmes, Contentez-vous de pleurer avec moi.
22	V	On veut bien verser quelques larmes, Mais on voudrait au moins savoir pourquoi.  D'ailleurs, ce n'est pas de ça qu'il s'agit. Avez-vous un bon cœur, criminel ?



		( <i>A part.</i> ) S'il pouvait avoir un bon <u>secour</u> , ce scélérat-là !... [page 21]
23	LDJ	Mais je ne sais pas <u>trop</u> .
24	V	Pardon de l'indiscrétion, c'est que j'ai une <u>idée</u> que vous pourriez faire ma <u>fortune</u> .
25	LDJ	Moi, comment ça ?
26	V	D'autant <u>plus</u> que ça ne vous coûtera <u>rien</u> . ( <i>A voix basse et d'un air mystérieux.</i> ) <u>Oui</u> , criminel, bonheur, <u>fortune</u> , tout ça me viendra de <u>vous</u> . Je suis un <u>pauvre</u> soldat, le service est <u>lourd</u> , la <u>paie</u> légère, mon cheval mange <u>tout</u> , je n'ai plus <u>rien</u> à mettre sous la <u>dent</u> , si bien que je mets à la <u>loterie</u> pour faire la <u>balance</u> .
27	LDJ	Que voulez-vous que j'y fasse, militaire ?
28	V	Mais je n'ai pas de <u>bonheur</u> à la <u>loterie</u> . Je tombe toujours à côté. Je mets le 76, il <u>sort</u> le 77. je <u>nourris</u> des <u>numéros</u> et je meurs de <u>faim</u> , ça ne m'engraisse <u>pas</u> .
29	LDJ	Au fait, c'est contrariant.
30	V	Or, <u>voici</u> une <u>belle occasion</u> pour <u>moi</u> . Il paraît, pardon, criminel, que vous passez aujourd'hui. On dit que ces gens là voient la <u>loterie</u> d'avance. Et si vous <u>vouliez</u> en bon enfant, quand votre <u>affaire</u> sera <u>faite</u> , m'apporter ce <u>soir</u> trois <u>numéros</u> soignés ; vous me <u>tirez</u> par les <u>pieds</u> , un peu <u>fort</u> , parce que j'ai le sommeil <u>dur</u> ... V'là mon <u>adresse</u> : Caserne Popincourt, escalier A, n°26, au <u>fond</u> du <u>corridor</u> ... Vous <u>demanderez</u> Valentin, dit la <u>Blague</u> .
31	LDJ	Va-t-en, animal, laisse-moi !
32	V	Qu'avez-vous <u>donc</u> ? ( <i>Le Dernier Jour va s'asseoir devant sa table et se met à écrire.</i> ) N'importe, ça n'est pas honnête.  ( <i>On entend fredonner dans la coulisse : Bravo ! bravo ! bravo !</i> ) [page 22]

SCENE X.

LES MÊMES, FIGARO.

1	F	Eh ! <u>ch</u> ! comment ça va-t-il, mon <u>cher</u> ? Dernier <u>Jour</u> ?
2	LDJ	<i>écrivait.</i> Laissez- <u>moi</u> , laissez- <u>moi</u> , <sup>heure</sup> <u>doc</u> teur, j' <u>n'</u> ai <u>pas</u> une <u>minute</u> .
3	F	<i>à part.</i> Il <u>paraît</u> que nous sommes dans notre <u>fièvre</u> . ( <i>Il lui tâte le pouls.</i> ) <u>Allons</u> , ça <u>n'</u> peut <u>pas</u> aller plus <u>mal</u> .
4	V	Salut, mon criminel... dans une <u>heure</u> je suis à vos <u>ordres</u> . (Il sort.)

SCENE XI

LE DERNIER JOUR, FIGARO.

1	LDJ	<i>écrivait.</i> Maintenant il <u>faut</u> que <u>me</u> <sup>je</sup> <u>roi</u> disse en moi- <u>même</u> , que j' <u>ôte</u> la <u>ceinture</u> de <u>brouillard</u> roulé <sup>e</sup> comme un <u>turban</u> autour de mon <u>front</u> <u>noir</u> .
2	F	Assez, mon <u>cher</u> , assez ! vous vous <u>échauffez</u> <u>trop</u> . ( <i>Il lui fait quitter la table.</i> ) <i>Air : Restez, restez, troupe jolie.</i> Allons, laissez-là votre <u>plume</u> , Et votre <u>style</u> oriental.
3	LDJ	Au <u>moins</u> , de mon œuvre <u>posthume</u> , <sup>post une / légume.</sup> <u>Amis</u> , <u>ne</u> dites point de <u>mal</u> .
4	F	<u>Non</u> , j' <u>n'</u> en dirai pas de <u>mal</u> . [page 23]
5	LDJ	Il faut <u>s'</u> <u>donner</u> bien des <u>peines</u> , Pour être <u>célèbre</u> à son <u>tour</u> ; Mon <u>ami</u> , voilà six <u>sémaines</u> , Que <u>je</u> <u>suis</u> à mon dernier <u>jour</u> .
6	F	Ces <u>diab</u> les de <u>fièvres</u> romantiques, c'est <u>dur</u> à arracher !...

## SCENE XII

### LES MÊMES, CLAIR DE LUNE.

1	LDJ	Elle est fraîche, elle est rose !...elle a de grands yeux ! elle est belle !... (Figaro va au-devant de Clair de Lune, lui donne la main et l'amène en scène ; la ritournelle de l'air du Clair de lune accompagne cette entrée.)
2	CL	à part. Quel effet spontané j'éprouve !...Mon cœur se brise, comme la brise, sur la vague bleue.
3	LDJ	Que vois-je !...quelle est cette jeune fille ? Ange de la prison, comment vous nommez-vous ?
4	CL	Clair de Lune.
5	LDJ	à part. C'est donc ça qu'elle est si pâle !
6	CL	Et vous, votre nom ?
7	LDJ	Je m'appelle le Dernier Jour d'un Condamné.
8	CL	Pauvre jeune homme ! (Elle pleure.)
9	LDJ	Vous pleurez !...Orage du cœur...est-ce une goutte de votre pluie ?...
10	F	Voilà de la sympathie, mes enfants, ce n'est pas de l'amour classique, cela ! [page 24]
11	CL	Etes-vous libre ?
12	LDJ	à lui-même. Quelle bêtise ! elle me voit en prison, et elle me demande si je suis libre !...
13	CL	Je veux dire : si vous êtes marié ?
14	LDJ	Oui, je suis marié...
15	CL	Grands dieux !...
16	LDJ	Mais je suis veuf...
17	CL	Ah ! quel bonheur !...Mon cœur s'épanouit comme l'héliotrope au soleil d'avril...C'en est fait, je ne crains plus de te dire ces paroles déliantes du cinquième

		me acte d'Henri III, « A cette heure su <sup>prême</sup> , les préjugés du monde ne sont plus rien pour nous, eh bien oui ! je t'aime ! je t'aime ! je t'aime ! je t'aime !... Mais toi, me seras-tu fidèle ?... »
18	LDJ	Tout <sup>te</sup> ma vie... (A Figaro.) Je n'ai plus que trois quarts-d'heure... <i>(Ils se font des protestations en pantomime, pendant ce qui suit :)</i>
19	F	Vivat ! Voilà où je voulais les amener : si mes deux malades guérissent l'un par l'autre, c'est une cure qui me fera beaucoup d'honneur.

SCENE XIII

LES MÊMES, VALENTIN.

1	V	Allons, mon condamné, voici l'heure !... Quand ça vous fera plaisir... [page 25]
2	CL	Ciel ! vous venez l'arracher de mes bras !... non ! jé veux partager son sort...
3	LDJ	Il faut partir !... Au fait, puisqu'il le faut... Mais non, de ce moment, je tiens à la vie.  Air des Voitures versées.  Tendre Clair de Lune, Le soldat est là ! mon n'un fortune. Sur mon infortune, Il s'attendrira.  Ma chandelle est morte, Je n'ai plus de feu ; Ouvre moi ta porte, Pour l'amour de Dieu !  D T Z S F m ma chandelle R D *
4	CL	Pauvre Clair de Lune, Le soldat est là ! Sur mon infortune Il s'attendrira.  Sa chandelle est morte, etc.
5	FV	Tendre Clair de Lune ! On t'obéira ; Sur ton infortune, On s'attendrira.  Sa chandelle est morte, etc.
6	F	à Valentin. D'après ce que jé vois, il paraît que ça va mieux ?
7	V	A présent, quelle est la nouvelle consigne ?
8	F	bas, à Valentin. Aux Frères Provençaux !
9	V	Aux Frères Provençaux !... bon !... Dites-moi, serai-je toujours de service ?
10	F	Toujours. Mais tu vas quitter ton uniforme... [page 26]
11	V	à part.

		Il paraît que la farce est jouée. (Au condamné.) Eh bien ! mon criminel, on va donc vous donner la clé des champs... c'est moi qui vais vous rendre la liberté... Hum ! criez-vous encore après les soldats, ces bons soldats !...
12	LDJ	Je vais donc respirer avec le reste du genre humain !
13	CL	Oh ! la liberté !...
14	F	Hum ! la liberté ! j'espère que c'est romantique...
15	V	C'est romantique et individuel.
16	CL	Fuyons** !...
17	F	Air :  Oh liberté ! liberté ! liberté ! Nous te rendons hommage. O liberté ! ô liberté ! ô liberté ! Soit notre déité ! (bis.)
18	CL	L'oiseau du bocage, A ceux qui gémissent en cage, Dit : pauvre réclus [sic] ! Hélas ! vous ne chanterez plus !...
19	LDJ	A celui qu'engage Le lien du mariage, Plus d'un bon vivant, Veuuf ou garçon, se dit souvent : <i>72</i>
20	V	Le voleur qui voit Les bons gendarmes, Sous les armes, Dit : filons tout droit, Ce n'est pas là la bonne endroit [sic].  [page 27]
21	F	Voyant l'esclavage, De maint peuple encor sauvage, Bénissant ses lois, Le Français chante à pleine voix :
22	Tous	O liberté ! etc.  (Ils sortent gaiement tous les quatre. – L'orchestre joue l'air du Chœur qui va suivre.)

## FIN DU DEUXIEME TABLEAU

### Troisième Tableau

Le Théâtre change et représente un coin du jardin du Palais-Royal. – Sur une grande porte on lit : *Littérature en gros et en détail, et grand bazar dramatique*. – Des commissionnaires traversent la scène en roulant des ballots de différentes grosseurs, sur lesquels on lit : *Drames, Mélodrames, Tragédies, etc. Moïse, l’Espion, la Fiancée, Lancastré, et autres titres d’ouvrages nouveaux*.

\*\* Codage impossible

- - syllabes accentuées
- ∧ - enchaînements consonantiques
- ∩ - ench. vocaliques pas encore <sup>quarant e ans</sup>
- ∨ - liaisons e.g pas encore [z]
- ∄ - e instable (non prononcé)
- ̄ - — prononcé.
- ◻ e muet (la ville)
- / // - pauses.

lier le <sup>(ou)</sup> voyelle et <sup>(R)</sup> hache le <sup>(R)</sup>

## Interview (Module coordinator)

So I'd say there were two sources of inspiration. First of all, my research, because it's during my PhD research that I stumbled upon that particular play and I liked it and I decided to work on it and I therefore carried out some research on the play. I found the manuscript in Paris and I thought there would be a publication that would be worth doing, like a critical edition of that play. And unfortunately, I've written parts of the introduction, I've got the notes, but I've never found the time to actually publish it. So that's still on my to do list at some point, you know, to publish a particular edition of that play. And then the second source of inspiration, the second reason, second motivation for me to, to, to, to study the play with the students was to find a different way of teaching the language and teaching the literature as well French literature to our students so that they would be more engaged.

There used to be another module which I had created when I arrived at Mary Immaculate College, a traditional module on crime and justice, whereby students were asked to read a certain amount of texts, either extracts or full books. And we were discussing them in class and they had an essay to write and all the rest. But it's really after a while I realized that students most of the time were not actually reading anything yet what I was giving them to read. And it became quite frustrating after a while because you can't. Then all the lectures were only one way. There was no interaction anymore because since they hadn't read the text, they couldn't comment on it, they couldn't discuss it with me, they had no questions about it. So I basically had to spoon feed them through my lectures. And that became, for me, demotivating, and I found that it wasn't very successful for the students.

So it was all about making them aware of the two artistic movements, classicism and Romanticism, making them familiar with some of the main texts and authors of those two artistic movements, enabling them to acquire a lot of new vocabulary.

Idiomatic expressions and all the rest. And to also perform the language, to actually give them an opportunity to to speak the language and to really placing the right intonations where they should be and all this

No. None at all. None at all. And I was very nervous the first time...

But I mean, I have this passion for theatre. I love theatre. So I was delighted in a way to be able to become a stage director and to get students to to play roles. But it was a challenge in the sense that everything had to be started from scratch. I had to, for example, find the source of costumes, try to figure out where to find them, what kind of costumes I would need. Then there was a the issue of the space that we would use then to perform. I wasn't sure how the students would react either. You know.

I won't say that it dramatically changed the role of of a lecturer, because the first part of the module is all about translating the place to get the play together and explaining the context and sub context of everything that they have in the play. But definitely the second part where I have the students rehearse, that's something that was new to me and I had to get I get some training, actually.

I did. It's based on the training that I received. So I did a one day, one day training with someone who is a specialist of using theatre for pedagogical purposes. I must even have a certificate there somewhere because I don't remember the name it was a number of years ago. Then I also have had as you may remember, I had some guest lecturers coming from time to time. Yeah, there was Odile Romano, from whom I learned how to get students to articulate better to work on their pronunciation.



ped I mean, she perhaps she didn't develop it herself, but how she used that particular method where through body body posture and body language, you actually help students to pronounce certain sounds which are difficult for them to pronounce otherwise, you know, or as you know, you get students to walk through the room as they speak, and that helps them put their intonation at the right time. You know, all this I learned thanks to those guest lecturers and the.

Oh, yeah, big time. Big time. It's basically it ruined the. The essence of the module, you know, because then it it basically prevented interaction most of the time completely. And we couldn't at the end of the day, we couldn't organise a live performance where all the students would perform together. So it was just a face to face meeting with each student where they were playing their role. And I was giving them that cue. But that was really, really not working. Well, no, no, no. It worked in at the end of the day, we were able to assess the students, you know, but it wasn't satisfactory. Yes.

The only thing that perhaps I've kept from the time when it was taught online was that I recorded with any side. We recorded each other playing the roles, each room separately, each of each character in the play. And I've kept those recordings and actually I've decided this semester, for example, towards the end of the semester, to use those recordings to make them available to the students so that they could listen to somebody else performing the role, a native speaker performing the role, and so that they could have a point of comparison to try to improve their own pronunciation, therefore, great.

Possibly. Possibly. That would be a they would be better placed than me to to to answer that question. Probably. But yeah, probably for some of them, definitely. Because, you know, some of them wouldn't be very comfortable in a public setting having to stand in front of everyone and.

Because, you know, it's like it's like we were saying we were talking about students being more comfortable behind a computer screen, but they actually are more comfortable behind the mask of the character in a way. You know what? They don't actually wear a mask, but it as if they were wearing a mask and they wear the costume which helped them distance themselves from their own personality.

Actually they gaining confidence a great deal by by impersonating a character.

So I basically decided to dedicate the first exam, the more traditional one, as you said, to testing their newly acquired vocabulary and then testing what assessing what they had, what they could remember of the artistic, social, historical, political context of the play while still assessing their written skills in French as well, since they have to answer those open questions in French.

And then separate separate from that, the last bit is more about their ability to speak French properly, to communicate orally in French. And then that's where I assess their pronunciation, intonation, delivery and communication, in which in the communication I put their acting skills. In a way, although they're not professional actors, they're not even students of, of, of drama, you know, but their ability to perform in public, let's say. Yes

Definitely. Without a doubt, the performance at the end of the semester is what they prefer, and that is where they actually perform better, much better or much better

I think they definitely put more work into the final performance than into their traditional exam, but that's because they find the motivation to put more work into it because they know that on the day and it's a bit scary, of course, for them, but they will be there on the spot and they will have they will have nowhere to hide. And in a way, there is also an element of team spirit there. If one of them fails completely, it will have an impact on the others who perform with that particular

student. So they have a kind of collective responsibility to do well, which is an extra motivation for them. Whereas for traditional exams, well as usual, nowadays they don't put much effort into their studies, they're more traditional studies. You know.

Yes, there's probably an element of that, but I'd say there is such a good, good vibes, actually. It's actually really create a sense of working as a group and as a team, and you can see that they are supporting each other as well. So that's probably what diffuses the anxiety.

And I think it pushes them as well to perform well because they can see some other students in the same group performing the same the role of the same character, sometimes better than them. And so it shows them the way it shows them what they should be doing in order to improve.

I really try hard not to make the students feel bad about their first performances when they when they rehearsed, you know, because I want them to gain confidence. And if I'm there and if I systematically correct each and every pronunciation mistake that they make, then it would be impossible actually for them to perform, you know. So sometimes I focus more. I choose. I choose I choose to focus more on the acting. Then on the pronunciation, reminding them that they really need, and especially those students who who are a bit weak in pronunciation, that they should really work on their own independently using the recording now to compare what they do with with the native speaker. But yeah, I'm very cautious to always be supportive and encouraging.

Well, my objective, of course, is that they improve their overall proficiency. And so it would be something that would encompass all of the elements of the module. That would be the ideal and result, of course. But I have to say that it's really the performance that strikes me as being the biggest achievement for all of the students, actually and myself. I am always a bit nervous sometimes when we go through rehearsals at the beginning because sometimes I wonder how on earth are some of my students going to be able to perform on the day, you know? And I'm always surprised for the final performance at how good they actually do

To be to be honest with you personally, I don't really I don't really see any effect, any impact on my relationship with the students. I feel the relationship doesn't change much. In fact, through studying this particular module, the only thing is that it enables us perhaps to have a little bit more fun sometimes during the rehearsals. We have a good laugh sometimes, you know. So you could say that this is something that creates a stronger bond maybe. But but as you may remember. But I like to have a good laugh as well in my other modules from time to time, you know. So I wouldn't I wouldn't say that he has dramatically changed anything in my relationship to the students. It has changed definitely in terms of their level of satisfaction with their own performance in French studies at the end of the day.

So strength yes, it has definitely for me revealed some some strengths. I remember some students who were extremely shy, extremely quiet at the beginning of the semester or throughout their degree, and who really opened up completely during the rehearsals and the final performance, especially, you know, they were transformed. They were transformed. And they really could see that they really enjoyed performing that role. And so, yeah, that's a strength that it really in terms of confidence, it has really helped them gain a lot of confidence.

Yes, absolutely. And everywhere I go, I talk to my colleagues about this particular module. I've even given some some papers for ADC, for example, talking about the example of that module. And I can see a real interest among my colleagues at this type of experiment. And so I always advise them to go for it. Reminding them that I didn't have any experience, prior experience of of teaching theatre before, but that it works extremely well. And my aim would be by publishing perhaps at some stage,

critical edition of the play would be to include within that critical edition some kind of a lesson plan that colleagues could follow if they wanted to use the play themselves for free

You could say that they were interested in interested in in all of those cultural elements that have the fashion of the time, you know, the the the social life at that time. And it also makes them remember things more easily, the fact that it's through a play and that they have to perform themselves those roles afterwards. They remember the vocabulary better and they remember the context as well. Better

It's difficult for me to answer that question. I'm not sure it's a question of personality, perhaps more of whether I am a native speaker or not. I'm not sure that it's the question that should be asked to the students themselves. You know, whether they perceive me differently because I'm as a native speaker than married, for example, you know, or I don't know. I don't know the answer to that question I

Possibly. Possibly. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, of course. Because every mistake would sound resonate more, perhaps to my ears, you know, than to.

Hmm. I never thought of that. Possibly. Possibly. You know.

Or was too much self-confidence? Nobody. Because I've always I've always loved studying languages. And perhaps the way we learn languages in France. I don't know how it is here, but we spend an awful amount of time learning the written language first. And so when when I arrived in England, for example, for the first time, and I had to live there and speak, you know, on a daily basis in English, at first I had difficulty speaking English. It was difficult for me. It was difficult for me to speak, and it was difficult for me to understand what everyone was telling me. But it never really, you know, made me too nervous. No, I went for it and I thought, you know, anyway, everyone can see I'm a foreigner, anyone can. I'm French. So if I make mistakes, they won't they won't really mind, you know? And everyone was so nice all the time.

That that's the reason why that's one of the reasons why I was nervous also because I could see, of course, that for them it was a big ask. You know, at the beginning when you tell them you're going to have to perform this play at the end of the semester, you can see their faces every every year. It's the same for the first lecture of the semester. I tell them that and I can see them become white, you know. But then by the end of of the module and now with, you know, the experience that I have of previous years, they enjoy it so much that I know that at the end of of the day, it's going to be a positive experience for them

Just wanted to say, you know, it's like it's like for an actors when, when they go on stage, they say that if they don't actually have the butterflies, it's bad. They need to have to have this sensation in order to perform well after that. And I feel that our students are so used to the traditional way of of learning that they don't really put any more effort into it. Now they know what the consequences will be in advance. And those consequences are not, you know, terrible because they can go through the repeat and they all almost all end up passing in the end. So I feel that this little amount of nervousness that they might have at the beginning of the semester when they teach, when they take my module, is actually perhaps something that will. Help them learn better at the end, you know.

No, no. It could definitely be other other performative ways. Yeah. Like music. Absolutely. Dance music and. Yeah, yeah. No, absolutely not. Just not just theatre. Yeah

ped I mean, she perhaps she didn't develop it herself, but how she used that particular method where through body body posture and body language, you actually help students to pronounce certain sounds which are difficult for them to pronounce otherwise, you know, or as you know, you get students to walk through the room as they speak, and that helps them put their intonation at the right time. You know, all this I learned thanks to those guest lecturers and the.

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So I basically decided to dedicate the first exam, the more traditional one, as you said, to testing their newly acquired vocabulary and then testing what assessing what they had, what they could remember of the artistic, social, historical, political context of the play while still assessing their written skills in French as well, since they have to answer those open questions in French.

