

Vision of the self and online informal engagement with English

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Abstract

Using a sequential design (questionnaire followed by semi-structured interviews) the study investigates students' online informal language learning habits (OILE) and whether learners with a high motivational profile (using L2 motivational self system as a theoretical framework) tend to reduce the discrepancy between their vision of the self and their actual self through practising OILE in their free time.

Introduction

Advances in technology have led to faster communication and more frequent use of the English language (Lee & Dressman, 2018; Sockett, 2014; Trinder, 2017). As a result of this, a new contemporary field has emerged within L2 research, named Online Informal Learning of English (OILE) (Sockett, 2014). This field has attracted attention lately, with several studies examining learners' OILE use (Jarvis, 2014; Jurkovič, 2019; Lee & Dressman, 2018; Trinder, 2017). However, some studies have suggested that not all learners engage in or use OILE equally and that individual differences, such as motivation and attitude, may influence learners' engagement with informal learning. This mixed-methods study will contribute to the literature by providing insights into how learners' motivation and IP relate to the frequency of OILE use.

Research question

How do students' self-reported habits of online informal learning of English relate to their:

- Motivation (Ideal L2 self / vision of the self).
- International Posture.

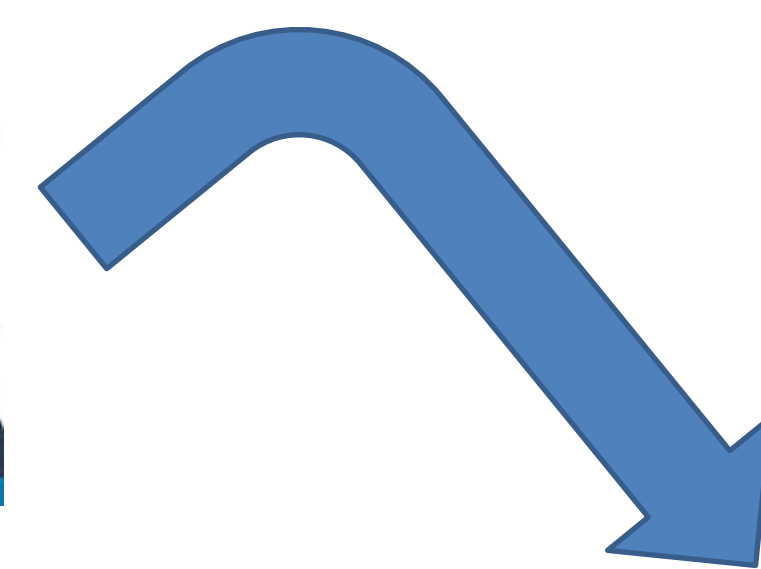


Methodology

This study used a sequential design (online questionnaires followed by semi-structured interviews).



500 participants in the online questionnaire



20 participants in the semi-structured interviews

Results and Discussion

➤ *Students' vision of the self and their online informal learning habits*

The quantitative findings indicated that the Ideal L2 self (vision of the self) correlated positively and moderately with OILE usage frequency (OILE habits), which corroborated the findings of a recent publication (Lamb & Airsindy, 2019). Furthermore, the Ideal L2 self was found to contribute to learners' OILE habits. The qualitative data supported these findings and showed that, even if the students dislike the classroom environment or have a negative L2 Learning experience, they still engage in OILE, because their Ideal L2 self seems to be stronger in terms of influencing their OILE use. Hence, the data suggest that the Ideal L2 self has a strong potency in influencing the frequency of OILE use, which is in line with the extant literature that confirmed the power of the vision of the self for guiding more communicative behaviour.

➤ *Students' IP and their online informal learning habits*

IP correlated positively and moderately with OILE frequency. It was also found to be a predictor for OILE frequency. The findings of this study confirmed that a higher IP could lead to more frequent OILE use.

Implications

- Enhancing learners IP and vision of their selves through the use of OILE
- Creating a bridge between formal and informal learning



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