And then separate separate from that, the last bit is more about their ability to speak French properly, to communicate orally in French. And then that's where I assess their pronunciation, intonation, delivery and communication, in which in the communication I put their acting skills. In a way, although they're not professional actors, they're not even students of, of, of drama, you know, but their ability to perform in public, let's say. Yes

Definitely. Without a doubt, the performance at the end of the semester is what they prefer, and that is where they actually perform better, much better or much better

I think they definitely put more work into the final performance than into their traditional exam, but that's because they find the motivation to put more work into it because they know that on the day and it's a bit scary, of course, for them, but they will be there on the spot and they will have they will have nowhere to hide. And in a way, there is also an element of team spirit there. If one of them fails completely, it will have an impact on the others who perform with that particular

- classroom discourse allowed all members to contribute & be heard (informed)  
This was key in preparation phase as it was a process for inclusive decision making, working through concerns & evaluating activities.

character exploration  
Every exploration was a convergence of a reader's experience & knowledge with the experience & knowledge of the character they were playing, the context in which material was read, the author's intention, the contexts of the narrative & audience.

→ N.B. → However, the accumulation of knowledge is not the principal aim of inquiry → the significance of reflection is the discovery & rediscovery of who we are as human beings & how we act out the stories we live by.

→ Importantly, 'Teachers need to allow students' interior or tacit understandings to surface & crystallise into tangible material with which learners can interact. - Teachers also must guide students to see how their daily existence & interests connect to larger issues of systems & how the personal & political impact are another

Historical context.

- as students began to understand themselves as explorers, enquirers, players, motivated by curiosity, they began to build a learning community engaged in creative inquiry.
- Particularly important to this stage of the process, was the dialogue that took place outside of reading + worksheets. → This is significant because as Littleton explains 'various forms of discussion & communication around & beside reformative explorations allow relationships to develop between the teacher & students & among students. As observed early in this chapter, it is through caring relationships that trust & empathy - 2 important ingredients in learning are built.
- Moreover, through different types of articulation, learners also gain competency in different types of communication and begin to think about which form of language might be most appropriate to a given situation.
- Through his attention to students' responses to curricular material & classroom events, the instructor was able to gain insight into students' subjectivities, self-perceptions, aims & needs.

along with the linguistic benefits, drama-based learning also had a positive effect on emotional appraisal & affective learning (more detail check @).

~ lowering affective obstacles ~

Meelmer + Camparo (2006) assert that drama "can open critical spaces within which students negotiate diverse perspectives and generate knowledge & affect student a "safe space to fictionalize reality & enact more empowering individual & collective representations from which others might learn"

(Pedagogical language pedagogy)  
unreel new of drama  
than with previous dichotomous  
conceptualisations.

schema  
"scale"

∴ L2 learners were not viewed as passive  
information processors, but rather as artists  
"thinkers & language users" - Instructor  
allowed for ample opportunities to reflect  
on social, affective & linguistic  
experiences in & through drama,

⇒ A dramatic engagement with language  
& communicative situations can evoke  
learners' imagination to an extent where  
they may step out and move beyond  
the confined walls of the classroom.

⇒ Facilitated contextually-situated  
interaction - language & context cannot  
be separate & interaction plays a  
central role in language learning.

⇒ created an environment where language  
was purchased, learned, and used in  
& through interactive situations in  
social contexts. - It invited learners  
into contexts where they were encouraged  
to spontaneously interact in their environment  
in meaningful ways, experience different registers  
styles, & discourse & develop skills of discourse  
& interaction, which collaboratively constructs  
imaginative worlds.



- works encouraged adaptability, fluency & communicative competence. Put lang into context, gave learners experience of success in real-life situations & aimed to build confidence for dealing w/ the world outside the classroom.
- facilitated opportunities for L2 learners to use language, experience it contextually, & develop their intercultural communicative competence which encompassed elements such as open, curious, and critical attitudes, knowledge in sociocultural practices, skills of relating & making sense of culture, abilities to discover & perform knowledge/skills in & through interaction & critical cultural awareness."
- A.B. to note that during product-oriented scripted classroom activities, growth in fluency in the TL occurs as learners experienced the complex nature of authentic communicative aspects of language (i.e., hesitation, interjections, rephrasings, incomplete sentences), as well as engage in rehearsals & performance, which calls for collaboration, negotiation, & meaning exchanges at personal & public levels using participatory

"How does the 'stage' interact?  
(qualitative)?"

Bertolt Brecht → present case study

↳ great theorist of the stage (1957)

differentiated with what he termed

"Theatre for pleasure" & Theatre for  
instruction.

Quote :

⇒ Today however these lines have  
been blurred & the use of dramatic  
theatre pedagogy is both for instruction  
& pleasure. Brecht's differentiation, however  
invites us to consider seriously the pedagogical  
& political possibilities of theatre pieces,  
produce knowledge about schools & children,  
interrupt formalistic notions of school &  
help new teachers productively intervene  
in school curricula & classroom relations.

\* The performative learning space is a highly demanding but also stimulating, provocative, and resonant arena. It is a location in which players may dare to fully be themselves & in doing so discover who they may become. - Reflection on embodied experience permits integration of internal knowing with external being & external learning & internal states.

\* large scale games

intro. → framework of the everyday classroom activity is expanded. → product created project, time consuming → sketches out over several weeks - Demands high motivation & massive dedication from the participant and can only be realized as an extra curricular activity.

→ During rehearsals & stages of a play, students gained long lasting learning experiences in relation to language, literature & culture along with significant insights contributing to their personal development \*

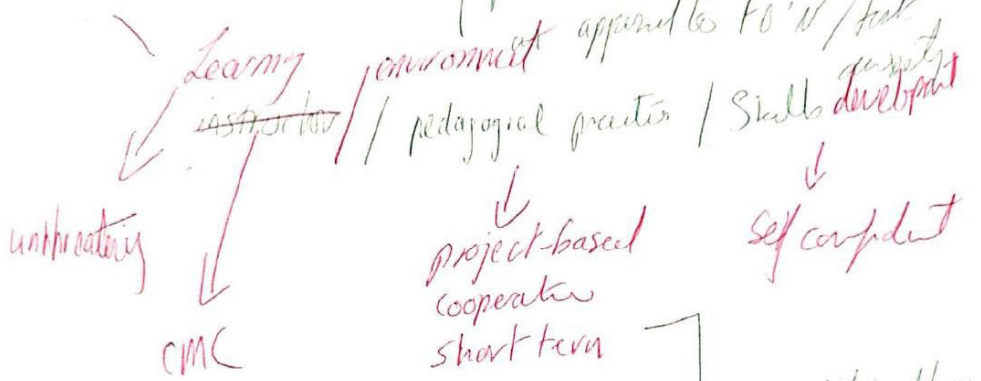
" Over the text "

→ Theatre performance + performative texts reflect not a process & a product level.

confidence in speaking  
compet in speaking

Inherently

(focused on speaking anxiety)



Before teaching

While

After

Training in uncertainty

"fear of the unknown"  
theatre

Left/neutral

(4)

teacher - Performance of Instruction

Critical turn in SL edu in 1980/90's - target not political. - freed from grammar instruction & communicative lang methods

lang classroom - real world training

p. 538 - opening quote? - lang acq. occurs its performance by subject already contributed by previous practices

Identity / p. 348 (political point):  
Selected performance pedagogy

(5)

CPD ~ participatory & dialogic in nature p. 14  
play & imagination - key elements.

Bordieu point "habitus": [validate some / identify / solve / other] p. 54

• entry points • border crossings  
• McLaren "liminal servants" / "inter-involvement"

CPD designs 15 curricula p. 194.

so as to probe in inscriptions into certain habits to develop strategies

Pedagogy/ pedagogy

Intro. (Performing ed) \*  
- this chapter examines CPP within the context of a French P&P module  
~ exemplar implementation (Crich site)

Chapter 5

1) What is CPP? / Henry Giroux / 50 yrs  
Paulo Freire  
Augusto Boal (Applied Theatre) [T/O]

Breaks & I methods  
centered CM

- 1) performative
  - 1 (transformative)
  - 2 (democratic classroom)
  - 3 (conscientization)
  - 4 (praxis)

Students thematic universe  
what does it mean to be critically pedagogical?

Performance used as a vehicle to achieve these ends

Performative turn in pedagogy  
(performing ed)  
→ good for CPP

identity experiment for student + teacher alike

3. is performative?

what does this pedagogy mean?  
edu = performance event + performative event  
"human training" vs. "Actor training"  
real world training

Language obstacles

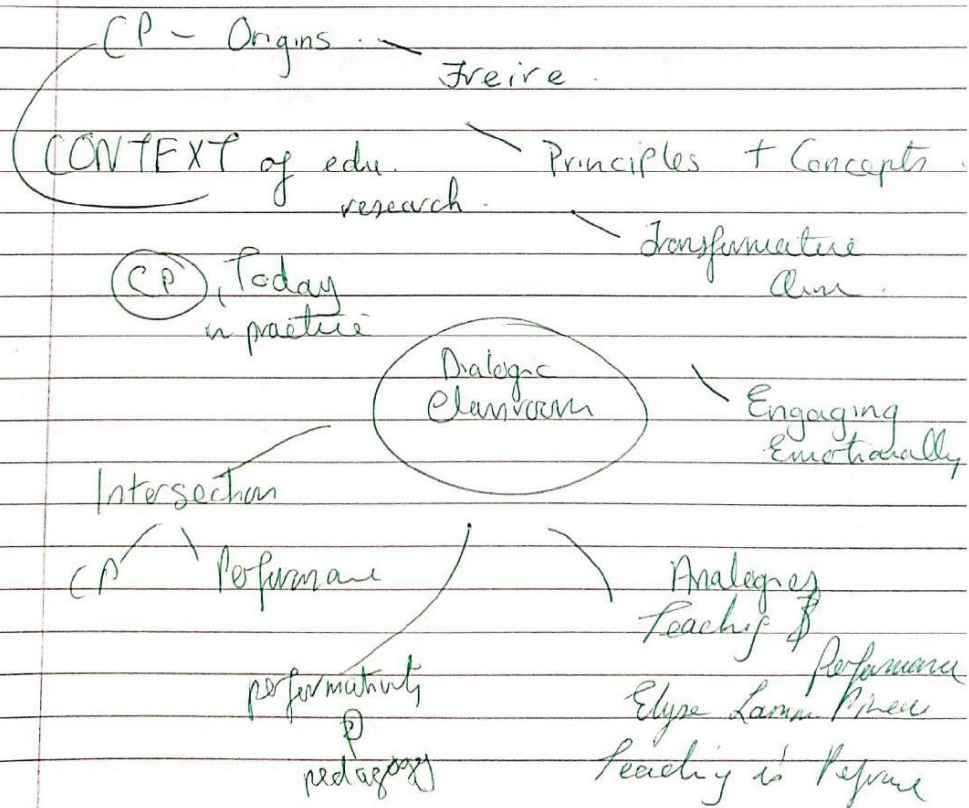
Connecting the 2nd space  
→ 3rd space pedagogies  
focus on the construction of a third space.

Performance  
 . syllabus  
 presented  
 here .  
 in order  
 to contextualise the  
 study

←  Irish Context

relevancy & status  
 of CP + D.F  
 in Freire

→ Arts in education  
 Performative Arts  
 Teaching lang.  
 through performance



key variables within these  
schools of thought  
agency,  
passive!

factive vs.

content based links

affecti:

Theory / concept / construct

what's  
the  
feed

categories:

schol  
Parat

scholar

intro

pick up  
or in  
2nd  
section

~~disciplines~~

which are (dominate  
these  
school  
of  
thought)



57

problematic terminology  
locate vs. navigating

that  
Broadly.

situational  
reason  
is different  
focus of  
study

object  
of  
study

agency  
agent  
passive

learned.

lexical error  
meaning provide  
agency terminology  
forms which will  
become central  
in later chapters.

not central to early perspectives,  
they arise ...

all the world a stage (oging  
historical Survey

Education vs. Pedagogy (CPP- middle ground"

High impact practice / new modes of student  
engagement

Deep Learning

Pedagogical Cycle

Critical teacher + student development

Reformative Inquiry

◦ Site of investigation

Affection demonstrates of Affective

What is pedagogy?

Technical experience

◦ Identity construction, reconstruction, and  
the Other

◦ 2 terms used throughout - what is pedagogy  
+ what is education

◦ Definitions performative, performative

p. 349

Parallels drawn to Lewis' view that: "when teachers & students purposefully embody their identities alongside each other within reflexive performance with serious attention might be paid to the process by which these identities are already constituted in relation to the Other".

perceptual  
senses

Grismer  
2002 Theater is a channel through which ~~our~~ sensory  
experience may be decelerated, the unknown might  
transcend, and succumb (to) <sup>perceptual</sup> activity. Informed by  
cultural limitations.

In keeping with this view, Bellona asserts that it is  
indeed this proximity to 'probe the ambiguous  
nature of our diverse, multilingual beings' that  
educators should endeavor to foster within students.  
Theatrical art forms, she affirms, gives us the license  
to investigate 'the powerful connection between language,  
emotion, body, and space in the construction of  
new experience born out of a process of self-  
awareness & critical thinking'.

### Problematic of Identity

\* This is echoed by Kopelson who recognizes that  
performative pedagogy proliferates the possibility of  
identity, permitting the immense potential of identity,  
'rather than to represent one bounded identity to another'.

345 Ross Juis does, however, insist that critical educators  
must not forget that practicing performative pedagogy  
does not erase the impact of students' contingent  
identities. (Interpreted twofold / to the other-  
author than code (Student bodies entangled in classroom

(2 layers to <sup>identity</sup> performative pedagogy)

performance dynamics ~ identity politics  
referential dynamics. ~

p. 251 (Flur or Jaber. "Where, if not, in the artistic process - and in theater above all - are experience with difference & confrontations with alterity possible?")

2010 p. 1 ← Performance, as described by Fisher-Lichte (2010), is marked by a "high degree of contingency". A performance only materializes during its evolution. It cannot be tales shape

entirely choreographed or premeditated. Balozza asserts that "accepting ambiguity, dealing with positions sometimes non-negotiable, and planning future scenarios" are optical that students must foster "when found in the uncharted territory of the kind of encounter for which there is no map." Drama/Theatre pedagogy permits the 'disruption of the obvious'. Throughout / Over the course of a performance pass through a "liminal experience" - about Balozza refers to a passage from a threshold - 'a state of temporary symbolic analysis (discrepancy, inability to 'read the signs'), through a passage or transition resulting into a transformative experience.

in the dramatic process Jaber (2016, p. 203) insists that the theatrical process permits "a productive tension between Self and Other" to grow. Through constructing new meanings and encountering new experiences encountered, which spring / emerge from self-reflection & new founded self-awareness with respect to the "unfamiliar" & "divergent situations", that permit students to acknowledge that "the common self" is a misconception, and rather the self is a "conflicted multiplicity" ~ in a continual process of identity construction & reconstruction.

reception of  
"if we don't train the senses, we will never get anywhere"

Within the context of the performative teaching and learning culture, Belzga affirms that the learner re-trains their senses and also acquires training in liminality. The association that exists between language and the senses in the process of meaning-making has not been adequately addressed in pedagogy. More specifically, in the context of L2 education, it is necessary to "reposition body and emotion at the center of the L2 enterprise". Through the retraining of the senses, educators may better understand and interpret the world around them in newly discovered and creative ways. In order to achieve these goals, Belzga asserts that the body, <sup>and</sup> voice, should be incorporated into the learning process; and more specifically, their function in 'communicating emotion, mood, and attitude; together with the performative potential of spaces inside & outside the classroom, and the development of one's physical presence'. Experience is put to the forefront of the learning process, rather than an over-emphasis on understanding control. In the same spirit of Pinar's work, students are viewed as disembodied minds entering the classroom, Body & mind cannot <sup>view</sup> be separated / viewed as two separate entities as the "Cartesian dualist" concept suggests; and moreover, traditional cultural binaries including subject-object, female-male, active-listener.

Deborah Newton  
max  
away  
from

"Breaching down those cultural binaries which can be extraordinarily powerful in reinforcing and maintaining traditional, myopic understandings of teaching & learning".

(P.6)  
Newton (2014)

Drama Pedagogy

dynamic interplay  
I arts & self

Teaching as an art

performative  
competence

Definition of  
performative

Definition of  
performative  
teaching + learning

How did Module help?

Communicative Competence  
Social Interaction (long connection)

n(p) chap

duality of  
lang / culture  
theatre



Drama vs. Theatre.

Change class size to 14

◦ French cultural history

Q for Linc

◦ Proficiency in French

◦ Participant numbers (difficulties)

process oriented  
[ Wks 1 (historical context) - 8 Text Analysis ]

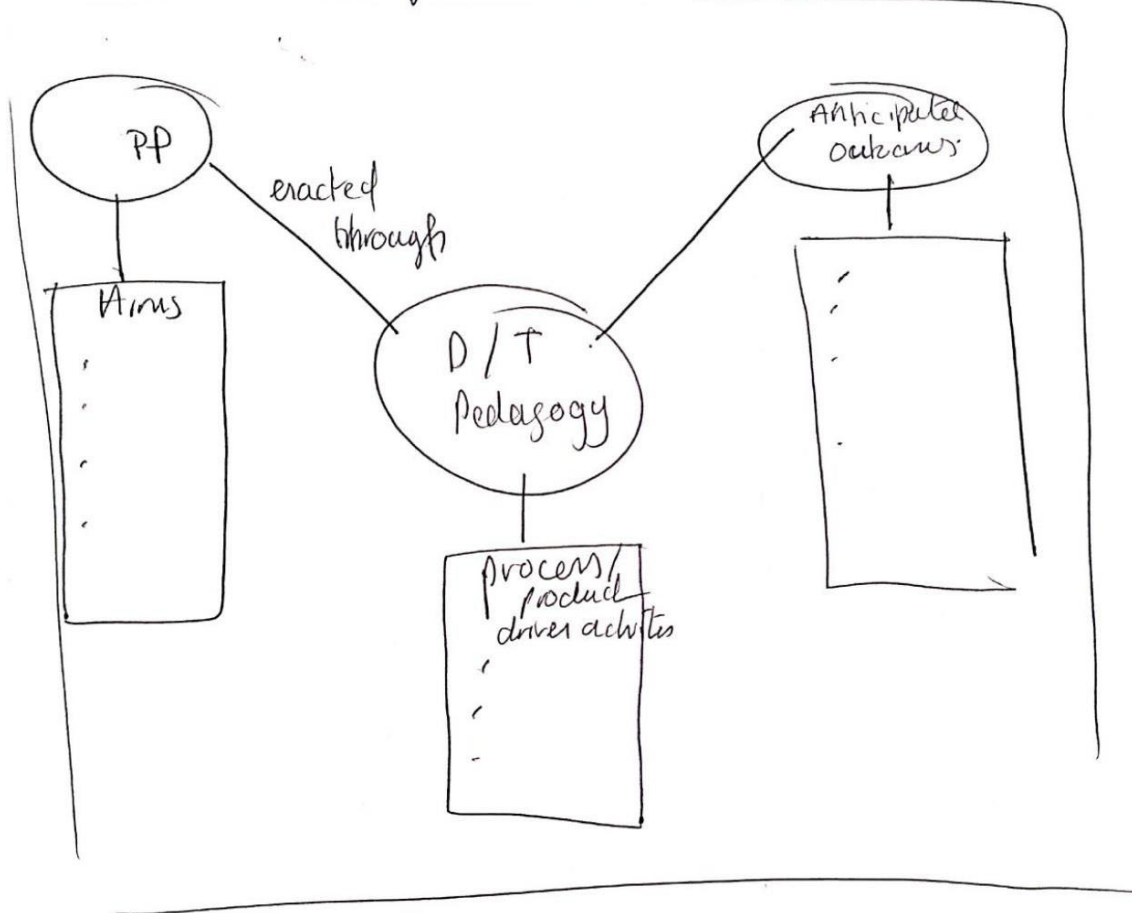
◦ What student for which roles - ability

◦ Main goal of the module

product oriented  
9-12

Background to play brief

Figure 1. Overview of the performance engineering framework.



Small supportive groups (peers)

Cooperative learning activities  
Increase opportunity to use  
1st lang. (and)

short-term  
project work

12 teachers

supportive classroom  
atmosphere

positive, friendly,  
relaxed

(CMC) → comp. mediated communication

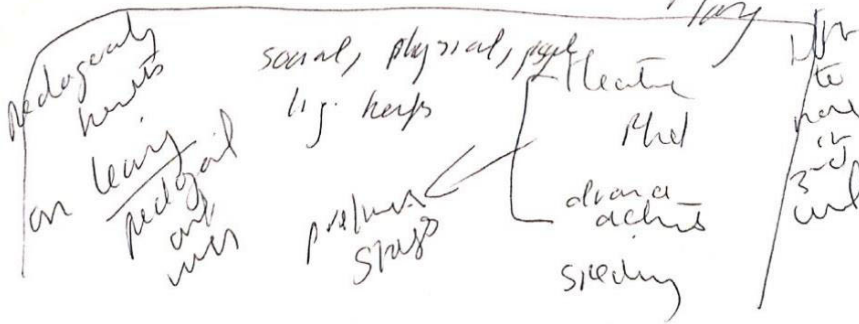
positive psychology

general categories  
emerged

modelling / guided participation

constructs & elucidates  
new findings

performance / distribute  
from  
theory



Teacher empathy

**At ease nationality/ why?**

same nationality / on toes é native  
 speak - more confident  
 Anglo phone - both

same (make a mistake, understand) →  
 had a similar experience

Same.

**Gender/ why?**

"either either  
 either"

"I can understand  
 where I was wrong"  
 native speaker can  
 correct by his syllable-like  
 to common mistake  
 explain difficulties  
 in English!

**Confidence language skills**

Reading - 2x C	FC	SC	FC
Writing - 3 C	FC	SC	3 C
Listening - SC	FC	SC	FC
Speaking - SC	FC	SC	3
	①	②	

**Classroom best place?**

NO

Yes

NO

NO

**Why?**

- P1 - living language  
 - go to other country  
 everyone speaks French
- P2 - quiet + easier  
 to interact / good  
 work / feedback
- P2 - immersion needed
- P3 - Grammar good but  
 heard outside interaction

**Greatest challenges for language learners in Ireland?**

- P1 - sufficient support to practice day, every day.
- P2 - not listening enough, not practicing enough, saying, taking part  
 limited in experience.
- P2 - no full immersion.
- P3 - Not enough time abroad.

**How many years studying French**

- 10 yrs
- 10 yrs
- 8/9 yrs
- 9 yrs

**Experience**

- Strongly positive
- Strongly positive
- Mostly positive
- Mostly positive

**Key factors (French)**

Teachers / interactive classroom / enjoying books are thick  
 Teachers, opportunities, grammar, heard  
 Teacher style effective / assessment straight forward. several teachers,  
 good teacher / helpful dept. notes

**What is traditional teaching?**

- P1 - no teaching aids / tech.
- P2 - teaching lang for applied environment / productive manner
- P2 - "original way"
- P3 - grammar rules, comprehens.

**Traditional Methods**

- P1 - Roleplay, oral practice, oral comp's
- P2 - memory games, grammar recap
- P2 - in target language / explaining grammar / translation
- P3 - Comp. grammar.

**Nationality of French Teacher**

- Both.
- Other (usually Irish / Spanish)
- Both.
- Both. (mostly Irish)

**Gender**

- Female
- Female / even mix
- even mix.
- Female

**Gael Scoil attend/not**

NO  
NO  
NO  
NO

**studied Irish (now / past)**

now - NO  
Past Yes / ~~now~~ - Yes  
Yes now + past  
Yes even if past

**Where studied Irish**

Primary & secondary schools  
PTS + Tenbury  
PTSPI Tenbury  
college (PTS)

**How they consider Irish language**

Irish's native lang.  
- native lang.  
Second language  
Second language

neg - - .140  
.719

**Statement - Irish language learning experience**

Neither P/N  
Mostly - ~~Mostly~~ P.  
Mostly Positive  
Strongly P.

**Q15 key factors**

P1 -> not interactive.  
not positive and should  
have been  
hard.

P2 -> teacher/instructor  
native lang. -> pros.  
substantiated

P2 - teacher's passion -  
teacher's style

P3 -> P.S. great  
emphasis on  
substantiated

**Native Language**

English  
English  
English  
E.g.

**Formal education**

Ireland.  
Ireland  
Ireland  
Ireland.

English - 4

Irish - 4

History - 1

**Languages studying**

French, English  
French, Irish  
Irish, English  
French, Irish

**Languages studied**

German

**First foreign language learned**

Spanish  
French  
French  
French.

**Where did you study first FL**

Primary school  
Secondary school  
Sc. School  
p. school

**At what age**

4-11 yrs  
13  
13  
11

Leads

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Native / Non native

Native

non native anglophone

Both

Both

Native

give + take

possibilities

insight

'appeal <sup>interest</sup>

'enthusiasm'

'convinced' to understand

enjoy you will do  
your best'

'by diff methods'

why

Better pres.  
exp. culture.

ceases to  
understand  
accent.

'insight

'I can't speak  
enough to  
hear, understand  
your accent'

better at  
explaining.



understanding

Confidence

immersion

At ease nationality/ why?

either (approachable/at ease)  
anyphone.

same nationality  
similar background + understood  
by culture

Gender/ why?

either  
difficult to understand the point.  
- as to in Eng.

either  
either  
either - either

Confidence language skills

	FC	FC	SC	SC	SC
Reading	FC	FC	SC	SC	SC
Writing	SC	SC	NC	NC	NC
Speaking	SC	NC	NC	NC	FC
Listening	SC	FC	SC	SC	SC

speaking more hard

Classroom best place?

- Yes.
- NO.
- NO.
- NO.
- NO. - immersion / lang. country

Why?

learning & peers.  
Immersion better after exams.  
"cultural environment more relaxed".  
"expected to keep up & enjoy it etc"

Greatest challenges for language learners in Ireland?

Confidence in lang, learn all words no confidence no score  
Not enough first hand ex in French speaking country  
Grammar side of learning a new lang.

"Amber at times - feeling like this really to ask  
"concepts"  
Grammar & listening

## Teacher / style

### How many years studying French

8  
10  
9  
4 (beginner)  
10

### Experience

Mostly positive  
Mostly positive  
Mostly positive  
Mostly positive  
Strongly positive

### Key factors (French)

social teacher.  
Teacher style / exams.  
Teacher / style  
Teacher / style

### What is traditional teaching?

grammar/vocab.  
notes / repetition / grammar.  
like always been taught.  
not competing outside  
teacher at front of room.

### Traditional Methods

learning off workbooks.  
following a book pg by pg.

### Nationality of French Teacher

Other (Frsh).  
Both.  
Other (Frsh).  
Both.  
Both.

### Gender

Female.  
Female.  
Female  
over mix  
over mix

**Gael Scoil attend/not**

W/N  
N  
w/n  
W/N  
W/N

**studied Irish (now/past)**

no/yes.  
yes.  
y  
W/Y  
/y

**Where studied Irish**

P+S.  
P+S.  
P+S+C.  
P+S-  
P-S.

**How they consider Irish language**

a second language.  
Irish native lang.  
Irish native lang.  
Irish native lang.  
Irish native lang.

**Statement - Irish language learning experience**

N P nor N  
Mostly positive  
Mostly positive  
Mostly positive  
W P nor N.

**key factors**

"hard lang to learn  
no confidence)  
"feels / style"  
"good feels  
not just LC"  
"leaving Conf  
disadvantage"  
leaves style +  
conf

**Native Language**  
P4 English  
P5 Eng.  
P6 Eng  
P7 Eng/ Irish

P. 9. English

**Formal education**

Ireland.  
Ireland.  
Ireland  
Ireland  
Ireland.

**Languages studying**

French, English  
Engl, French.  
Irish, French  
English, French.  
French

**Languages studied**

**First foreign language learned**

French.  
French  
French  
German.  
French.

**Where did you study first FL**

S. School  
S. School.  
S. school  
S. school.  
S. school.

**At what age**

12.  
12.  
12.  
12.  
13.

RQ1. WHY AND TO WHAT EXTENT DO FINAL YEAR STUDENTS OF FRENCH IN THE IRISH THIRD-LEVEL CONTEXT EXPERIENCE FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY?

**Category 3. Fear of Negative Evaluation (3 items avg. 3.14)**

Items

- 7 - I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am. (7) "keep up"
  - 23 - I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.
- comparing

Fear of NE by teacher / neg judgement

- 33 - I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in

advance. → links back to speaking ability

RQ1. WHY AND TO WHAT EXTENT DO FINAL YEAR STUDENTS OF FRENCH IN THE IRISH THIRD-LEVEL CONTEXT EXPERIENCE FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY?

**Category 2. Test Anxiety (5 items avg. 3.15)**

Items

- attitude towards testing. • 8 - I am usually at ease during tests in my language class. assessments found difficult.
- Grades/future directed thoughts. • 10 - I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.
- Value/Importance • 11 - I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes. empathy towards other students
- affective filter. • 12 - In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know. classroom environment at times not a relaxed atmosphere.  
pace
- Pressure to prepare for class. • 22 - I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.

Open Codes

Properties

Examples

# What is a good teacher?

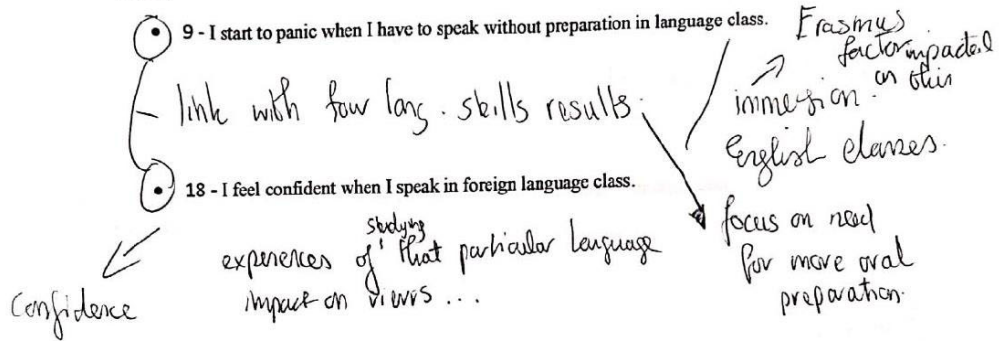
RQ1. WHY AND TO WHAT EXTENT DO FINAL YEAR STUDENTS OF FRENCH IN THE IRISH THIRD-LEVEL CONTEXT EXPERIENCE FOREIGN LANGUAGE ANXIETY?

highest

Teacher/Teaching Style/  
Classroom practices

## Category 1. Communication Apprehension (5 items avg. 3.45)

### Items

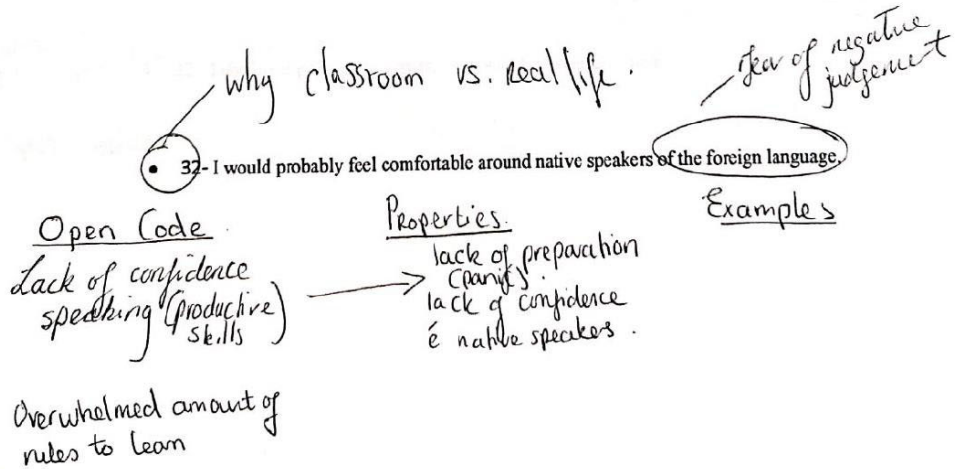


Teacher factor 29 - I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.

why mainly in English classes:

30 - I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.

"grammar side"



Variance  $s^2 = 546.5$  Mean,  $\bar{x} = 107.33$

**Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale**

(FLCAS; Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. 1986).

SD = 73.377

Participant Instructions:

Throughout your French studies at MIC, you have completed many French language modules, which have been taught in what is considered to be a \*'traditional' manner (e.g. version, thème, aural/oral tutorials, content-based lectures such as The French and Love, The Trials and Traumas of Wartime France, and Writing the Modern Self).

Please respond to the following questionnaire based on your experience of 'traditional' French language instruction. Read each statement about foreign language learning carefully, then tick the one response that best represents how you feel about that statement.

*\*Traditional language teaching is primarily associated with teacher-centred delivery of instruction to classes of students who are the receivers of information.*

(5)                      (4)                      (3)                      (2)                      (1)

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my foreign language class.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(RC)                      (1)                      (2)                      (3)                      (4)                      (5)

2. I don't worry about making mistakes in language class.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in language class.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the foreign language.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(RC)

5. It wouldn't bother me at all to take more foreign language classes.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



6. During language class, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at languages than I am.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(RC)

8. I am usually at ease during tests in my language class.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in language class.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. I worry about the consequences of failing my foreign language class.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(RC)

11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over foreign language classes.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. In language class, I can get so nervous I forget things I know.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my language class.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(RC)

14. I would <i>not</i> be nervous speaking the foreign language with native speakers.				
<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. Even if I am well prepared for language class, I feel anxious about it.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

17. I often feel like not going to my language class.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(RC) 18. I feel confident when I speak in foreign language class.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

19. I am afraid that my language teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in language class.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

21. The more I study for a language test, the more confused I get.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(RC) 22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for language class.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

23. I always feel that the other students speak the foreign language better than I do.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking the foreign language in front of other students.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

25. Language class moves so quickly I worry about getting left behind.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

26. I feel more tense and nervous in my language class than in my other classes.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my language class.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(RC) 28. When I'm on my way to language class, I feel very sure and relaxed.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the language teacher says.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules you have to learn to speak a foreign language.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak the foreign language.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(RC) 32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of the foreign language.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

33. I get nervous when the language teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Teacher

Yes.

Yes

Yes.

Yes.

Teachers improve  
interest in  
students

Why

P1 initial exp. affect attitudes

P2 passion contagious/keant compeline

P2 teachers passion  
effective / naturally being method help

P3 enthusiastic teacher work teacher

native / non

Native

Native

Both.

Both.

Why

insight into country

quirks, slow words

used daily life

less inclined to make

errors + person. <sup>initial</sup>

just speaking

Ivan Pavlov



classical conditioning



making an association

positive / neg.  
Pavlov

Watson + Rayner

but with  
what?  $\Rightarrow$   $\frac{1}{2}$   
faced the  
distraction

Types of reinforcers:  
p. 71 (social, activity etc):

behavioral  
thought

how LR learned

$\rightarrow$  consider.  $\Delta$  acquire

cognising  $\rightarrow$  acquisition.

good at LR / LR acquisition -  
not so good at lang. learning

LAO - nested cogn.:

teaching + solution (grammar)

normal conversation does not give us enough  
phr

common view of it (conscious) + practice.

cause / effect - know, understand it.  
(conditioning of  
CC).

acquire language why I was interested  
in (Chomsky - natlang) <sup>comprehending</sup>

Dr. Bereko <sup>optimal</sup> <sup>apprehensibility</sup>  
reason ← rely on <sup>in people's world</sup>  
Street test of <sup>ability to do it</sup>  
mind.

[image transfer context]

Designed to  
enable to  
story more  
comprehensible  
vs. words

- history
- style
- why style
- why / how humans by reading
- empathy fiction
- need more ppl.
- avoid simple solution

reading fiction  
learn more about  
humans by reading  
fiction

instrumental in educational theory.

Seekin' 1 ← 50 - late 60's.

maxim / famous quote attributes

Educational psych.  
making an association in the process of learning

behaviorist reinforcement principles

communicative apprehension for (us) <sup>experience</sup> <sup>negative consequence</sup>  
judgment → certain stimuli will not get a response

'lang grows in the mind' | <sup>valuing</sup> <sup>→ it just</sup> <sup>comes.</sup>

Internal rich structure of mind

teaching to test' work / <sup>meta</sup> <sup>needs</sup> <sup>to explore</sup>

"feelings or emotional reactions about the language, about the people who speak the language, or about the culture where the language is spoken"

⇒ negative self-related cognition:

fear of not being understood

negative self-perceptions  
undervaluing oneself

unknown.  
resources

anticipation of future of avoidance.

The Self  
&  
The Other.

beliefs

frequent & recurrent exposure.

future orientated  
need state  
Barlow

Anxiety unique to lang. learning?

Comm app., test anxiety, fear of my evaluation

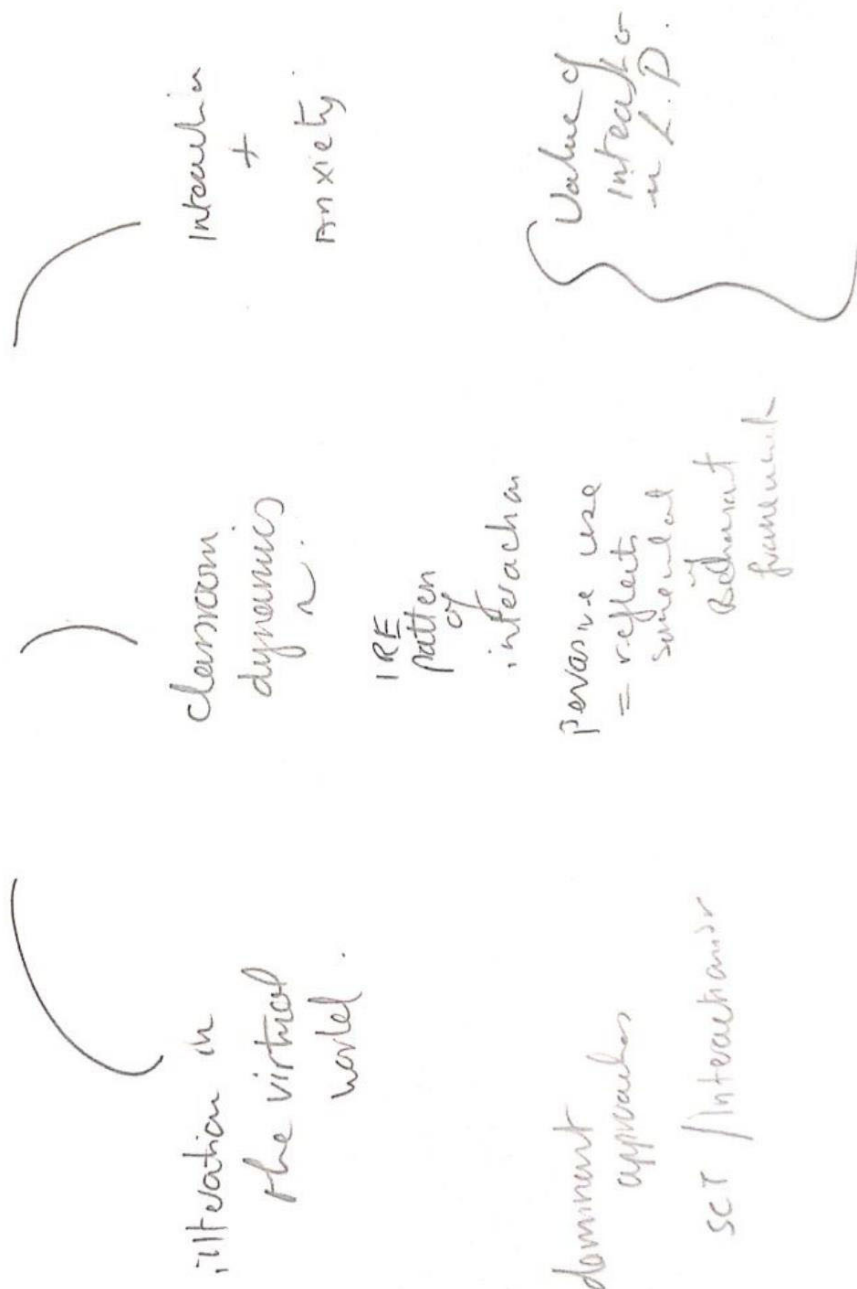
Debate poor command

Physical responses.

avoidance behaviors



discussion structured



18 outliers

Participant responses		Performance FLCAS									Avg	
		3.12	2.48	4.03	2.96	2.24	2.96	2.36	3.15	3.81	(6.01)	
Participant ->		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9		
-	ITEM 1	N	1	1	4	2	1	2	2	2	4	2.11
+	ITEM 2	RC	3	1	5	4	2	4	2	4	4	3.55
+	ITEM 3	RC	3	2	5	4	2	3	2	4	5	3.33
-	ITEM 4	RC	2	2	4	4	1	2	3	2	5	2.77
+	ITEM 5	RC	3	2	5	3	1	4	4	4	5	3.44
+	ITEM 6	N	4	4	5	3	3	4	2	4	4	3.55
-	ITEM 7	RC	4	2	5	2	3	3	4	4	5	3.55
*	ITEM 8	RC	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	4.44
+	ITEM 9	RC	3	4	1	3	1	2	5	2	1	2.44
-	ITEM 10	RC	3	4	4	4	2	4	2	2	4	2.77
-	ITEM 11	RC	4	1	3	4	2	3	2	3	5	3.00
-	ITEM 12	RC	4	2	4	4	4	2	4	2	5	3.44
*	ITEM 13	N	3	3	4	3	1	2	1	4	4	2.77
-	ITEM 14	N	3	2	5	2	2	3	2	3	4	2.88
+	ITEM 15	RC	3	2	4	4	3	4	1	4	4	3.22
+	ITEM 16	RC	4	2	5	3	4	3	2	4	5	3.66
+	ITEM 17	RC	4	2	3	2	3	4	3	1	3	2.77
-	ITEM 18	RC	4	2	4	4	4	5	3	5	2	3.66
+	ITEM 19	RC	2	4	5	3	2	2	2	4	4	3.22
+	ITEM 20	RC	4	3	4	2	3	2	1	5	4	3.11
+	ITEM 21	RC	4	2	4	2	2	3	1	2	4	2.77
-	ITEM 22	N	2	3	4	2	2	2	1	4	4	2.66
-	ITEM 23	N	4	2	2	4	4	3	1	4	4	3.11
-	ITEM 24	RC	1	2	3	2	2	3	3	2	4	2.44
-	ITEM 25	RC	1	1	4	2	1	2	4	4	4	2.55
*	ITEM 26	RC	4	4	5	3	2	4	3	1	4	3.33
-	ITEM 27	N	2	2	4	3	1	2	2	4	4	2.66
-	ITEM 28	N	3	2	4	3	3	3	1	4	2	2.77
-	ITEM 29	RC	3	2	4	2	1	2	2	1	4	2.33
-	ITEM 30	RC	4	4	2	2	3	3	2	3	4	3.00
+	ITEM 31	RC	5	2	5	3	1	4	3	5	5	3.66
-	ITEM 32	RC	2	2	4	4	2	3	2	2	2	2.55
-	ITEM 33	N	2	2	4	2	1	2	2	1	4	2.22
Totals			103	82	133	98	74	98	78	104	126	

Total Score Mean - 107.27  
Std dev - 23.33  
Variance - 544.19  
Min - 74  
Max - 146

Participant  
mean score - Mean - 3.25  
Std dev - .71  
Variance - .50  
Min - 2.24  
Max - 4.42

Participant responses

FLCAS

① CA - Neutral - 3.42  
 ② TA - Above - 3.13  
 ③ Prev Mean - 3.10

Participant ->	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	AVG
ITEM 1 (CA)	2	4	2	4	4	5	4	2	1	3.11
ITEM 2 (CA)	2	4	2	4	4	5	4	2	1	3.11
ITEM 3 (TA)	1	4	4	3	4	4	3	2	3	3.11
ITEM 4 (CA)	1	4	2	3	4	4	4	4	3	3.22
ITEM 5 (TA)	1	2	2	4	2	5	2	1	1	2.22
ITEM 6 (TA)	1	2	2	4	3	2	2	1	1	2
ITEM 7 (TA)	2	4	3	5	5	5	4	3	5	3.8
ITEM 8 (TA)	4	3	4	4	5	5	5	2	3	4.11
ITEM 9 (CA)	2	4	4	4	5	5	4	5	5	3.7
ITEM 10 (TA)	5	5	2	4	5	5	4	5	5	4.44
ITEM 11 (TA)	4	4	4	3	4	5	3	5	3	3.8
ITEM 12 (TA)	1	4	3	4	5	5	3	4	3	3.5
ITEM 13 (TA)	2	2	1	3	5	4	4	2	2	2.7
ITEM 14 (CA)	4	2	2	3	4	5	3	2	4	3.11
ITEM 15 (CA)	1	3	2	2	4	2	4	3	4	2.77
ITEM 16 (TA)	1	2	3	3	4	4	1	2	4	2.66
ITEM 17 (TA)	1	2	1	4	2	2	4	1	3	2.22
ITEM 18 (CA)	3	3	3	4	5	5	4	4	4	3.8
ITEM 19 (TA)	1	2	1	3	4	4	2	3	2	2.44
ITEM 20 (TA)	1	3	4	3	5	4	2	3	2	3
ITEM 21 (TA)	2	1	1	2	2	4	4	2	2	2.22
ITEM 22 (TA)	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	5	5	4.11
ITEM 23 (TA)	2	4	4	4	5	5	4	2	4	3.7
ITEM 24 (CA)	2	4	4	3	5	5	4	2	2	3.44
ITEM 25 (TA)	2	4	2	4	3	5	5	3	2	3.33
ITEM 26 (TA)	2	2	4	4	5	5	2	2	2	3.22
ITEM 27 (CA)	2	2	2	4	5	5	3	2	2	3
ITEM 28 (TA)	3	3	3	3	4	4	3	3	2	3.11
ITEM 29 (TA)	3	3	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	3.7
ITEM 30 (CA)	4	3	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	4.11
ITEM 31 (TA)	1	2	2	2	5	4	1	1	4	2.44
ITEM 32 (CA)	4	4	5	3	4	5	3	3	2	3.66
ITEM 33 (TA)	2	3	2	4	5	5	4	3	4	3.5

Totals (74) (102) (91) (116) (138) (146) (111) (89) (98) AVG

Avg ~ 96.22  
 33 - 70 - low | 71 - 109 - moderate | 110 or above - high  
 ① | ⑥ | ②

Item - 7, 22,  
 8, 23,  
 9, 29,  
 10, 30,  
 11, 32,  
 12, 33,  
 18,  
 33-74 | 75-117 | 117 or above  
 25 / 75<sup>th</sup> percentiles .94  
 neutral mean 82.5 (13.72)

CA - .85 (N items 20)

max - 100 (min 20)

Mean - 59.33

SD - 8.31

Variance - 69.00

min - 49

max - 74

( Kurtosis - .65  $\rightarrow$  (-1  $\rightarrow$  +1)  
Skewness .46  $\rightarrow$  (-2 / +2) ✓ )

correlation

(-1  $\rightarrow$  1) < .05 (statistically significant)

Participant responses

TECHNOLOGY  
Male

Participant ->	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
ITEM 1	2	2	2	3	1	3	3	4	4	-2.67
ITEM 2	3	3	5	4	4	3	4	3	4	-3.67
ITEM 3	2	3	3	4	4	3	3	3	4	-3.22
ITEM 4	2	3	2	3	3	2	4	3	2	-7.67
ITEM 5	2	3	2	3	4	2	3	5	3	-3
ITEM 6	2	3	2	4	2	4	3	3	3	-2.89
ITEM 7	2	3	2	4	2	4	3	3	3	-2.89
ITEM 8 RC	2	3	2	3	3	4	2	2	4	-2.78
ITEM 9	3	3	4	5	4	4	3	3	5	-3.78
ITEM 10	2	3	2	3	4	2	2	2	2	-2.44
ITEM 11	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	4	-2.75
ITEM 12	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	-2.33
ITEM 13	4	3	3	4	4	4	3	4	4	-3.67
ITEM 14	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	4	4	-2.75
ITEM 15	1	3	2	4	2	4	2	2	2	-2.44
ITEM 16	2	2	3	2	1	4	2	5	4	-2.78
ITEM 17	4	3	4	4	2	5	4	4	5	-3.89
ITEM 18 RC	3	3	2	3	2	4	2	3	5	-3
ITEM 19	3	3	2	3	2	2	3	3	5	-2.89
ITEM 20	3	3	2	4	2	2	2	2	5	-2.78
	(49)	(58)	(57)	(68)	(52)	(63)	(56)	(64)	(74)	

Patterns

extreme  
performance  
anxiety

- Q10
- Q14 (confidence + speaking)
- Q15 (trust / correcting)
- Q16 (no heart punchy)
- Q19/20 less tense /
- Q17/18 (less confused / pressure)

Judging aspect

other students  
note

- Q21 →
- Q24 (less overabundant)
- Q25 (more peer understandings)

Q8 → future  
 (and) | punctuated  
 (circumstances) | moment set  
 (practice)  
 (his picture)  
 (regard)

- Q26 (Spontaneity / native speaker?)
- Q27 (uptake ✓)
- Q28 (More focus) goal @ end
- Q29 (not embarrassed)
- Q30 (Skill remains in native speaker)
- Q31 (Common ground)
- Q32 (Pace ✓)
- Q33 (volunteering ✓)

mean 107.33

Students

$$1) \quad \frac{x}{74} \quad \frac{x - 96.22}{-33.33} \quad \frac{(x - 96.22)^2}{1110.89}$$

$$2) \quad 102 \quad \frac{5.33}{-33.33} \quad \frac{(5.33)^2}{28.41}$$

$$3) \quad 91 \quad \frac{-16.33}{-33.33} \quad \frac{(-16.33)^2}{266.67}$$

$$4) \quad 117 \quad \frac{9.67}{-33.33} \quad \frac{(9.67)^2}{93.51}$$

$$5) \quad 138 \quad \frac{36.67}{-33.33} \quad \frac{(36.67)^2}{1344.57}$$

$$6) \quad 146 \quad \frac{38.67}{-33.33} \quad \frac{(38.67)^2}{1495.37}$$

$$7) \quad 111 \quad \frac{3.67}{-33.33} \quad \frac{(3.67)^2}{13.47}$$

$$8) \quad 89 \quad \frac{-18.33}{-33.33} \quad \frac{(-18.33)^2}{335.99}$$

$$9) \quad 98 \quad \frac{-9.33}{-33.33} \quad \frac{(-9.33)^2}{87.05}$$

$$SD \sqrt{\frac{41372.05}{n}} \approx (23.377)$$



Previous range of scores = 74 - 146

Performance range of scores = 74 - 133

Avg (E1) = 96.22

Avg (E2) = 99.55 / →

Cronbach Alpha  
 .93  
 (high internal consistency) ✓

low/moderate  
 FLA

Communication App			Test Anxiety		Fear of Neg	
Items	1	2.11	Items	3-3.33	Items	2-3.55
	4	2.77		5-3.44		7-3.55
	9	2.44		6-3.55		13-2.77
	14	2.88		8-2.44		19-3.22
	15	3.22		10-2.77		23-3.11
	18	3.66		11-3.00		31-3.66
	24	2.44		12-3.44		33-2.22
	27	2.66		16-3.66		7-22.08
	29	2.33		17-2.77		
	30	3.00		20-3.11		
	32	2.55		21-2.77		
		30.06		22-2.66		
	11			25-2.55		
				26-3.33		
				28-2.77		
				15	45.59	

$\boxed{= 2.73}$

(E1 = 3.42)

$\boxed{= 3.04}$

(E1 = 3.13)

$\boxed{= 3.15}$

(E1 = 3.10)

## Appendix P

### Interview Transcripts

#### Participant 1.

I am not necessarily uncomfortable when being taught by a french native speaker, I just feel I am on my toes a lot more and am more cautious of for example my pronunciation when I must speak.

I believe the best place to learn is wherever you can practice the language as a living language, where you can practice the language in real live situations. Of course the classroom is necessary for initial learning but practice makes perfect and it can be a culture shock when you go to a french speaking country for the first time and realize the gravity of feeling every single person around you speaks nothing but French.

I believe your initial experience from learning in the classroom will definitely affect your attitude towards a foreign language.

I believe that learning from a native speaker, you get an insight into the country of which language you are learning, as well as the culture. You don't just learn the language academically, you learn it as a living language, it's quirks and slang words, how the language is altered and used in daily life by native speakers.

I believe it is best to learn French as a collective, with a group of people, where you can interact and communicate with the language.

The course delivery is very structured, with one module always focused on french literature while the other is a mix of history and language combined. The main language classes are delivered in is English which is something I believe should change, and more oral communication in french is needed amongst students. This should be done before students go on Erasmus.

I think the greatest challenge of all is getting sufficient enough support to practice the language orally

native less immediately what they know & are used to

## Participant 2.

Some of my teachers have been very **passionate** about the language. The teaching style of some teachers I've had in the past hasn't always been as good.

The teaching style has been quite effective in most cases. The assessments have been quite straightforward. I've had quite **good teachers** also.

The teaching style has been quite effective in most cases. The assessments have been quite straightforward. I've had quite good teachers also.

I think that of course we learn a lot in the classroom, especially if we try to keep to speaking in French as much as possible. **I think though that you really learn the most about a language when you are fully immersed in it**, for example if you have the opportunity to just listen and converse with native speakers in a regular situation.

I think a **teachers passion** for a language and the teaching and learning of it can make a **huge difference**. If they are **simply going through the paces to teach it's not inspiring**. Having interesting and effective teaching methods will of course also aid a students learning and **ambition to learn**.

motivation

It is important to learn from a native speaker as it can be helpful to hear the way they speak to help with your **accent and pronunciation**. A nonnative anglophone speaker will of course be able to help you with these aspects also but I just think that a native speaker may be able to help you understand natural French speaking more.

In my opinion, **the most ideal scenario is complete immersion**, but of course that is not always an option.

I thought it was very effective. I had a mixture of different teachers which I enjoyed as there were many different teaching styles. It was also great so see different ways to look at everything and get different opinions on things. I just found it a very well delivered course overall.

The teacher was very nice and quite understanding. She spoke completely through French apart from a very rare word or two translated to English. She spoke moderately slow so that everyone could understand. We took a level test before our classes began to assign us and they were very helpful and considerate. We also took an oral to assess our spoken language which was taken into consideration also towards our class level

I'm honestly not sure. Of course, as I keep mentioning **there isn't the full immersion** that I see as so effective but besides that I feel as though the colleges do their best to give students as much help as possible with everything.

attitudes of the learning  
based on past experiences  
of that language

### Participant 3.

Having a good secondary school teacher for state exams, helpful french department and tutors in college.

I find it easier when I am taught by an english speaker as they tend to explain difficult terms in English

It is for grammar etc but I learned more on erasmus outside of the classroom, speaking everyday French in the town, on the bus, in restaurants etc.

if the teacher is 'good' or is enthusiastic, personally i tend to pay more attention and work harder in that subject

Personally I really enjoy the language aspect of the course: translation, oral, aural etc. I struggle with French literature as it doesn't interest me at all, likewise with the content lectures for French. I find with the content lectures, it's all done through english( with the assessment) and I struggle with English which is disappointing.

Not enough experience on erasmus. I think there should be one semester of erasmus in second year and one in third year.

### Participant 4.

As long as the person teaching is clear with the information and approachable when I need help, I'm at ease. Their first language or nationality isn't important

A teachers approach to a class can greatly influence a students interest in any subject

there's a better chance of getting a better pronunciation and they're better at explaining culture as they live that way, they haven't learned it through secondary sources

confidence in the language. you can learn all of the vocabulary but if you don't have the confidence to say it out loud its no good. ~ Confidence \*

### Participant 5.

If it is difficult to understand the French, the anglophone teacher is more likely to explain it in English

I feel like Erasmus thought me that being immersed in the language is better

Peer teaching is easier as you can bounce ideas off each other and you feel less pressure

If a teacher is enthusiastic then it's easier to learn as you know they love what they are doing and like what they are teaching

It's easier to understand the accent

Not having enough first hand experience in a French speaking country

immersion

### Participant 6.

Good teachers with good teaching styles have had a **positive influence**. Assessments and presentations I have found difficult.

I suppose they may have a **similar background** to me and **understand my culture** and know what **struggles non native speakers of the French language may encounter**.

You can learn a lot from an outside the classroom environment where there is sometimes a more **relaxed atmosphere**.

If they make an effort to make things easier to understand and **engaging you will want to do your best** in return.

Like a said above, in some cases the non native speaker, if of the same native language to you they can understand you a bit more. But a native French speaker can perhaps give an insight into something a non native speaker would not know.

The **grammar side** of learning a new language.

### Participant 7.

I really like French but I find it very difficult at times. I think I am best learning grammar points in my own time **because it takes me longer to understand than other students**, I think I don't follow along as quick as they do and I end up feeling stressed/worried I'll be asked a question and not understand it.

I think having a native speaker would be an advantage because you might pick up on little bits of the French accent even when they are speaking in English but,

It's not a bad place of course, but you are expected to keep up with everyone else and this is especially **difficult at third level because everyone started at different times** \*

Everyone learns in a different way, I think it's important for a teacher to try different methods and see what works best

I do think the pace was a bit fast for me.

Maybe it's being a bit aimless at times. **Feeling like there's nothing to work towards**. Not being sure of how to prepare for exams

### Participant 8.

More encouragement, support and guidance

The native speaker can correct us but may be **less sympathetic to common mistakes we make as anglophones**

They do not **train their ears enough to the French language** and so are not able to hear clearly what's being said, **they don't practice enough**

Background  
culture  
struggles

reciprocal  
process

teacher  
prep.

Participant 9.

I find that the teachers who are french spoke more french in classroom rather than teaching the french language through English

I think living in the place where the language is spoken is better cause your surrounded by it. Where as in a class room your only there for maybe 45 mins

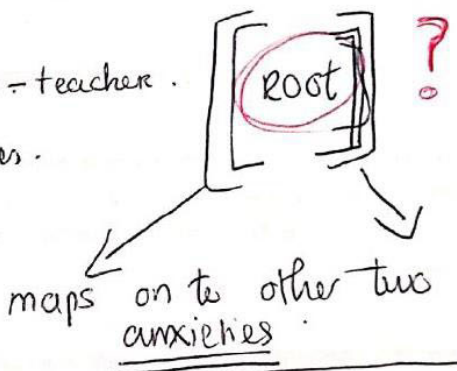
I find the teachers that are passionate about their subjects reflect on the student and make you want to do well

Grammar and listening

Communication Apprehension

- highest anxiety category

- Speaking → lack of confidence. (production/reception) - teacher.
- grammar → overwhelmed by rules. lack of time to develop.
- Real life Context → not confident with native speakers. lack of immersion.



Test Anxiety

- Assessment → value/importance placed on exams. Fear of failure
  - Learning environment → Classroom environment not relaxed. (Price). Pressure to prepare. not surrounded by language.
- fear of failure ?

Fear of Negative Evaluation.

- peer evaluation → comparing/keeping up with other students.
- Teacher evaluation → lack of prep (link to learning environment also to skill ability).

*Transcript A: Participants' Language Learning Experiences*

**Could you tell me about your language learning experiences (from your earliest memory/anything that comes to mind)?**

**Participant 1.** “Yes, so I would have been introduced to Irish as a child, my grandmother would have spoken Irish to us and then we ... I didn't actually go to an Irish-speaking school, but my childminder was also from a Gaeltacht area, so she would have been kind of speaking to us informally and then ... Yeah, we just did Irish in school, and we actually did French in fifth and sixth class because my teacher took us to do it after school.”

**Participant 2.** “I suppose when I was learning French, the first key was to be able to communicate. Yeah, and I got the feeling that if you could communicate even if it was pidgin French, you'd be able to get by. Yeah, the big thing was communication, whereas for me, I found for Irish that we were reading these novels or reading these things in school, but we actually couldn't speak. So, yeah, communication was prioritized, maybe more when learning French. Yeah. And maybe the whole understanding of the grammar obviously depends on the teacher, too. I'm not saying the teachers were bad or good or anything in my school, but for French they nailed the grammar.”

**Participant 3.** “Well, I was in an English-speaking school. It was a Catholic school at the time. And yeah, they kind of drilled Irish into you. But then when you got to secondary, there was the *modh coinniollach* ... I suppose the subjunctive equivalent in French and tonnes of other grammar points. I found Irish more lackadaisical ... with Irish you were kind of doing it with no real reason as to what was the outcome, whereas in French, I found you were learning to communicate and maybe to use it, you know, like in Europe and everything, it was great.”

**Participant 4.** “Um, thinking back to when I did Irish in primary school, I feel like it was very much like just integrated into like your class day today. So, like, you know, when you go into primary school, you can remember just doing Irish or whatever, but it was never daunting.”

**Participant 5.** “Irish just seemed very easy flowing, in my opinion anyway, in my primary school. Irish was a lesson, but it was also kind of taught throughout the day. It wasn't just another subject. Yeah, it wasn't just like ... okay, we have Irish now at two o'clock, it was like kind of the numbers. If the teacher was doing maths, she'd be like, “Oh, what's this an Irish or whatever?” Like, we weren't an Irish school or anything, but it was just still very much like part of the everyday lessons.”

**Participant 6.** “I think Irish became very like forced in secondary school. It wasn't like language learning because you were learning off essays and you were learning off poems. My teacher was very like rote learning focused. So, from first year, I had a teacher who would be like, okay, “learn this off, learn that off”. And then the next day she'd be like, “OK,

Line 17, what's that?" And you'd have to like, remember all of them, like, it wasn't like very natural or straightforward."

**Participant 7.** "When we went to leave primary school and then went to secondary, I had a new teacher, she was very much like picking at your brain. She wasn't going to give you tough stuff to learn, like it was very like you had to come up with the thing. So, it was like going from one extreme to the other. When I was learning Irish in like Junior Cert, it was totally different – I was learning by heart and then for Leaving Cert, I had to like, readjust my whole brain and just come up with sentences and like essays and stuff for myself. I felt like Irish was just more kind of rushed, you know, like the Leaving Cert was really bad because like we have to do 20 *Sraith Pictiúr* or something. I used to have four pages to learn for each story because I did higher level. It was like four A4 pages for each story and we'd only be asked one."

**Participant 8.** "Yeah, so there were two classes of Irish, so one of the classes, like my class, was very much rote learning. And like we, she literally would give us a page of like 20 sentences and be like, "learn these". And then she would say to you, "say sentence number 12". So, you'd have to go through them all in your mind because I learnt it all in order. And then for the orals, she might have asked something like, "can you tell me about yourself?" Like what? I couldn't. It was all rote learning, and I couldn't make my own sentences. So, I was like, "Oh my God, what do I do?" It's just kind of like the dynamic of like switching from primary to secondary, it being more natural and then in secondary the teachers giving you everything and you learn it off to then being like, okay now you have to come up with things yourself!"

**Participant 9.** "In my primary school, they really put emphasis on Irish dancing and stuff like that. Yeah, we did a lot of different things like we did drama, Irish dancing like they did a lot of like pottery and like sewing and things like that. So, I didn't dread Irish. I kind of took it as it came kind of thing, but I didn't enjoy it either. I don't know. It's probably the way they taught it ... it was really more academic. Like, I don't think even in secondary, it was never that interactive. I think they try and teach to the curriculum. It's weird, but they teach you so you can do an exam, not so you can speak it. And I do like Irish. Like, I find it a shame that I can't really speak it now. Now, I live with international students, and they're always like, "Oh X [name removed], how would you read this line in Irish?" I can read it, but I can't speak it. I think the teacher as well, like my Irish teacher was really strict. Oh yeah. In secondary, we used to be afraid going into our class, to be honest, like she's a nice woman but you would literally be shaking in your boots like in front of her."



*Transcript B: Initial foreign language learning experiences (Primary school and Secondary school)*

**Could you tell me about your foreign language learning experiences? Is there anything that immediately comes to mind?**

**Participant 1.** “So, there was actually a French native girl in our class in primary school and her dad used to come in on a Wednesday, I think even just for .... I think, an hour and he used to do like French songs with us. That was in fourth and sixth class he used to come in. And then, ah, like I said, my teacher for fifth and sixth used to take us in the evenings for French, just because of her own interest in it – it wasn’t obligatory or anything. It was optional, like if you wanted to stay back. She took us for like lessons. Yes. So, we learned general vocabulary in French, kind of like the basics, like introducing colours. I really got lucky ... yeah, I actually was really lucky with the teachers I had and did German as well for Junior Cert. So, I took on German until 3<sup>rd</sup> year and then I dropped that for Leaving Cert and I kept on French because, well, the teacher ... I just got on better with her.”

**Participant 2.** “Yeah, I find like even from primary school, there would be a lot of teachers that wouldn’t be comfortable teaching a foreign language. So, then obviously those children are lacking in those skills. And then that’s like evident when they go into secondary school. So, say, in the school I went to, it would have been kind of academically competitive. But again, there were still like ordinary level classes for languages, which was kind of strange because everyone did like mostly honours level everything. But for Irish, like I know even in my group of friends, like only the people that were in my class from primary school, we all just loved it. And people from the school were put into one higher-level class. But then when it came to French like to be honest, we had really big classes for six years and people tended to drop the language because, you know, you didn’t need it for school and stuff. So, they knew then that they could drop the language, whereas like I would have kept it on like, as it was my strongest subject or whatever, you know?”

**Participant 3.** “There’s no bit of creativity. Yeah. I don’t like to name and shame teachers or slam teachers, but I just, yeah, it’s very to the book. And there’s not much creativity brought. Yeah, yeah looking back on it now some teachers were very good, but one maybe was more creative or whatever approach to teaching, whereas one was led by the book and exam focused.”

**Participant 4.** “I just think the whole thing is like essay after essay with Irish. And then you have an oral and you’re given all of these sentences and these fancy words to learn off or an essay. Yeah. And then it comes to an oral and you can’t hold a conversation, whereas in French, you could and then you could use your knowledge in a situation because you kind of had the basics.”

**Participant 5.** “When we were in TY (transition year), like, obviously we didn’t do much language learning at all. But when I was like in third year, fifth year, sixth year, it was rote

learning things off and then in fifth year my teacher was just like, list off, you know? And I was like, I don't know anything. I find I struggled with French in fifth year."

**Participant 6.** "I think like my French grades were ever very good, like in third year. But then I think in sixth year I was just used to it. So, you just kind of get used to it. And then like, you get used to different teachers' learning ... like the way they teach. So then in sixth year, like I brought back up my grade a bit, but I did struggle with Irish and French because it was just kind of like one teacher does it this way and the other teaches it in another way. It's like it's hard because you go from one extreme to the next."

**Participant 7.** "My French teacher was unbelievable. Like she was like ... she was so stern. She was the strictest teacher I had. So, like, if she gave you things to learn, you would learn them. She'd get you to like ... like, learn things off for diary entries or whatever. But then she'd still like ... she was very like by the book. So, she'd go on to a next chapter if we came to it and then the next chapter. She'd go to and do all the exercises in the book."

**Participant 8.** "My French teacher was really by the book and wouldn't stray away from it but would still give you all the information you needed. She was very just like, witty but also could be very strict too."

**Participant 9.** "Yeah. So, like, it was very easy to learn in our French class because first of all, you didn't want to, like, get in trouble because the teacher was quite strict. But then second of all, she was quite like ... sarcastic and stuff. So, you'd kind of dread class and you'd always feel you needed to do the work so you wouldn't get into trouble. In a language class, if you say something like wrong, the rest of the students you know ... like if you're after pronouncing a word and it sounds like another word, yeah, I mean, they'd laugh. The teacher wouldn't be cross, but they would kind of laugh at you, kind of. It's a different kind of perspective."

*Transcript C: Opinions on Irish vs. French*

**Did you notice any differences in language learning styles/strategies/content between the Irish and French language?**

**Participant 1.** No, it was very different, like we had smaller classes, obviously, for French which was great but having the French native speakers for the help for the oral was very helpful. And then having like your experience of translation from English or French or French English, I really enjoyed those classes. Whereas for Irish like, we just didn't have that at all. It was just kind of learn this novel ... learn this book!

**Participant 2.** I loved the like, say, for Irish, we had the grammar classes, but we only had it for like one hour a week for a tutorial? And then for French, like remember, we had like translation from English to French, French to English, and then we had like four different sections. And I preferred that like ... I felt like my French definitely improved my Irish kind of, I'd say, kind of stayed at the same level that way. I feel as though we didn't have as much contact hours with Irish. But yeah, and I actually said it to the head of Irish that it's ridiculous we don't have more contact hours. You know, like I said to him that for French, this is what we do ... because he asked, how could we improve it (Irish course)? And like even the translation for French I also found helpful.

**Participant 3.** "So, I suppose, kind of, the biggest difference was that Irish was more exam focused versus French which was more communication focused. Like, we couldn't fluently speak Irish, whereas I could hold the conversation in French. Obviously, I haven't done it now in a year, but like even the difference between those two languages and I studied them both to degree level.

**Participant 4.** Um, just the translation, I really, really like those and like the seeing the different strategies from English to French and then French to English. And I really like the oral and aural classes.

**Participant 5.** "In secondary school, during my orals, she (teacher) used to always be like, "your Irish accent is just ridiculous. Like, she was like, "you need a French accent." She was like, "get rid of your Irish accent. Like even in my parent teacher meeting."

**Participant 6.** "I was kind of like, I don't know how to change my Irish accent. So then when I was speaking, I was like, "Oh my God, maybe like, I might speak in French speaking Irish. I was like, I don't know, like it was just like in my head. I was like, Am I doing a French accent or am I doing an Irish accent? I don't know."

**Participant 7.** "Yeah. I decided to keep on French in secondary and preferred it to Irish just because it was more consistent. I had the same teacher all the way up along. I knew how she worked. I didn't have to change my style of learning and like it was just very like ... she was the exact same from first year day one to six year like last day, that kind of way. So, you know, I probably picked French just because it was more consistent."

**Participant 8.** “Yeah, so Irish was kind of just based on, I’d say, was kind of more based on the exam. But French was more linked to oral work, kind of like if you’re in France, you need to know how to say the word this or that. That’s what I found anyways. Just kind of like all grammar and the comprehension and rote learning for Irish. I saw all this material and I didn’t really know what it meant half the time.

**Participant 9.** “Yeah, so I got the feeling that if you could communicate even if it was pidgin French, you’d get by. Yes. What’s the big thing was communication, whereas for me, what I found for Irish was that we were reading these novels or reading these things, but we actually couldn’t speak it as opposed to being able to speak French. So, yeah, communication was prioritized, maybe more when learning French. Yeah. And maybe the whole understanding of the grammar obviously depends on the teacher, too. I’m not saying the teachers were bad or good or anything, but for French they nailed the grammar. I think the Irish teachers presumed that we all knew the basics from primary school and then went on to these novels and essays, which were so hard. I loved Irish in primary school, but it was just such a big jump in secondary, I feel that I couldn’t keep up.”

*Transcript D: Experiences of FLA*

**Do you/Have you ever suffered from FLA (nervousness/apprehensiveness) at any point when learning a language? If so, when, what language, and why?**

**Participant 1.** “And sometimes I just get a bit nervous speaking in front of other people, not in Irish, only in French. Like I know, I think they’re judging my accent, but that was kind of in first year and then I got over that a bit.”

**Participant 2.** “Probably in first year, I’d say, like the oral classes or, you know, someone asking you to translate, you know, we used to do them on the spot. I’d be “oh these people think I’m so stupid, but like, they don’t think that, but that’s just what goes on in your head. Yeah.”

**Participant 3.** “Yeah, I would. Yeah, yeah, I would be nervous especially about my accent and speaking to a native. Yeah, like it’s their language, you know, I’m like, “oh my God, did I say the right word?” You know? Yeah, yeah, yeah, that’s it really. Yeah, that’s it the judgment. Yeah, definitely.”

**Participant 4.** “Um, like I was nervous before my last, my final two orals, and like I was saying to my mom, I only felt that stressed on like a piano exam and my driving test. I don’t know why it was just like a driving test. I just felt that nervous, but I did too in my final year orals.”

**Participant 5.** “I don’t stress like I’m a very relaxed person, so like normally things wouldn’t even faze me at all ... like for my other exams, but I did get really nervous for the French orals. But just in college, I don’t know why.”

**Participant 6.** “Um, probably, yeah, definitely for French. But just for like the oral lessons. I really did enjoy them, but I was just kind of anxious going in and I wouldn’t be an anxious person at all. But yeah, then for the oral exams, one hundred percent, just pure anxiety. Like then you’re nervous. You’re like, “oh my God, my voice, I hope it doesn’t break, what am I going to say? I suppose it was a different kind of nervousness, yeah.”

**Participant 7.** “Yeah, just from your peers, not even your peers, but the people in your class, you know, they’d just be like, “oh, she can’t speak French.” They didn’t say that, but that’s what they’d be thinking, you know, if you did make a mistake.”

**Participant 8.** “Yeah, I would have been really stressed in first year, especially for oral tutorials. But then in second year, we all kind of were friends. Then, you know, it’s such a small class. We were all just kind of in the same position, you could laugh at each other or help each other. Yeah, but it was it was two sided in French. In English class, for example, you just had to worry about the awkwardness of breaking the silence. But in French, it’s like, okay, I have to break the silence now and then I have to face the language side of it.”

**Participant 9.** “Yeah, I would have been more nervous in French, just because I’d be more fluent in Irish, I suppose, and I’d probably be the one in Irish being like, “oh my God, you

said that”, you know, like, I would have just been like, “How did you not know that word?” Or you would have just been thinking in your head that people probably said that about me in French? You know?”

*Transcript E: Comments on Language Learning at University*

**Could you tell me about your French language learning experiences at university?**

**Participant 1.** “Yeah, yeah, that’s it. Exactly. Yeah, like even the books and things. Sure, I had no clue like what was going on and just the assessment. I felt like I wasn’t fairly judged because like, I can even remember, like lecture type modules were more weighted than, say, the stuff we did with like all the translation. And like, you know, I found that I would have done a lot better on those exams. And then overall my grade would have been a lot lower, which really annoyed me. But anyways, it had to be done.”

**Participant 2.** “Just like the continuous exams? You know where we had the option to self-correct and then go back and bring up your grades? I thought that was really, really good. I think it was last Christmas for one of the lecture modules and all the books and everything were in French. And then our assignment was in English. And like, I find my English is actually awful like that. But like, I didn’t feel like my grade was, like, not fairly reflected then the work I’d put in just because my English is genuinely so bad.”

**Participant 3.** “I did like the English explanations especially for the content modules and grammar classes. I think there was one module on French war. I’ve forgotten the title of it but, I would have really struggled without the English explanations.”

**Participant 4.** “I really preferred the way it was a bit of English and a bit of French maybe towards the start of final year and then more French focused towards the end. Yeah, yeah, definitely.”

**Participant 5.** “Yeah, I feel like I keep saying it, but like the oral translation and aural, I actually really enjoyed going to them because the lecturers were so engaging and if I had any questions they would always answer. It was never any problem, whereas like going to just content or you’re just sitting there and you’re like a bit more bored. They’re not as interactive. Just content, content, content. Whereas the other ones are like, it wasn’t just the teachers and all the talk, and it was a lot of group work and, you know, like learning from other people. And I think that’s how I learn best, you know, just even learning from other people’s mistakes and hearing them.”

**Participant 6.** “All of X’s modules and like all the modules on the history of France, I really enjoyed. Yeah, those stand out more like the ‘Trials and Traumas in France’ and the ‘French and Love’ and all those kinds of ones. Yeah, because it was just how the French history evolved and then how kind of the French language evolved as well, like, you know, you spoke about the different countries like Francophone countries? And it was just ... I was very intrigued about how France as a country, I suppose, evolved throughout the years and how it is now.

**Participant 7.** “Well...I don’t know if anyone can really say we loved going for a grammar class and yeah, I personally found from my own experience and what I would like to do in my career is the whole thing of being immersed in the French language itself. So like X

started to do it as the years progressed ... integrated more of the French language in their classes. So, I found it had also been especially useful for Erasmus as well and then my own experience in the college just being completely immersed in the language. Yeah, as opposed to going from French to English from English to French.

**Participant 8.** “Um, well, I really liked X’s modules, actually. I really liked them because I’m kind of ... I’m very into history as well. Yes. Yeah, I did like the wars and even told my friends I thought that was really interesting. But then some modules were a bit heavy. I suppose not the fact that it wasn’t as interesting, well, maybe a small bit. Well, I thought it was really heavy and like we weren’t fluent speakers either and because you have a lot of work going on in college and you are expected to read a whole book in old French and you were kind of just like picking chapters here and there to kind of get a whole sense of the whole thing? We couldn’t. I had the whole book in English because I just couldn’t get through all of it in French.

**Participant 9.** “Like I even thought at secondary school that Irish is taught as a subject and not as a language. So, like when you start to study, when you start to study French, you start to learn like the grammar aspects and the language aspects because you’re learning a new language. But the way Irish was taught, it was like it was taught like English, like, you know it was taught, like a subject like maths or like geography. It wasn’t taught like a language. I think we used to always say that in secondary school. Like, that’s why like, it’s harder to learn Irish for some people I know. Learning Irish in college is better because it’s like more like you learn as a language ... like French you’re learning it like a language.”



### *Transcript F: Comments on Erasmus Placement*

#### **Could you speak to me a little bit about your experience on Erasmus?**

**Participant 1.** “Yeah, I done the first semester that was the plan and then to come home with the second one. So, I actually was really lucky that I did spend the time there. But again, I went with X and all of our modules were like in French and we had such a hassle getting over there. So only the modules we had picked were all French and then we got over it. Then when we arrived, they were like, “these modules actually don’t exist”. So, we had to get all these new ones, but like it had to be registered with them the previous summer. So, when we got there, we had no option but to do like English modules, which was like, obviously helpful. We found that we learned a lot more by making friends with others and like speaking informally or whatever.”

**Participant 2.** Yeah, it was just like a bit of a culture shock. I was like, “Oh my God, what’s the word for this? What’s the word for that? How do I ask for this?” You know, like basic things you learn in like first year of secondary school, then it all comes back to you. Both me and my sister actually went to France there in August, and I found myself speaking it there, and I think it is useful, you know?”

**Participant 3.** “Yeah, even just in secondary, if there was a module on preparing for Erasmus, you know, even just to take a refresher course on all the basics because obviously they just assume that if you’re doing French, you know all these things and like you do know them, but it’s just to actually put them into practice. You know, we haven’t done them in years from primary or secondary school. So, I feel like that would have been very useful, like.”

**Participant 4.** “Even in normal scenarios, it was like when I went on Erasmus, like I was on my own while I was trying to get to know the city and I was just like, I didn’t realize how kind of they’re a bit arrogant, especially in the region I was in, you know?”

**Participant 5.** “I was in the northeast trying to get to know the place. Oh, I was just like stopping people, asking them, like to know, “where is the grocery store?” And they’d be walking straight past me and it made me start to think, “oh, did I say that wrong?”

**Participant 6.** “I think because you have someone in front of you and they’re just kind of staring at you, waiting for you to respond in French. You know, it’s a bit daunting because you’re trying to process what’s in front of you.”

**Participant 7.** “Yeah. Like even going to France, like my listening had improved so much because just from hearing it every day ... like I would even be out, we’d be sitting on a bus or something. And like when we first went over to France, it’s like, “what are they saying?” Whereas then like, at the end of it, you’d be like an earwig and be like, I understand what they’re saying now. So, I feel like my listening definitely improved. But like aural was always my weakest point.”

**Participant 8.** “Yeah, I feel like at third-level for Erasmus, the content just needs to be emphasised more at secondary school. So, like if you’re going to be focusing on conversational everyday French at third-level, it should be like the Leaving Cert as well. It shouldn’t be like ... because in the Leaving Cert, you’re learning things off about like themes and issues about like politics and all this kind of stuff like, you know, you’re never going to speak about that when you go to like France, like, you know, so I feel like if they brought that into secondary school it would be a lot easier in College then because you’re not going through like the transitional kind of phase in university ... like I could tell you about like the theme or issue of like Donald Trump and like Boris Johnson in French. But like, I can’t have an everyday conversation with you about like the weather.”

**Participant 9.** “On Erasmus, I went with X and we did all of our classes and tutorials in French where there was a very big like oral focus. I mean, our accent became a bit of an issue. There was another girl there from a different college in the midlands and the French tutor came down to us and she was like “you three sound so different to everyone else.” Yeah, because it’s like we just had like the kind of the thicker accents than like the other girls, because the other girls were like from Dublin and like London and like Scotland. So, they kind of had more like nice flowing voices, whereas me and X and X were kind of like, with the thick bogger accents like. So just ... they wouldn’t know what we’re saying. But then the way we were communicating, the tutor ... she was kind of like looking at us as if she was trying to figure it out because of our language and accent was a bit different and then you got a bit nervous if you started to like mumble up your words and whatever ... like, it’s a little bit more daunting because you’re like, then they won’t know what you’re saying.”

*Transcript G: Comments on Performance-Based Assessment*

**What was your opinion of the performance-based assessment you carried out in your final year of French Studies?**

**Participant 1.** “I was just like, “Oh my god, is this actually my final year assessment?” I genuinely mean like because I was living with X last semester and we were just like, “Oh, my God, is this our life?” But I actually really enjoyed it in the end. It was funny, like to act it out and stuff. But like, I love all that kind of stuff.”

**Participant 2.** “I was worried because I was like, “Oh my God, my final grade is going on a play”, and I just couldn’t comprehend it at all. But yeah, I suppose it was a different type of assessment that you wouldn’t traditionally think about, especially when you’re in fourth year.”

**Participant 3.** “I suppose I actually did like it because I wasn’t just sitting down and, you know, it was more oral-focused, which kind of incorporated everything we learned for the past four years. Yeah. I found the written exam part of it kind of hard because of the timing.”

**Participant 4.** “Yeah, I think personally, I would have preferred just the performance, and I thought I’d done really well in the written exam and then I got my results, so it’s kind of like, “Oh God”, and I done a lot better in the performance, and I thought it would have been the other way around.”

**Participant 5.** “I was like, “Oh my God ... a play”, you know. I haven’t done one in years or whatever. But like when we actually did it, it was fine. I know it was different online, but if it was in person, it would have been good craic you know. I probably think if it was in person, I would have been looking at it, oh god, from another perspective, because you’d be standing in front of people and that’s a different dynamic again. So, like because I was at home, my room was like focusing on like, how’s this going to work? Like, how am I going to get this across?”

**Participant 6.** “I was probably more at ease, yeah, just I thought it was just nice to have the script and know what you were going to say, and we all had our own parts and stuff. But just the thought the, you know, going through the play was like how to translate and stuff because it was all the old French.”

**Participant 7.** “Yeah, because you’re in like different scenes with five other characters or performers, you kind of feel the need to, like, put on the accent more or whatever. Yeah, it’s kind of like a mask. You see, you’re like, you’re still pretending to be someone else. They’re like, “Oh, yeah, they’re not looking at you as you see yourself.”

**Participant 8.** “Yeah, a hundred percent like even we had our scripts and stuff, and we were allowed to use them, I felt more confident. And, you know, we wouldn’t have had that if we were on stage, and it would have made me a little more nervous. And I know, like if we had the costumes and stuff, it’s the same ... you would have had butterflies ... like if you were

doing a play or whatever. And then on the actual night, it's always goes way better, like ours went way smoother than just rehearsals or whatever.”

**Participant 9.** “Um, I thought it was definitely better like having not having to depend on your head to like remember your lines. So, we were kind of like, “Oh, this’ll be fine”. But yeah, I suppose online it probably was easier because you weren’t even in front of a crowd or anything like you just had the examiner and your classmates. The performance was 60 percent or something, was it 40 written? Yeah, okay, so. Yeah, I think it was nicely balanced because there is a lot more work put into the oral performance. Yeah, but I suppose it was fair enough that like that there was a written as well for people that wouldn’t have been as good at the oral.”

*Transcript H: Comments on the Course coordinator*

**What were your opinions about the course director/instructor?**

**Participant 1.** “Yeah, just the having the French native speaker too and it did help having his point of view. Oh, we learned how things didn’t directly translate. You know, he was teaching the content really well and then just listening to the French accent was great too and easy to understand. I found it maybe easier to learn from him than other French teachers I’ve had in the past with different accents.”

**Participant 2.** “Because he was the head of French, you would always have your work done and you’d be kind of scared not to go in because he would give out, you know, you would always be prepared for the class, you know, unlike some others where the instructor might leave you off or whatever. But like, he was like, “don’t come to class or rehearsals if you don’t have the work done” basically and that stuck.”

**Participant 3.** “Sorry, you know, he did like ... we did practice on the orals and I think he was kind of connecting the dots so we could improve our grade and stuff like that, which is really helpful. Like at the time, I was like, “Oh my God, this module”. But like looking back, it probably was one of the best ones that we did do.”

**Participant 4.** “You know, he would correct you, but I did find it constructive because it was always your own line, you know, like you knew then for the future, like, I used to just highlight things and make little notes on the script and stuff like that. So, it probably was helpful.”

**Participant 5.** “It was a real kind of innovative approach by the instructor, like for the final year, I was a bit sceptical at the start, but really enjoyed it by the end. I always found that he was a strict kind of character. I don’t know if that was because he was French or because he was just like a strict like kind of character. But I feel like a lot of people like knew that. Like when you go into Loïc’s exam, it’s like, this is like going to be a hard corrected exam, but I don’t know what ... that could be just because he was French and like obviously it’s his first language, like he’s going to see it, like he’s going to correct it more harshly.”

**Participant 6.** “Loïc would point out things in a constructive way, like he’s not the kind of person like, you know, if you had, if you like, spoke four sentences to him, he’d know every single thing that you did wrong in the four sentences like, you know, like if I was doing my lines and I said a sentence ... he might pick up on the things that I said, and he’s like, “oh, maybe just change them around words. I think because he obviously speaks the language, he can see it so like clearly because it’s his first language, but he’s always been like that. He’ll tell you every single mistake you make.”

**Participant 7.** “Well, I suppose, because Loïc is like a native speaker ... you know ... you’re always trying to put your best foot forward. I think it helped me invest more, I suppose into it and I did try my best. But, I suppose that level of a native speaker, you know, puts a ... puts a kind of bit of pressure on it. But yeah, I think that way he went through it was very

interesting, and also because like he was, he went, you know he had to go through the entire script because everyone had different lines and roles. So, it kind of was a bit tedious in that sense, but he kind of broke out of it at times and kind of gave the historical context and stuff. So, we did learn a lot of like we learnt about traditional French dishes and stuff and like that such as different mode of transport, things like that. And I thought I was interesting too.

**Participant 8.** “Yeah, okay so I think that just the having the native French speaker probably helped for this module because we learned that certain things didn’t directly translate. You know, he was teaching the content really well and then just to have the French accent was great. I found it may be easier to learn from him.”

**Participant 9.** “I thought ... I would say that when we were doing our lines and was correcting like corrected pronunciation, I never felt he was pinpointing everything I was doing. I felt that it was like ... it was constructive, like it was a positive kind of critique? I did find it constructive because it was always your own line, you know, like you knew then for the future, like, I used to just highlight things and make little notes on the script and stuff like that. So, it probably was helpful.”

Appendix Q

Scenes III, V, IX, X, XI, XII, and XIII : *Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un  
condamné, ou le Canon d'alarme* (1829)

**LE DOGE  
ET  
LE DERNIER JOUR D'UN CONDAMNÉ  
OU  
LE CANON D'ALARME,  
VAUDEVILLE EN TROIS TABLEAUX,  
Par MM. SIMONNIN ET VANDERBUCH,**

Représenté pour la première fois, à Paris,  
sur le Théâtre des Nouveautés, le 20 mai 1829.

PARIS,  
QUOY, LIBRAIRE-EDITEUR

1829.

### SCÈNE III.

SMARRA, VIEUX-VERS.

SMARRA, *avant que Vieux-Vers ne paraisse.*

Enfin, voilà ma maison sur un bon pied ! Il était temps ; car, en vérité, mon mari avec ses vieilles idées...

VIEUX-VERS, *dans la coulisse, criant bien fort.*

C'est indigne ! C'est affreux !...Où est-elle ?...où est-elle ?...où est ma femme ?

SMARRA, *gaîment.*

Il est furieux, je m'y attendais !

VV, *entrant furieux.*

*Air du Château de mon Oncle.*

Est-ce possible ? grands dieux !

Congédier, à mes yeux,

Tous nos gens de ces lieux,

Sous prétexte qu'ils sont vieux !

Madame, que direz-vous,

Pour excuser entre nous

L'affront que, sans raison,

Vous faites à ma maison ?

SMARRA.

Le siècle me guide ;

Il est si rapide !...

VV.

Je n'en disconviens pas,



Le siècle marche à grand pas,  
Mais en galant homme,  
J'ai pensé  
Qu'en somme,  
Si le siècle est pressé,  
Il faut le laisser  
Passer.

*(Parlé)* Mais je regrette tous mes anciens serviteurs !

(ENSEMBLE)

VV.

Est-ce possible ? grands dieux ! etc.

SMARRA.

Quel mal ai-je fait, grands dieux !

En appelant en ces lieux

Des artistes fameux !...

Nous avons tant besoin d'eux !...

Monsieur, que me direz-vous,

Pour excuser le courroux

Qu'à mes yeux sans raison,

Vous avez dans la maison ?

VV.

Je ne m'étonne plus maintenant que vous vouliez me forcer de déménager, à quitter la rue Saint-Jacques où je suis depuis quarante ans !

SM.

Je veux aller demeurer de l'autre côté de l'eau, dans les beaux quartiers.

VV.

Dans les beaux quartiers ? Comme si la rue Saint-Jacques n'était pas une fort belle rue... bien longue !...

SM.

Fort belle, vraiment ! Il n'y a pas seulement de ces beaux passages élégans, où de riches boutiques...

VV.

Des passages ? nous pouvons nous en passer ; il y en a assez dans les autres quartiers de la capitale.

SM.

Pas seulement un trottoir pour se garantir des voitures ! Et dieu merci, il n'en manque pas ! Ce n'est pas que je m'en plaigne, au moins !...J'aime tout ce qui fait innovation !

*Air de Garick.*

Citadines, cabriolets,

Des Tricycles, des Ecosaises,

Des omnibus, des Wiskis, des Bogheis,

Des Fiacres et des Béarnaises,

Carolines, et cætera,

C'est romantique ! ...

VV., *riant.*

Oui, ma bonne,

J'approuve fort ces entreprises là ;

Lorsqu'en voiture tout le monde ira,

On n'écrasera plus personne.

SMARRA.

Riez, riez, cela n'empêche pas qu'hier, lorsque le conducteur des Ecossaises me tendit la main pour monter dans sa voiture, j'ai cru voir Fingal qui enlevait Asléga.

VV.

Vous êtes folle !...et ce sont vos idées romanesques qui ont tourné la tête à ma pauvre fille.

SM.

Qu'est-ce à dire, Monsieur ?

VV.

Je ne parle pas de vos principes à mon égard. J'aime à croire que votre conduite, envers moi, n'a rien de...de romantique. Mais il n'en est pas moins vrai que vous exaltez la tête de ma fille avec vos auteurs de l'école moderne.

SM.

Cela varie au moins dans son esprit la monotonie de vos vieux auteurs poudreux.

VV, *vivement*.

Auteurs poudreux !...Est-ce à cause de ma coiffure, serait-ce une personnalité, Madame de Vieux-Vers ?

SM.

Encore ce nom !...Vous savez bien que j'ai adopté celui de Smarra, et votre fille que vous nommiez...

VV.

Je la nommais Esther.

SM.

Elle s'appellera Clair de Lune. Mais cela me fait penser qu'elle est indisposée, cette chère enfant !...Elle a passé une nuit affreuse !

VV.

Je connais un médecin qui la guérira...C'est un garçon bien gai, bien extravagant...

## SCÈNE V.

LES MÊMES, CLAIR DE LUNE, *ayant sous son bras un volume de Racine, et à la main une brochure des Orientales.*

CLAIR DE LUNE.

La voyez-vous passer la nuée au flanc noir,  
Tantôt pâle, tantôt rouge et splendide à voir ?  
Les vents soufflent d'une voix grêle,  
Et rompent l'eau qui coule en perles sur leur aile.

SMARRA.

Te voilà éveillée de bonne heure, chère enfant ?

CL, *déclamant.*

Recevez mon hommage matinal, ô vous que le Ciel a donnée pour seconde compagne à l'auteur  
de mes jours ! *(Smarra l'embrasse.)*

*Air : Vaudeville de Voltaire.*

Salut, ruisseaux ! salut, bosquets !

Salut, soleil ! salut, fontaines !

Salut, déserts ! Salut, forêts !

Salut, près, champs, montagnes, plaines ! ...

VV, *à part, à Figaro.*

Ainsi qu'elle fait chaque jour,

Ma fille va, la chose est sûre,

Avant de me dire bonjour,

Saluer toute la nature.

CL.

Salut !...

VV.

Eh bien ! Esther, est-ce que tu ne dis rien, ce matin ?

CL.

Si...Bonjour, papa.

Aux petits oiseaux il donne la pâture,  
Et sa bonté s'étend sur toute la nature.

F., *à part.*

Voilà une demoiselle qui mange à deux râteliers.

SM.

Tâche donc de te défaire de ces vieilles citations...

VV.

C'est bien, ma fille, du Racine, du Corneille, du Cicéron, ne sors pas de là.

CL.

Vous serez satisfaits tous les deux. (*A son père.*) J'ai traduit les lettres d'Atticus. (*A sa mère.*)  
Je traduis aussi les Orientales, je commence à les expliquer assez bien.

VV.

Tu as donc beaucoup lu, beaucoup étudié ?

CL.

Ne m'en parlez pas, j'en suis toute malade.

SM.

Voilà M. Figaro qui te guérira.

F., *à Vieux-Vers.*

Voulez-vous permettre que je lui tâte le pouls ?

VV.

Avec plaisir...

F., *tâtant le pouls à Clair de Lune.*

Le pouls est agité, les pulsations sont précipitées... Vous aimez, jeune fille ?...

CL.

Hélas...oui...je l'avoue...j'aime un être chimérique...un être fantastique...j'aime un être diabolique...enfin, j'aime un objet que l'on appelle le Dernier jour d'un condamné.

F.

Je le connais beaucoup, c'est un personnage intéressant...il n'est pas gai, par exemple.

CL.

J'en rêve toutes les nuits.

F.

Cela fait votre éloge.

CL.

Je veux pleurer avec lui.

F.

Je puis vous procurer ce plaisir.

CL.

Pauvre jeune homme, il n'a plus que cinq heures ! ...

F.

En ce cas, dépêchez-vous !

VV., à *Smarra*.

Vous voyez, Madame, que vos idées folles vont la conduire...

F.

Il ne faut pas contrarier les malades...laissez-moi faire.

VV.

Patience ! patience ! nous allons être vengés...La bonne cause a trouvé des défenseurs, M. Figaro.

SM., à *Figaro*.

Ne répondez pas à mon mari...il ne sait ce qu'il dit...

F., à *Clair de Lune*.

Allez, ma chère amie, allez faire un peu de toilette, et je vais vous conduire auprès de l'être qui vous a tourné la tête. (*A part.*) C'est un autre malade que je traite et que j'espère guérir en lui conduisant cette jeune fille qui n'est pas mal folle non plus.

## SCÈNE IX.

LE DERNIER JOUR, *seul, puis* VALENTIN.

LDJ.

Condamné !...Voilà six semaines que j'habite avec cette [page 19] pensée !...Mon esprit est en prison dans une idée...et mon corps est en prison dans une prison...Je n'ai plus qu'une pensée, qu'une conviction, qu'une certitude, c'est que je suis condamné !

VALENTIN, *entrant*.

Bonjour, mon criminel.

LDJ.

Ah ! ah ! c'est vous ?...Bonjour. Dites-moi, est-ce pour aujourd'hui ?

V.

Je n'en sais rien, mon criminel, mais une chose est certaine, c'est que si ça n'est pas pour aujourd'hui, c'est pour un autre jour.

LDJ.

On m'avait dit que c'était pour aujourd'hui à midi.

V.

Si c'est pour aujourd'hui à midi, comme on vous a fait le plaisir de vous le dire, vous n'avez plus que deux heures.

LDJ, soupirant.

Que deux heures !...c'est bien peu !

V.

Pourtant en se dépêchant, on peut faire encore bien des petites choses.

LDJ.

Vous croyez ?

V.

Au fait, votre position de condamné a son agrément. Pour intéresser, vous n'avez pas besoin d'intérêt, ni d'intrigue, ni d'amour, ni même d'esprit. Vous n'avez qu'à dire : Messieurs et Mesdames, je suis Le dernier jour d'un condamné, on est content, et on vous dévore.



LDJ.

C'est vrai... Il faut dire aussi que le goût a fait des progrès.

V.

Parbleu ! s'il en a fait ! Les voleurs, Cartouche, Mandrin, étaient drôles ; les forçats purs et les forçats libérés étaient bien gentils ; on n'a pas eu à se plaindre des empoisonneurs, des chauffeurs et des bourreaux.

LDJ.

De sorte que j'arrive au bon moment ?

*Air : Vaudeville de l'Ours et le Pacha.*

Votre mérite est bien réel,  
Le public s'habitue au crime ;  
Vous avez pour un criminel,  
Un fort joli succès d'estime ;  
Les brigands qu'on connaît déjà,  
Chacun leur tour ont eu la pomme,  
A présent, c'est vous qu'on renomme,  
Car, à côté de ces gens-là,  
Vous devez paraître un honnête homme.

Ah ça ! mais, dites-moi, mon criminel, depuis que je vous garde à vue...là, je ne sais pas encore de quoi vous êtes coupable. Nous avons donc fait des bêtises, quoi ? Un petit assassinat, histoire de rire ? Vous me direz, l'homme n'est pas parfait...Vous êtes un scélérat, chacun a ses ridicules.

LDJ.

Vous êtes bien curieux, soldat ! Mais je m'en vais vous dire une chose...Personne ne sait ce que j'ai fait, ni moi non plus, et vous ne le saurez pas plus que les autres.

V.

C'est juste ; pardon, mon criminel.

LDJ.

Il n'y a pas d'offense.

*Air de la Robe et des Bottes.*

Je ne veux pas dire la cause

De mon destin infortuné.

VALENTIN

Faut croire pourtant qu'vous avez fait quelque chose,

Puisque vous êtes condamné ?

LDJ.

Si mon malheur a pour vous quelques charmes,

Contentez-vous de pleurer avec moi.

V.

On veut bien verser quelques larmes,

Mais on voudrait au moins savoir pourquoi.

D'ailleurs, ce n'est pas de ça qu'il s'agit. Avez-vous un bon cœur, criminel ? (*A part.*) S'il pouvait avoir un bon cœur, ce scélérat-là ! ...

LDJ.

Mais je ne sais pas trop.

V.

Pardon de l'indiscrétion, c'est que j'ai une idée que vous pourriez faire ma fortune.

LDJ.

Moi, comment ça ?

V.

D'autant plus que ça ne vous coûtera rien. (*A voix basse et d'un air mystérieux.*) Oui, criminel, bonheur, fortune, tout ça me viendra de vous. Je suis un pauvre soldat, le service est lourd, la paie légère, mon cheval mange tout, je n'ai plus rien à mettre sous la dent, si bien que je mets à la loterie pour faire la balance.

LDJ.

Que voulez-vous que j'y fasse, militaire ?

V.

Mais je n'ai pas de bonheur à la loterie. Je tombe toujours à côté. Je mets le 76, il sort le 77. Je nourris des numéros et je meurs de faim, ça ne m'engraisse pas.

LDJ.

Au fait, c'est contrariant.

V.

Or, voici une belle occasion pour moi. Il paraît, pardon, criminel, que vous passez aujourd'hui. On dit que ces gens là voient la loterie d'avance. Et si vous vouliez en bon enfant, quand votre affaire sera faite, m'apporter ce soir trois numéros soignés ; vous me tirerez par les pieds, un peu fort, parce que j'ai le sommeil dur...V'là mon adresse : Caserne Popincourt, escalier A, n°26, au fond du corridor...Vous demanderez Valentin, dit la Blague.

LDJ.

Va-t'en, animal, laisse-moi !

V.

Qu'avez-vous donc ? (*Le Dernier Jour va s'asseoir devant sa table et se met à écrire.*) N'importe, ça n'est pas honnête.

(*On entend fredonner dans la coulisse : Bravo ! bravo ! bravo !*)

## SCÈNE X.

LES MÊMES, FIGARO.

F.

Eh ! eh ! comment ça va-t-il, mon cher Dernier Jour ?

LDJ, *écrivant.*

Laissez-moi, laissez-moi, docteur, je n'ai pas une minute.

F., *à part.*

Il paraît que nous sommes dans notre fièvre. (*Il lui tâte le pouls.*) Allons, ça ne peut pas aller plus mal.

V.

Salut, mon criminel...dans une heure je suis à vos ordres.

(Il sort.)

## SCÈNE XI.

LE DERNIER JOUR, FIGARO.

LDJ, *écrivain*.

Maintenant il faut que me roidisse en moi-même, que j'ôte la ceinture de brouillard roulée comme un turban autour de mon front noir.

F.

Assez, mon cher, assez ! vous vous échauffez trop.

*(Il lui fait quitter la table.)*

*Air : Restez, restez, troupe jolie.*

Allons, laissez-là votre plume,

Et votre style oriental.

LDJ.

Au moins, de mon œuvre posthume,

Amis, ne dites point de mal.

F.

Non, je n'en dirai pas de mal.

LDJ.

Il faut se donner bien des peines,

Pour être célèbre à son tour ;

Mon ami, voilà six semaines,

Que je suis à mon dernier jour.

F.

Ces diables de fièvres romantiques, c'est dur à arracher ! ...

## SCÈNE XII.

LES MÊMES, CLAIR DE LUNE.

LDJ.

Elle est fraîche, elle est rose !...elle a de grands yeux ! elle est belle !...

*(Figaro va au-devant de Clair de Lune, lui donne la main et l'amène en scène ; la ritournelle de l'air du Clair de lune accompagne cette entrée.)*

CL, *à part.*

Quel effet spontané j'éprouve !...Mon cœur se brise, comme la brise, sur la vague bleue.

LDJ.

Que vois-je !...quelle est cette jeune fille ? Ange de la prison, comment vous nommez-vous ?

CL.

Clair de Lune.

LDJ., *à part.*

C'est donc ça qu'elle est si pâle !

CL.

Et vous, votre nom ?

LDJ.

Je m'appelle le Dernier Jour d'un Condamné.

CL.

Pauvre jeune homme ! *(Elle pleure.)*

LDJ.

Vous pleurez !...Orage du cœur...est-ce une goutte de votre pluie ?...

F.

Voilà de la sympathie, mes enfants, ce n'est pas de l'amour classique, cela !

CL.

Etes-vous libre ?

LDJ, à *lui-même*.

Quelle bêtise ! elle me voit en prison, et elle me demande si je suis libre !...

CL.

Je veux dire : si vous êtes marié ?

LDJ.

Oui, je suis marié...

CL.

Grands dieux !...

LDJ.

Mais je suis veuf...

CL.

Ah ! quel bonheur !... Mon cœur s'épanouit comme l'héliotrope au soleil d'avril... C'en est fait, je ne crains plus de te dire ces paroles délirantes du cinquième acte d'Henri III, « A cette heure suprême, les préjugés du monde ne sont plus rien pour nous, eh bien oui ! je t'aime ! je t'aime ! je t'aime ! je t'aime !... Mais toi, me seras-tu fidèle ?... »

LDJ.

Toute ma vie... (*A Figaro*.) Je n'ai plus que trois quarts-d'heure ... (Ils se font des protestations en pantomime, pendant ce qui suit)

F.

Vivat ! Voilà où je voulais les amener : si mes deux malades guérissent l'un par l'autre, c'est une cure qui me fera beaucoup d'honneur.

### SCÈNE XIII.

LES MÊMES, VALENTIN.

V.

Allons, mon condamné, voici l'heure !...Quand ça vous fera plaisir...

CL.

Ciel ! vous venez l'arracher de mes bras !...non ! je veux partager son sort...

LDJ.

Il faut partir !...Au fait, puisqu'il le faut...Mais non, de ce moment, je tiens à la vie.

*Air des Voitures versées.*

Tendre Clair de Lune,

Le soldat est là !

Sur mon infortune,

Il s'attendrira.

Ma chandelle est morte,

Je n'ai plus de feu ;

Ouvre-moi ta porte,

Pour l'amour de Dieu !

CL.

Pauvre Clair de Lune,

Le soldat est là !

Sur mon infortune

Il s'attendrira.

Sa chandelle est morte, etc.



F., V.

Tendre Clair de Lune !

On t'obéira ;

Sur ton infortune,

On s'attendrira.

Sa chandelle est morte, etc.

F., à *Valentin*.

D'après ce que je vois, il paraît que ça va mieux ?

V.

A présent, quelle est la nouvelle consigne ?

F., *bas*, à *Valentin*.

Aux Frères Provenceaux !

V.

Aux Frères Provenceaux !...bon !...Dites-moi, serai-je toujours de service ?

F.

Toujours. Mais tu vas quitter ton uniforme...

V., à *part*.

Il paraît que la farce est jouée. (Au condamné.) Eh bien ! mon criminel, on va donc vous donner la clé des champs...c'est moi qui vais vous rendre la liberté...Hum ! crierez-vous encore après les soldats, ces bons soldats !...

LDJ.

Je vais donc respirer avec le reste du genre humain !

CL.

Oh ! la liberté !...

F.

Hum ! la liberté ! j'espère que c'est romantique...

V.

C'est romantique et individuel.

CL.

Fuyons !...

FIGARO

Air :

Oh liberté ! liberté ! liberté !

Nous te rendons hommage.

O liberté ! ô liberté ! ô liberté !

Soit notre déité !

*(bis.)*

CL.

L'oiseau du bocage,

A ceux qui gémissent en cage,

Dit : pauvre reclus [sic] !

Hélas ! vous ne chanterez plus !...

LDJ.

A celui qu'engage

Le lien du mariage,

Plus d'un bon vivant,

Veuf ou garçon, se dit souvent :

V.

Le voleur qui voit  
Les bons gendarmes,  
Sous les armes,  
Dit : filons tout droit,  
Ce n'est pas là le bon endroit [sic].

F.

Voyant l'esclavage,  
De maint peuple encor sauvage,  
Bénissant ses lois,  
Le Français chante à pleine voix :

TOUS

O liberté ! etc.

*(Ils sortent gaîment tous les quatre. – L'orchestre joue l'air du Chœur qui va suivre.)*

FIN DU DEUXIEME TABLEAU

**Appendix R**

**English Translation : Scenes III, V, IX, X, XI, XII, and XIII of *Le Doge et Le Dernier jour d'un condamné, ou le Canon d'alarme* (1829)**

**THE DOGE  
AND  
THE LAST DAY OF A CONDEMNED MAN  
OR  
THE ALARM CANON  
VAUDEVILLE IN THREE ACTS,  
BY ANTOINE SIMONNIN AND LOUIS VANDERBUCH,**

Performed for the first time, in Paris,  
at the Théâtre des Nouveautés, on May 20, 1829.

PARIS,  
QUOY, LIBRAIRE-EDITEUR  
1829.

### SCENE III.

SMARRA, VIEUX-VERS<sup>975</sup>

SMARRA, *before Vieux-Vers appears.*

Finally, here is my house in good order! It was time; because, in truth, my husband with his old ideas...

VIEUX-VERS, *backstage, shouting very loudly.*

It is disgraceful!...It is dreadful!...Where is she?...where is she?...where is my wife?

SMARRA, cheerfully.

He is furious, I expected it!

VV, entering furiously.

*Tune of Chateau de mon Oncle.*

Is it possible ? great gods!

Dismissed, before my eyes,

All our people from these places,

On the pretext that they are old!

Madam, what will you say,

To excuse between us

The affront that, for no reason,

You make to my house?

---

<sup>975</sup> This character's name is a play on words. The adjective 'vieux' translates from French to English as 'old', and the noun 'vers' as 'verse'. This character's name mirrors his affiliation with classicism in the play (i.e., classical ideals of order, clarity, proportion, and good taste).

SMARRA.

The century guides me;

It is so fast!...

VV.

I don't disagree,

The century moves swiftly,

But as a gallant man,

I thought

that in sum,

If the century is in a hurry,

You have to leave it

Pass.

*(Spoken)* But I miss all my former servants!

(TOGETHER)

VV.

Is it possible ? great gods! Etc.

SMARRA.

What wrong have I done, great gods!

By calling to these places

Famous artists!...

We need them so much!...

Sir, what will you say to me,

To excuse the rage

That, before my eyes, for no reason,

You have in the house?

VV.

I am no longer surprised now that you wished to force me to move away, to leave the  
rue Saint-Jacques where I have been for forty years!

SM.

I want to go to live on the other side of the water, in the nice neighbourhoods.

VV.

In the nice neighbourhoods?...As if rue Saint-Jacques wasn't a very beautiful  
street...long live it!...

SM.

Very beautiful, really! There are not only those beautiful, elegant passages, or  
expensive boutiques...

VV.

Passages ? we can do without them; there are enough of them in the other districts of the  
capital.

SM.

Not just a sidewalk to secure cars! And thank God, there is no shortage of them!... It's not  
that I'm complaining about it, at least!... I like everything that is innovation!

Tune of *Garick*.

City cars, cabriolets,

Tricycles, Ecossoises,

Omnibuses, Wiskis, Bogheis,

Fiacres and Bearnaises,

Carolines, *et cetera*,

It's romantic !...

VV., *laughing*.

Yes, my good lady,

I strongly approve of these undertakings;

When by car everyone will go,

Nobody will be crushed.

SMARRA.

Laugh, laugh, it does not prevent that yesterday, when the driver of the Ecossaises held out his hand to me to get into his car, I thought I saw Fingal who kidnapped Asléga.

VV.

You are mad!...and it is your romantic ideas that have turned my poor daughter's head.

SM.

What do you mean, sir?

VV.

I am not talking about your principles towards me. I like to believe that your conduct towards me, has nothing...romantic about it. But it is none the less true that you exalt the head of my daughter with your authors of the modern school.

SM.

It varies at least, in her mind, the monotony of your dusty old authors.

VV, *lively*.

Dusty authors!... Is it because of my hairstyle, would it be a personality, Madame de

Vieux-Vers?

SM.

That name again!...You know very well that I adopted that of Smarra, and your daughter that you called...

VV.

I called her Esther.



SM.

She will be called Clair de Lune. But that makes me think she's indisposed, that dear child!...She had a terrible night!

VV.

I know a doctor who will cure her... He is a very cheerful, very extravagant boy.

## SCENE V.

THE SAME CHARACTERS, CLAIRE DE LUNE, *with a volume of Racine under her arm, and a brochure of the Orientales in her hand.*

CLAIR DE LUNE.

Do you see her pass the dark-sided cloud,  
Sometimes pale, sometimes red and splendid to see?  
The winds blow with a shrill voice,  
And break the water which flows into pearls on their wing.

SMARRA.

You are awake early, dear child?

CL, *reciting.*

Receive my morning homage, O you whom Heaven has given as a second companion to the author of my days!

*(Smarra kisses her.)*

*Tune: Vaudeville by Voltaire.*

Hello, brooks! Hello, groves!

Hello, sun! hello, fountains!

Hello, deserts! Hello, forests!

Hello, meadows, fields, mountains, plains!...

*VV, aside, to Figaro.*

As she does every day,

It is certain, my daughter,

Before saying hello to me,

Is going to salute all nature.

CL.

Hello!...

VV.

Well ! Esther, aren't you saying anything this morning?

CL.

Yes...Hello, father.

To the little birds he feeds,  
And his kindness extends over all nature.

F, *aside*.

There's a young lady who runs with the hare and hunts with the hounds.

SM.

Try to part with those old citations...

VV.

That's good, my daughter, Racine, Corneille, Cicero, do not dispose of them.

CL.

You will both be satisfied. (*To her father.*) I have translated the letters of Atticus. (*To her mother.*) I'm also translating the Orientales, I'm beginning to explain them quite well.

VV.

Have you therefore read a lot, studied a lot?

CL.

Don't talk to me about it, I'm sick of it.

SM.

Here is Monsieur Figaro who will cure you.

F., *to Vieux-Vers*.

Will you allow me to take her pulse?

VV.

With pleasure...

F., *taking the pulse of Clair de Lune.*

The pulse is agitated, the pulsations are precipitated...Are you in love, young lady?...

CL.

Alas...yes...I admit it...I love a chimerical being...a fantastic being...I love a Diabolical being...well, I love an object called the *Last Day of a Condemned Man.*

F.

I know him well, he's an interesting character...he's not cheerful, for example.

CL.

I dream about him every night.

F.

That is a testament of your homage.

CL.

I want to cry with him.

F.

I can give you that pleasure.

CL.

Poor young man, he doesn't have more than five hours left!...

F.

In that case, hurry up!

VV., *to Smarra.*

You see, Madam, that your mad ideas are going to guide her...

F.

Do not upset the sick ... leave it to me.

VV.

Patience ! patience ! we are going to be avenged...The good cause has found defenders, Mr.

Figaro.

SM., *to Figaro.*

Don't answer my husband...he doesn't know what he's saying...

F., to *Clair de Lune*.

Come on, my dear friend, freshen up a little, and I'll take you to the being who has turned your head. (*Aside.*) It is another patient I treat, and who I hope to cure by bringing him this young girl, who is not madly crazy either.

## SCENE IX.

LE DERNIER JOUR, *alone, then* VALENTIN.

LDJ.

Condemned!...I have lived with this thought for six weeks!...My mind is in prison in reflection...and my body is in prison in a prison...I only have one thought, one conviction, one certainty, it is that I am condemned!

VALENTIN, *entering*.

Hello, my criminal.

LDJ.

Ah! Ah! Is that you?...Hello. Tell me, is it for today?

V.

I don't know anything about it, my criminal, but one thing is certain, if it's not for today is for another day.

LDJ.

I had been told it was for today at noon.

V.

If it's for today at noon, as you were kindly told, you do not have more than two hours.

LDJ, *sighing*.

Only two hours!...that's very little!

V.

However, by hurrying, we can still do many little things.

LDJ.

You think so ?

V.

Now I think of it, your condemned position has its approval. In order to captivate, you do not need any interest, nor intrigue, or love, not even wit. You only have to say: Gentlemen and Ladies, I am *Le dernier jour d'un condamné*, they are happy, and they devour you.

LDJ.

It's true... It must also be said that the taste has made some progress.

V.

Good Lord! If it has! The thieves, Cartouche, Mandrin, were funny; the pure convicts and the freed convicts were very nice; one did not have to complain about the poisoners, the drivers and the executioners.

LDJ.

So I arriving at the right moment?

*Tune : Vaudeville de l'Ours et le Pacha.*

Your merit is very real,  
The public is accustomed to crime;  
You have for a criminal,  
A very nice success of esteem;  
The brigands we already know,  
Each in turn has been famous,  
At present, it is you who is renowned,  
Because, next to these people,  
You must look like an honest man.

Oh that ! but, tell me, my criminal, since I have you in custody... I still don't know what you are guilty of? So, have we got up to mischief? A little assassination, a funny story? You will tell me, man is not perfect... You are a criminal, everyone has their faults.

LDJ.

You are very curious, soldier! But I'm going to tell you one thing... No one knows what I did, neither do I, and you will not know any more than the others.

V.

It's just ; pardon, my criminal.

LDJ.

There is no offense.

Tune of *la Robe et des Bottes*.

I do not wish to say the cause

Of my unfortunate fate.

VALENTIN

You have to believe, however, that you have done something,

Since you are condemned?

LDJ.

If my misfortune has any charms for you,

Content yourself by crying with me.

V.

One wishes to shed a few tears,

But one would at least like to know why.

Besides, that's not what it's about. Do you have a good heart, criminal? (*Aside.*) If he could have had a good heart, that scoundrel!...

LDJ.

But I don't really know.

V.

Pardon the indiscretion, it's just that I have an idea that you could make my fortune.

LDJ.

Me, how?

V.

Especially since it won't cost you anything. (*In a low voice and with a mysterious air.*) Yes, criminal, happiness, fortune, I will have all of that because of you. I'm a poor soldier, the



service is heavy, the pay light, my horse eats everything, I have nothing left to eat, so much that I have started to do the lottery to make up the balance.

LDJ.

What do you want me to do about it, soldier?

V.

But I have no luck with the lottery. I always fall short. I put 76, 77 comes out. I eat numbers and I'm dying of hunger, that does not make me rich.

LDJ.

In fact, it's annoying.

V.

Well, here is a great opportunity for me. It seems, pardon, criminal, that you will be executed today. It is said that these people see the lottery in advance. And if you wished to be good-natured, when your business is done, bring me three carefully selected numbers this evening; you'll pull me by the feet, a little hard, because I'm a heavy sleeper...Here's my address: Barracks Popincourt, staircase A, n°26, at the end of the corridor... You will ask for Valentin, say the Joke.

LDJ.

Go away, animal, leave me!

V.

What's wrong with you? (*Le Dernier Jour goes to sit down in front of his table and begins to write.*) It doesn't matter, that's not honest.

(*We hear humming in the wings: Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!*)

**SCENE X.**

THE SAME CHARACTERS, FIGARO.

F.

Hey! Hey! How are you, my dear Dernier Jour?

LDJ, *writing*.

Leave me, leave me, doctor, I don't have a minute.

F, *aside*.

It seems that we are in our fever. (*He takes his pulse.*) Come on, it can't get any worse.

V.

Hello, my criminal...in an hour I am at your command.

(*He leaves.*)

## SCENE XI.

LE DERNIER JOUR, FIGARO.

LDJ, *writing.*

Now I must strengthen myself, remove the belt of enveloped fog like a turban around my black forehead.

F.

Enough, my dear, enough! You are getting too excited.

*(He makes him leave the table.)*

Tune : *Restez, restez, troupe jolie.*

Come on, leave your pen there,

And your oriental style.

LDJ.

At least, from my posthumous work,

Friends, speak no evil.

F.

No, I will not say anything bad about it.

LDJ.

You have to go to great lengths,

To be famous in turn;

My friend, it has been six weeks

That I am on my last day.

F.

These devils of romantic fevers, it's hard to get rid of them!...

## SCENE XII

THE SAME CHARACTERS, CLAIR DE LUNE

LDJ.

She's fresh, she's pink!...she has big eyes! She is beautiful !...

*(Figaro goes to meet Clair de Lune, takes her by the hand and brings her on stage; the refrain of the tune Clair de lune accompanies this entry.)*

CL, *aside*.

What a spontaneous effect I am experiencing!... My heart breaks, like the breeze, on the blue wave.

LDJ.

What do I see!... Who is this young girl? Angel of the prison, what is your name?

CL.

Clair de Lune.

LDJ, *aside*.

So that's why she's so pale!

CL.

And you, your name?

LDJ.

My name is *le Dernier Jour d'un Condamné*.

CL.

Poor young man! *(She cries.)*

LDJ.

You are crying!... Storm of the heart... is it a drop of your rain?...

F.

That's sympathy, my children, that's not classic love!

CL.

Are you free ?

LDJ, *to himself.*

What foolishness ! she sees me in prison, and she asks me if I am free!...

CL.

I mean: if you are married?

LDJ.

Yes I'm married...

CL.

Great gods!...

LDJ.

But I'm a widower...

CL.

Ah! What happiness!...My heart blossoms like the heliotrope in the April sun...It is fact, I am no longer afraid to tell you these delirious words from the fifth act of Henri III, "At this supreme hour, the prejudices of the world are no longer anything for us, well yes! I love you ! I love you! ! I love you ! I love you!... But you, will you be faithful to me?..."

LDJ.

All my life...(To Figaro.) I only have three quarters of an hour left...

*(They profess their love to each other by miming, during which follows)*

F.

*Vivat!* This is where I wanted to lead them: if my two patients cure one by the other, it is a cure that will do me a great honour.

### SCENE XIII.

THE SAME CHARACTERS, VALENTIN.

V.

Come, my convict, it's time!...When it will make you happy...

CL.

Sky ! you come to snatch him from my arms!... no! I want to share his fate...

LDJ.

We have to leave!... Now I think of it, since we have to... But no, from this moment on, I want to live.

Tune of *Voitures versées*.

Tender Clair de Lune,

The soldier is here!

By my misfortune,

He will be touched.

My candle has died out,

I do not have any more light;

Open your door for me,

For the love of God!

CL.

Poor Clair de Lune,

The soldier is here!

By my misfortune

He will be touched.

His candle has died out, etc.

F., V.

Tender Clair de Lune !

We will obey you;

By your misfortune,

We will be touched.

His candle has died out, etc.

F., *to Valentin.*

From what I see, it seems things are better?

V.

At present, what is the new order?

F., *in a low voice, to Valentin.*

To the Frères Provenceaux!

V.

To the Frères Provenceaux!...good!...Tell me, will I still be on duty?

F.

Still. But you're going to take off your uniform...

V., *aside.*

It seems that the farce is played. (*To the condemned man.*) Well! My criminal, so we are going to give you the key to greener pastures...it's me who will set you free...Hum! will you still shout at the soldiers, these good soldiers!...

LDJ.

So, I'm going to breathe with the rest of mankind!

CL.

Oh ! freedom!...

F.

Hum! Freedom ! I hope it's romantic...

V.

It is romantic and individual.

CL.

Let's flee!...

FIGARO

Tune :

Oh freedom! Freedom ! freedom !

We pay homage to you.

O freedom! Oh freedom! Oh freedom!

Be our deity!

*(encore)*

CL.

The bird of the bocage,

To those that moan in the cage,

Said: poor recluse [sic]!

Alas! You will sing no more!...

LDJ.

To the one who engages in

The bond of marriage,

More than a bon vivant,

Widowed or young man, often says to himself:



V.

The thief who sees

The good cops,

Under arms,

Said: let's fall into line,

This here is not the right place [sic].

F.

Seeing slavery,

Of many still savage people,

Blessing his laws,

The Frenchman sings at the top of his voice:

EVERYONE

Oh freedom! Etc.

*(The four of them leave merrily. – The orchestra plays the tune of the Chorus which is to follow.)*

END OF THE SECOND ACT

## Appendix S

### University Language Programmes offered in Ireland

<p><b><i>University College Dublin (UCD)</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA (Hons) in Languages, Linguistics and Cultures</li> <li>• BA (Hons) in Modern Languages</li> <li>• BA Joint Honours in Classics (Greek and Roman Civilization, Latin and Greek)</li> <li>• BA Joint Honours in French</li> <li>• BA Joint Honours in German</li> <li>• BA Joint Honours in Italian</li> <li>• BA Joint Honours in Spanish</li> <li>• BSc (Hons) in French</li> <li>• BSc (Hons) Social Sciences in Classics (Greek and Roman Civilization, Latin and Greek)</li> <li>• BSc (Hons) Social Sciences in German</li> <li>• BSc (Hons) Social Sciences in Italian</li> <li>• BSc (Hons) Social Sciences in Spanish</li> <li>• MA in Modern Languages</li> <li>• Mlitt in Languages, Cultures and Linguistics</li> <li>• PhD – Doctor of Philosophy in Languages, Cultures, and Linguistics</li> <li>• PhD – Doctor of Philosophy in Modern Languages</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Dublin City University (DCU)</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA in Applied Language and Translation Studies</li> <li>• BA (Joint Honours) Languages</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Trinity College Dublin</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA in Classical Languages (Joint Honours)</li> <li>• BA in French (Joint Honours)</li> <li>• BA in German (Joint Honours)</li> <li>• BA in Italian (Joint Honours)</li> <li>• BA in Middle Eastern and European Languages and Cultures</li> <li>• BA in Modern Language (Joint Honours)</li> <li>• BA in Russian (Joint Honours)</li> <li>• BA in Russian (Spanish Honours)</li> <li>• B.B.S (Lang.) in Business Studies and French</li> <li>• B.B.S (Lang.) in Business Studies and German</li> <li>• B.B.S (Lang.) in Business Studies and Polish</li> <li>• B.B.S (Lang.) in Business Studies and Russian</li> <li>• B.B.S (Lang.) in Business Studies and Spanish</li> <li>• B.Sc. (Clin. Lang.) (Honours) in Clinical Speech and Language Studies</li> <li>• LL.B. in Law and French</li> <li>• LL.B. in Law and German</li> <li>• M.Phil./P.Grad.Dip. in Chinese Studies</li> <li>• M.Sc. in Clinical Speech and Language Studies</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Master in Letters in Clinical Speech and Language Studies</li> <li>• Master in Letters in French</li> <li>• Master in Letters in Germanic Studies</li> <li>• Master in Letters in Russian and Slavonic Studies</li> <li>• Master in Letters in Italian</li> <li>• Master in Science in Centre for Language and Communications Studies</li> <li>• PhD – Doctor of Philosophy in Centre for Language and Communications Studies</li> <li>• PhD – Doctor of Philosophy in Clinical Speech and Language Studies</li> <li>• PhD – Doctor of Philosophy in French</li> <li>• PhD – Doctor of Philosophy in Germanic Studies</li> <li>• PhD – Doctor of Philosophy in Italian</li> <li>• PhD – Doctor of Philosophy in Russian and Slavonic Studies</li> </ul>
<b><i>Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT)</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Languages and International Tourism (Chinese/French/German/Irish/Italian/Spanish)</li> <li>• Law (LLB) with a Language</li> <li>• Computing with Language (French/German/Spanish)</li> <li>• International Business and Languages (Chinese/French/German/Italian/Spanish)</li> </ul>
<b><i>University College Cork (UCC)</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA (Hons) in Arts – Chinese Studies</li> <li>• BA (Hons) in Arts – French</li> <li>• BA (Hons) in Arts – German</li> <li>• BA (Hons) in Arts – Greek</li> <li>• BA (Hons) in Arts – Italian</li> <li>• BA (Hons) in Arts – Latin</li> <li>• BA (Hons) in Arts – Portuguese</li> <li>• BA (Hons) in Arts – Spanish</li> <li>• BA (Hons) in World Languages</li> <li>• Bcomm International in Commerce with Chinese Studies</li> <li>• Bcomm International in Commerce with French</li> <li>• Bcomm International in Commerce with German</li> <li>• Bcomm International in Commerce with Italian</li> <li>• Bcomm International in Commerce with German</li> <li>• Hdip in Arts – French</li> <li>• Hdip in Arts – Italian</li> <li>• Hdip in Arts – Spanish</li> <li>• Hdip in Arts in Greek and Roman Civilisation</li> <li>• Hdip in Languages – Advanced Languages and Global Communication</li> <li>• MA in Chinese – Teaching Chinese to Speakers of Other Languages (MATCSOL)</li> <li>• MA in Global Cultures and Languages</li> <li>• MA in Roman Studies</li> <li>• PG Dip in Ancient Medieval Languages</li> </ul>

<p><b><i>National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG)</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA in Arts (Language Studies)</li> <li>• Bachelor of Arts (Global Languages)</li> <li>• Bachelor of Commerce (International with French)</li> <li>• Bachelor of Commerce (International with German)</li> <li>• Bachelor of Commerce (International with Spanish)</li> <li>• Mlitt French</li> <li>• Mlitt German</li> <li>• Mlitt Italian</li> <li>• Mlitt Spanish</li> <li>• Italian Online (Diploma)</li> <li>• MA (Advanced Language Skills)</li> <li>• MA French</li> <li>• MA Spanish</li> <li>• MA German Literature/Language</li> <li>• MA Medieval Studies</li> <li>• Language Science (PhD)</li> <li>• Structured PhD (Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences) French</li> <li>• Structured PhD (Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences) Italian</li> <li>• Structured PhD (Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences) Latin American Studies</li> <li>• Structured PhD (Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences) Italian</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)</i></b></p>	<p>Languages are available as elective subjects on the following courses at levels 6, 7 and 8 in the following discipline areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business</li> <li>• Tourism, Heritage, Culinary Arts, Hospitality, and Event Management</li> <li>• Creative Arts and Media</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>University of Limerick (UL)</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Arts in Applied Languages</li> <li>• Bachelor of Arts in French</li> <li>• Bachelor of Arts in German</li> <li>• Bachelor of Arts in Spanish</li> <li>• Structured PhD in Applied Linguistics</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Mary Immaculate College (MIC)</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Arts in French Studies</li> <li>• Bachelor of Arts in German Studies</li> <li>• MA/PhD in Arts by Research</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Maynooth University</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bachelor of Arts</li> <li>• BBA Accounting Finance and Spanish and Latin American</li> <li>• BBA Business Management and Chinese Studies</li> <li>• BBA Business Management and French</li> <li>• Studies</li> <li>• BBA Business Management and German Studies</li> <li>• BBA Business Management and Spanish and Latin American Studies</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BBA International Business and Chinese Studies</li> <li>• BBA International Business and French Studies</li> <li>• BBA International Business and German Studies</li> <li>• BBA Marketing and Chinese Studies</li> <li>• BBA Marketing and French Studies</li> <li>• BBA Marketing and Spanish and Latin American Studies</li> <li>• MA in Chinese Studies</li> <li>• MA in French</li> <li>• MA in German</li> <li>• MA in Modern Languages, Literature, and Culture: Narratives of Conflict – French</li> <li>• MA in Modern Languages, Literature, and Culture: Narratives of Conflict – German</li> <li>• MA in Modern Languages, Literature, and Culture: Narratives of Conflict – Spanish</li> <li>• Mlitt in Chinese Studies</li> <li>• Mlitt in French</li> <li>• Mlitt in Spanish</li> <li>• PhD – Doctor of Philosophy in Chinese Studies</li> <li>• PhD – Doctor of Philosophy in French</li> <li>• PhD – Doctor of Philosophy in German</li> <li>• PhD – Doctor of Philosophy in Spanish</li> <li>• Postgraduate Certificate in French for Teaching at Post-Primary Level</li> <li>• Postgraduate Certificate in German for Teaching at Post-Primary Level</li> <li>• Postgraduate Certificate in Spanish for Teaching at Post-Primary Level</li> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma in French for Teaching at Post-Primary Level</li> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma in German for Teaching at Post-Primary Level</li> <li>• Postgraduate Diploma in Spanish for Teaching at Post-Primary Level</li> <li>• Professional Certificate in French for Teaching at Post-Primary Level</li> <li>• Professional Certificate in Spanish for Teaching at Post-Primary Level</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Dundalk Institute of Technology</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA (Hons) in Global Marketing</li> </ul>

## Appendix T

### University Performance-Based Programmes offered in Ireland with the Option of Language Study

<p><i>University College Cork (UCC)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA (Hons) Theatre and Performative Practices</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i><b>First Year Elective Language Options</b></i> <i>French, German, Italian, Spanish, Greek, Latin</i></p>
<p><i>Trinity College Dublin</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA (Joint Honours) Drama Studies <u>May be paired with Modern Languages</u> <i>French, German, Italian, Russian, Spanish, Irish</i></li> <li>• BA Drama and Theatre Studies <u>Language Elective Options:</u> <i>Greek, Italian, Chinese, Spanish, Japanese, French, German, Korean, Latin</i></li> </ul>
<p><i>National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA (Hons) Drama, Theatre, and Performance Studies</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><i><b>First Year Elective Language Options</b></i></p> <p><u>Optional Subject: French</u> FR1100: Introduction to French Language and Culture FR1101: Introduction to French Literature in Context</p> <p><u>Optional Subject: German (Advanced)/German (Beginners)</u> GR1100: German Language and Culture (Advanced) GR1101: German Language and Culture (Beginners)</p> <p><u>Optional Subject: Italian</u> IT1100: Italian Language and Culture IT1101: Italy at the movies</p> <p><u>Optional Subject: Spanish (Advanced)/Spanish (Beginners)</u> SH1100: Intensive Beginners Spanish Language and Culture SH1101: Intermediate Spanish Language and Culture</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u><b>Second Year Elective Language Options</b></u></p> <p><u>Optional Subject: French</u> FR269 : Lecture du français : Textes, Contextes, Idées – FR266 : French Language FR270 : Langue poétique/ langue vivante FR267 : La France mise en scène</p>

	<p><b><u>Optional Subject: German</u></b>  GR239: History of German Literature &amp; Culture I  GR236: German Language I  GR238: German Studies I  GR237: German Language II  GR240: German Studies II  GR235: History of German Literature &amp; Culture II</p> <p><b><u>Optional Subject: Italian</u></b>  IT235: Intermediate Language I  IT2101: Oral (Communication and Presentation Skills)  IT237: Applied Language Skills: Intercultural Studies  IT236: Intermediate language II</p> <p><b><u>Optional Subject: Spanish</u></b>  SH2101: Spanish Language II A: Ex-Intermediate  SH2100: Spanish Language II B: Ex-Beginner  SH232: Hispanic Literature &amp; Culture I  SH2102: Spoken Spanish and Oral Presentation Skills  SH2103: Spanish Language II  SH233: Hispanic Literature &amp; Culture II</p> <p><b><u>Final Year Elective Language Options</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Optional Subject: French</u></b>  FR371: French Literature &amp; Culture  FR3100: French Literature and Culture II  FR379: French Language  FR380: French and Francophone Studies II  FR366: French and Francophone Studies</p> <p><b><u>Optional Subject: German</u></b>  GR341: German Language I  GR342: German Language II</p> <p><b><u>Optional Subject: Italian</u></b>  IT324: Language III</p> <p><b><u>Optional Subject: Spanish</u></b>  SH339: Spanish Language III  SH336: Hispanic Literature &amp; Culture  SH337: Hispanic Literature &amp; Culture IV</p>
<p><i>Mary Immaculate College (MIC)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA (Joint Honours) Drama and Theatre Studies</li> </ul> <p><i>First Year Elective Language Options French, German, Irish</i></p>
<p><i>University College Dublin (UCD)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BA (Joint Honours) Drama Studies</li> </ul> <p><b><u>May be paired with:</u></b>  <i>German, Italian, Spanish, Irish</i></p>

## Appendix U

### **CEFR Note: Final Year Undergraduate French Modules at MIC**

**Note:** It is expected that upon completion of final year you will have attained a level of proficiency in French at least equal to **B2** in the CEFR (Common European Framework of Reference for languages; see below). You are strongly encouraged to sit external proficiency exams such as the internationally accredited *DELF* diplomas awarded by the French Ministry of Education. Such external certification of linguistic ability is a requirement of registration with the Teaching Council of Ireland and other professional bodies. Alliance française Limerick holds an annual DELF B2 exam in May. You can register to sit that exam here: <https://aflimerick.org/delf-exams/>



Further details: <http://www.ciep.fr/en/delf-dalf>

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions>



## Appendix V

### CEFR Common Reference Levels (Global Scale) and CEFR Illustrative Descriptor Scales

(Adapted from Council of Europe, *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment Companion Volume with New Descriptors*, 2018)

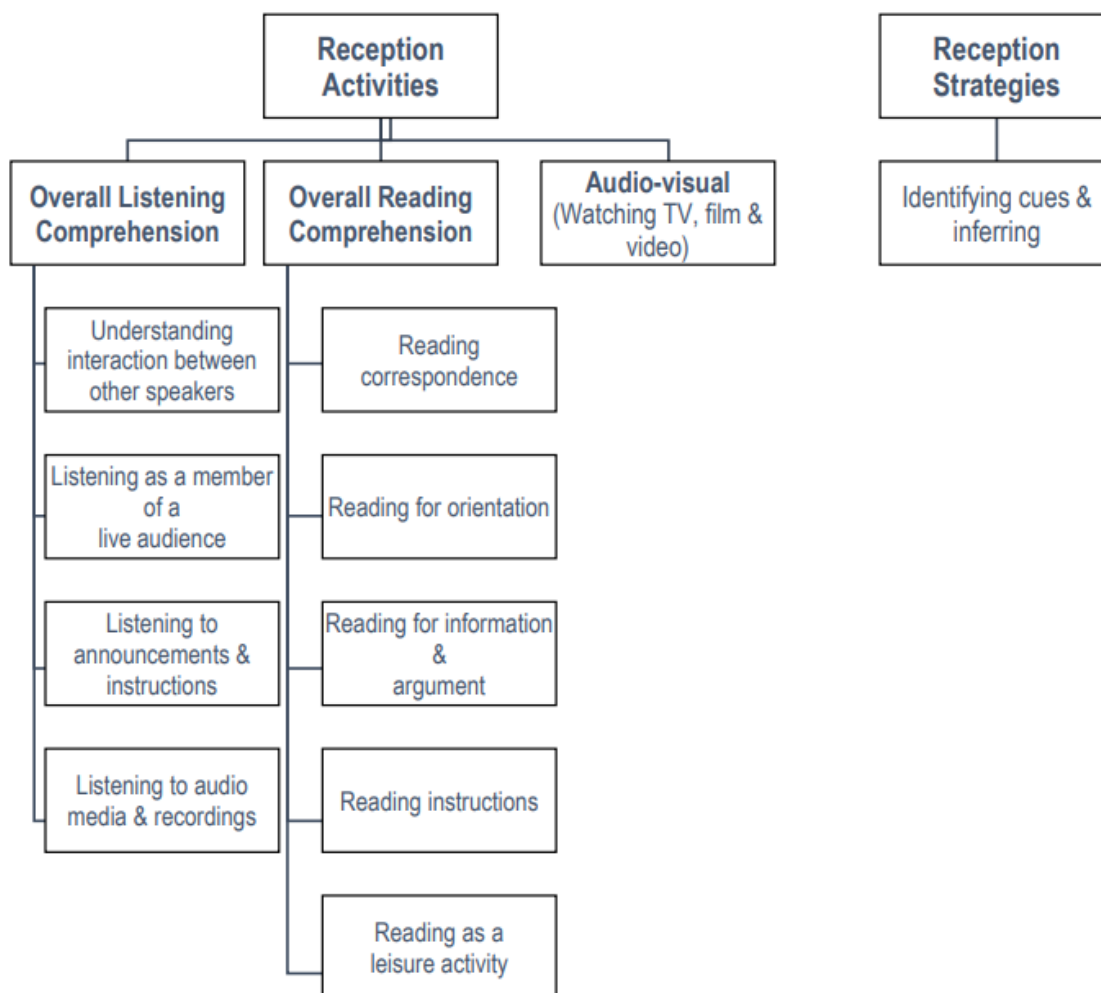
#### *CEFR Common Reference Levels (Global Scale)*

<b>Proficient User</b>	<b>C2</b>	Can understand with ease virtually everything heard or read. Can summarise information from different spoken and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express him/herself spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.
	<b>C1</b>	Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express him/herself fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.
<b>Independent User</b>	<b>B2</b>	Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in his/her field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with native speakers quite possible without strain for either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.
	<b>B1</b>	Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise whilst travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics, which are familiar, or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.
<b>Basic User</b>	<b>A2</b>	Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of his/her background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.
	<b>A1</b>	Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce him/herself and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where he/she lives, people he/she knows and things he/she has. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.

## ***CEFR Illustrative Descriptor Scales***

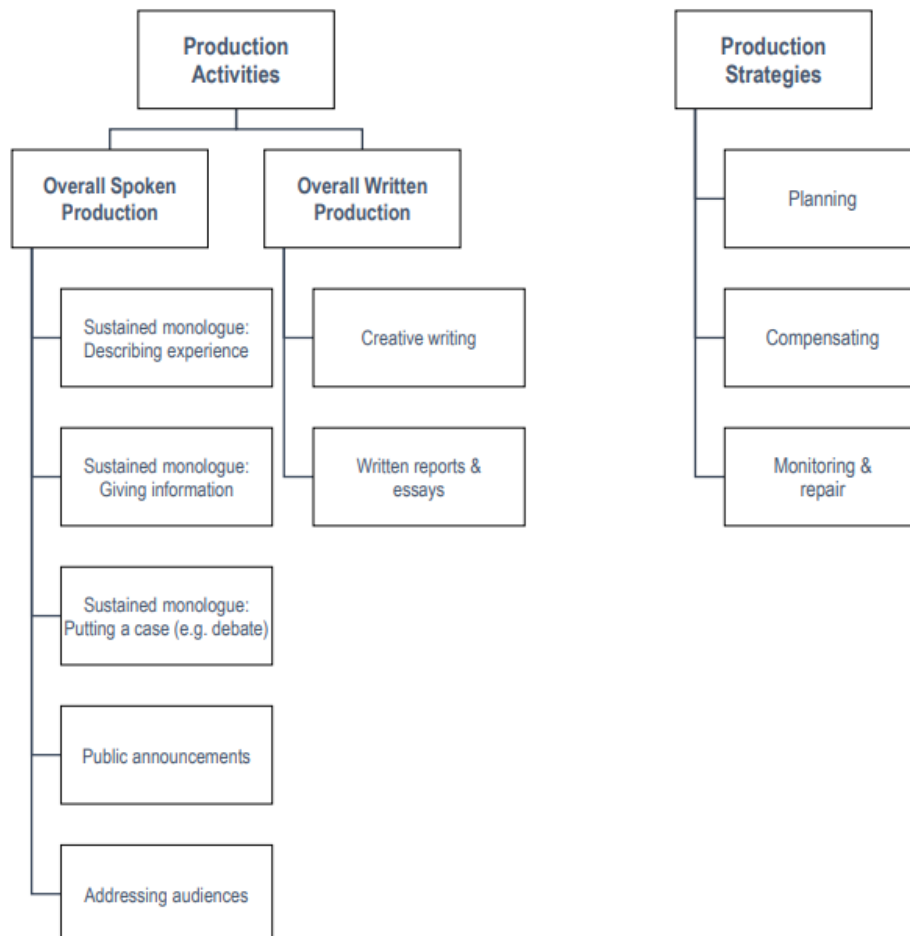
### **- Reception**

Reception involves receiving and processing input, activating what are thought to be appropriate schemata in order to build up a representation of the meaning being expressed and a hypothesis as to the communicative intention behind it. Incoming co-textual and contextual cues are checked to see if they ‘fit’ the activated schema – or suggest that an alternative hypothesis is necessary. In aural reception (one-way listening) activities, the language user receives and processes a spoken input produced by one or more speakers. In visual reception (reading) activities the user receives and processes as input written texts produced by one or more writers. In audio-visual reception, for which one scale (watching TV and film) is provided, the user watches TV, video, or a film and uses multi-media, with or without subtitles and voiceovers.

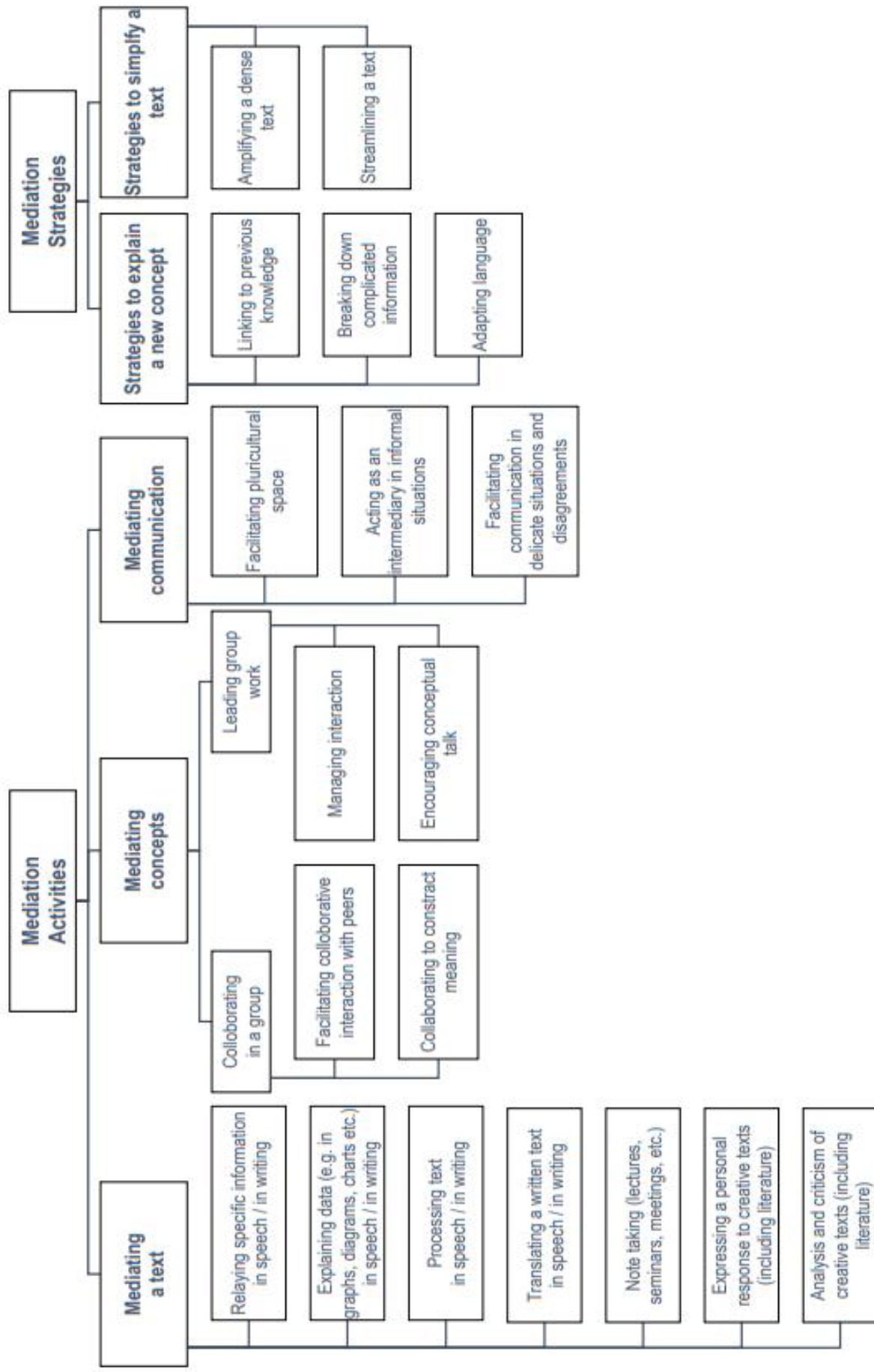


- **Production**

Production includes both speaking and writing activities. Spoken production is a ‘long turn,’ which may involve a short description or anecdote, or may imply a longer, more formal presentation. Productive activities, spoken and written, have an important function in many academic and professional fields (oral presentations, written studies and reports) and particular social value is attached to them. Judgements are made of what has been submitted in writing or of the fluency and articulateness in speaking, especially when addressing an audience. Ability in this more formal production is not acquired naturally; it is a product of literacy learnt through education and experience. It involves learning the expectations and conventions of the genre concerned. Production strategies are employed to improve the quality of both informal and formal production. Planning is obviously more associated with formal genres, but Monitoring and Compensating for gaps in vocabulary or terminology are also a quasi-automated process in natural speech.

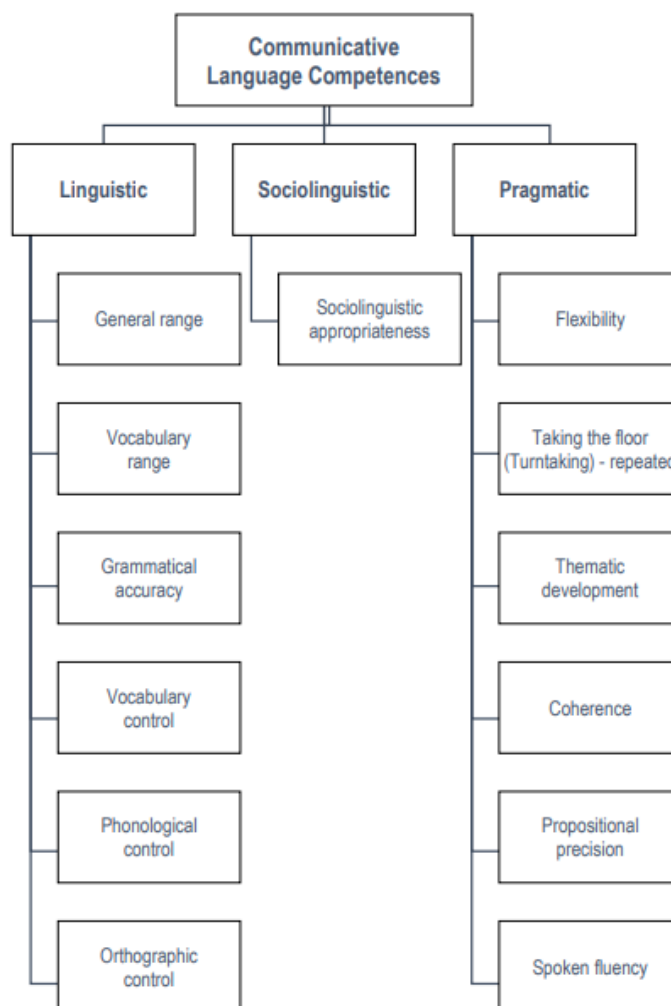






- *Communicative language competences*

As stated in the first section when discussing the CEFR descriptive scheme, the view of competence in the CEFR does not come solely from applied linguistics but also applied psychology and socio-political approaches. However, the different competence models developed in applied linguistics since the early 1980s did influence the CEFR. Although they organised them in different ways, in general these models shared four main aspects: strategic competence; linguistic competence; pragmatic competence (comprising both discourse and functional/actional competence), and socio-cultural competence (including socio-linguistic) competence. Since strategic competence is dealt with in relation to activities, the CEFR presents descriptor scales for aspects of communicative language competence in CEFR Section 5.2 under three headings: Linguistic competence, Pragmatic competence and Sociolinguistic competence. These aspects, or parameters of description, are always intertwined in any language use; they are not separate ‘components’ and cannot be isolated from each other.

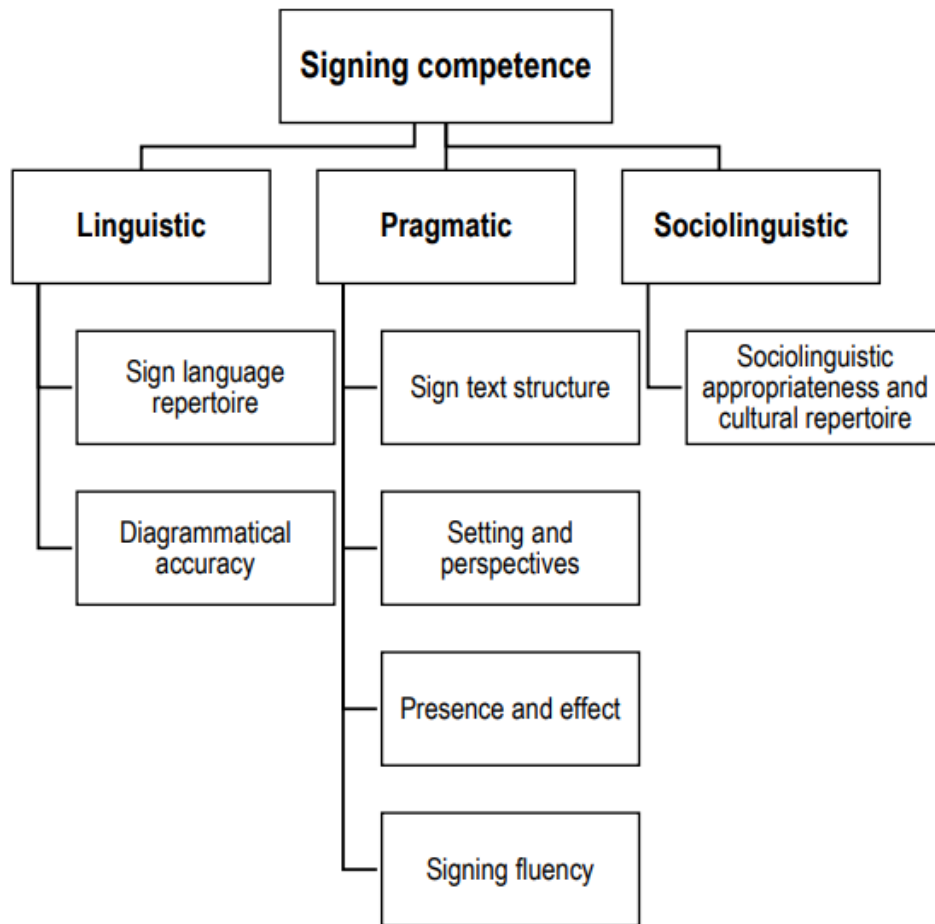


- *Signing competences*

Many of the CEFR descriptors, especially those for spoken communicative language activities, are as applicable to sign language as they are to spoken language, since sign language is used to fulfil the same communicative functions. This is indeed the basis of the ECML's ProSign Project. However, there are obviously ways in which sign language differs substantially from spoken language. Fundamentally it involves a spatial and diagrammatical competence in the use of visual space. And it involves a broadened notion of the term "text", namely for video recorded signing that is not based on a written script. These competencies go far beyond the paralinguistic features of communication through spoken language. The signing space is used to nominate and later refer to relevant persons, places and objects in a form of spatial mapping. Sign languages then have syntax, semantics, morphology and phonology just like any other language. These differ of course from one sign language to another, as there are different sign languages in different countries. But there are certain common features such as the use of indexing, pronouns and classifiers. In addition, facial expression, body, head, and mimics are used extensively in addition to hand and arm movements.

For communicative and contact purposes with spoken language users, the repertoire of proper signs is supplemented by literally spelling out words or names with the so-called finger alphabet. Roughly, each letter of the spoken language script corresponds to a handshape. This "fingering" however is a means of conveying something unfamiliar, e.g. a proper name, in order to use e.g. data bases that are restricted to graphemic access. So this "fingering" is a part of contact language necessary for the deaf to access the written knowledge of the spoken world. Everyone must know it, but it is not regarded as a characteristic of sign language proper.

Due to the divergent modalities of signed and spoken languages it cannot be assumed that the different levels and the respective competencies of the CEFR for spoken languages can be transferred onto sign languages as such. No European spoken language shows typological features that are characteristic of the European sign languages. So whereas a translation of communicative functions from spoken to sign languages can work, a translation of language competences is less appropriate! Naturally, the categories for signing competence relate to the linguistic, pragmatic and sociolinguistic competences found in spoken languages. And some of the descriptors given in the previous section can also be applied to sign language. For ease of reference, however, the descriptor scales for signing competence are provided here together separately.

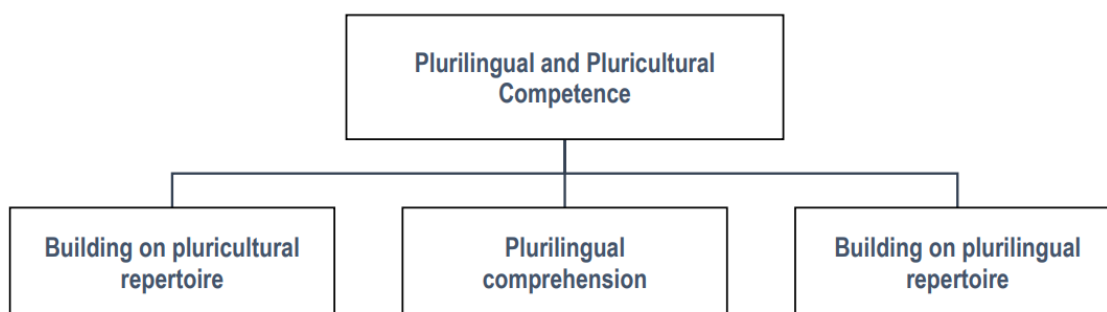




- ***Plurilingual and pluricultural competence***

The notions of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism presented in the CEFR Sections 1.3, 1.4, and 6.1.3) were the starting point for the development of descriptors in this area. The plurilingual vision associated with the CEFR gives value to cultural and linguistic diversity at the level of the individual. It promotes the need for learners as ‘social agents’ to draw upon all of their linguistic and cultural resources and experiences in order to fully participate in social and educational contexts, achieving mutual understanding, gaining access to knowledge and in turn further developing their linguistic and cultural repertoire. As the CEFR states:

‘... the plurilingual approach emphasises the fact that as an individual person’s experience of language in its cultural contexts expands, from the language of the home to that of society at large and then to the languages of other peoples (whether learnt at school or college, or by direct experience), he or she does not keep these languages and cultures in strictly separated mental compartments, but rather builds up a communicative competence to which all knowledge and experience of language contributes and in which languages interrelate and interact’. (CEFR Section 1.3)



In the development of descriptors, the following points mentioned specifically in the CEFR were given particular attention:

- languages are interrelated and interconnected especially at the level of the individual;
- languages and cultures are not kept in separated mental compartments;
- all knowledge and experience of languages contribute to building up communicative competence;
- balanced mastery of different languages is not the goal, but rather the ability (and willingness) to modulate their usage according to the social and communicative situation;
- barriers between languages can be overcome in communication and different languages can be used purposefully for conveying messages in the same situation.

Other concepts were also taken into consideration after analysing recent literature:

- the capacity to deal with ‘otherness’ to identify similarities and differences to build on known and unknown cultural features, etc., in order to enable communication and collaboration;

- the willingness to act as an intercultural mediator;
- the proactive capacity to use knowledge of familiar languages to understand new languages, looking for cognates and internationalisms in order to make sense of texts in unknown languages – whilst being aware of the danger of ‘false friends;’
- the capacity to respond in a sociolinguistically appropriate way by incorporating elements of other languages and/or variations of languages in his/her own discourse for communication purposes;