Motivation and Learning Strategies ~~of~~ for ~~low~~ Low-Resource Languages:

Learning Welsh

The purpose of this research was to investigate the intrinsic and external motivations of a second language (L2) learner and how these factors influenced and assisted ~~their~~ her learning strategies. Of particular interest to the researcher ~~was~~ were the ~~second language~~ L2 acquisition strategies used by learners ~~or~~ of threatened languages ~~as~~ because such learners may begin with significantly ~~less~~ fewer available resources ~~available to them~~, including ~~the~~ access to a first language (L1) speaking teacher or community.

~~Past r~~ Research by Dörnyei (2001) suggests that when first starting to learn a~~n second language~~ L2, ~~the~~ learners' desire for immediate benefits (such as reading a book or ordering a coffee) and their attitude towards their learning resources may outweigh more intimate motivators such as the desire to integrate with the culture or identity (as cited in Ortega, 2009, p. 178). In the case of English ~~second language~~ L2 acquisition this may be true, as English is now regarded as the international language of business and communic. However, threatened languages often have a strong cultural base~~,~~ and therefore~~,~~ we suggest that the motivation to learn them is primarily linked to a sense of identity. ~~Garnder~~ Gardner (2001) defined this ~~"~~ "inte~~r~~grativeness~~"~~" antecedent as a "genuine interest in learning the second language in order to come closer to the other language community~~"~~ " ~~ ~~ (as cited in Ortega, 2009, p. 5).

In what is today the British Isles, ~~There exists a~~ a long and complicated history exists ~~within, what is today, the British Isles~~ between the English language and the indigenous tongues of its inhabitants. In Wales, the Act of Union ~~Act~~ of 1536 could be viewed as the beginning of centuries of English language preference. The Act of Union ~~Act~~ brought Wales into England and subjected ~~them~~ it to both the English

Commented [AC1]: Since you have used *L1* for *first language* throughout, for consistency, *L2* should be used for *second language*, except for the first mention of the terms.

Commented [AC2]: Use secondary sources sparingly; you should always try to locate the original source of information which is cited in a work that you have read.

Commented [AC3]: Please check this page number as it appears to refer to the original source (Gardner, 2001) rather than the source you have read (Ortega, 2009).

Commented [AC4]: Use secondary sources sparingly; you should always try to locate the original source of information which is cited in a work that you have read.

Crown and its ~~Law~~law. The Act stated that English was to be the language used in ~~Courts~~ courts and in positions of ~~Public~~ public ~~Office~~ office within Wales (Davies, 2014, p. 34). Although ~~the~~ speaking ~~of~~ Welsh in schools was never made explicitly illegal, children were punished for using the language within the classroom.

The census of 1901 recorded that 49.9 per cent of the population claimed to speak the language (within Wales) (Davies, 2014, p. 87). By 1951, this figure was 28.9 per cent (Davies, 2014, p. 101), and ~~in~~ by 1991, ~~this figure~~it had dropped to 18.6 per cent of the population. Despite this remarkable decline, the 1991 census was a sign of hope for the language ~~as~~ because for the first time; the proportion of young speakers had dramatically increased. The language learner interviewed in this report was ~~approached~~ invited to participate, ~~as~~ because she is a young learner who had minimal exposure to the ~~second language~~L2 in childhood and faces the additional obstacle of learning in a context that ~~deprive~~offers ~~them~~ her ~~of many~~few social opportunities to use her L2. ~~I anticipated that for~~ For this reason, I anticipated that the ~~learner~~Learner would ~~have~~ relie~~d~~y heavily on resources available via the Internet.

Accessible online learning resources are changing the way we learn and how ~~second language~~L2 learners view the role of ~~a~~ teacher**s** in their learning strategies, : the absence of a classroom teacher~~Teacher~~ is no longer a preventative barrier to learners beginning their language journey. The~~is~~se current technology ~~are~~ is a positive driving force in the maintenance of and interest in languages, providing access to resources that would otherwise be ~~inaccessible~~ unavailable ~~for~~ to learners with limited or no L1 contact.

The L2 learner~~Second Language Learner~~ ~~at the focus of~~in this study is a woman of Welsh de**s**cent in her early twenties, with a tertiary level education, whose parents immigrated to New Zealand prior to her birth. The learner was provided with

information regarding the investigation and was informed of her rights should she agree to participate. The learner~~Learner~~ signed a consent form agreeing to participate and for the interview to be recorded.

After ~~the Learner was described~~ the nature of the investigation was described to the learner and she had signed the consent, ~~for~~ she completed a ~~two~~ two-part questionnaire adapted ~~from~~from the work of O'Malley ~~&~~ and Chamot (1990). The first section asked the learner~~Learner~~ to indicate which strategies ~~they~~ she used to assist ~~their~~ her ~~second language~~L2 learning. The strategies described were ordered ~~my~~ by metacognitive, cognitive and social mediation strategies. The second section asked the learner to identify on a 1—5 scale, how helpful ~~they~~ she felt the overarching strategies were.

The interview followed the learner's completion of the questionnaire and began with 13~~thirteen~~ base questions~~,~~; however, ~~where~~ when the learner offered more information or made observations outside of the base script, the responses were also included in the final transcript and results. The interview was recorded with the learner's~~Learners~~ permission. The interview took approximately half an hour.

Oxford (2001)~~(p.166)~~ ~~proposes~~ proposed that all language-learning strategies are "features of control, goal-directedness, autonomy and self-efficacy" (p. 166). The questionnaire and interview focused on the strategies used by the learner~~Learner and,~~ the types of goals ~~they~~ she set~~,~~ and, most importantly, how ~~they~~ she monitored them ~~as.~~ ~~more~~ More effective ~~second language~~L2 learners not only ~~use~~utilize a number of linked strategies but also actively engage with and monitor their learning (Chamot, 2001).

During the interview, ~~T~~the learner~~Learner~~ reported ~~during the interview~~ that ~~they~~ she used a variety of language-learning resources, including songs, dictionaries,

children's books and, especially, ~~specifically~~ application<u>s</u> such as 'Duolingo' and the written and television resources provided by the BBC's 'I<u>L</u>earn Welsh' website. The Duolingo application was considered a useful tool ~~as~~ <u>because</u> it ~~included~~ <u>includes</u> tests of both pronunciation and lexicon.

Results from the questionnaire show that the <u>learner</u>~~Learner~~ ~~made use of~~<u>used</u> almost half of the language strategies overall ($p = 0.48$)<u>,</u> metacognitive strategies ($p = 0.57$), cognitive strategies ($p = 0.50$) and social mediation ($p = 0.00$)<u>.</u> as shown in <u>F</u>~~f~~igure 1. Social mediation strategies are noticeably absent, ~~that~~ <u>which</u> is consistent with the <u>learner's</u>~~Learners~~ later response that social mediation strategies were less helpful to ~~them~~ <u>her</u> than written and auditory cognitive strategies.

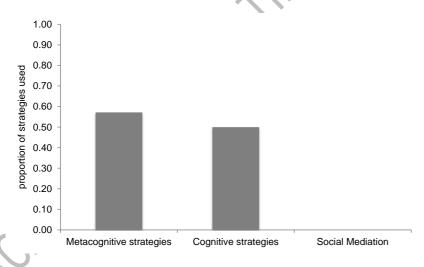~~*Figure 1.* Summary of responses to Learner strategy questionnaire~~

Figure 1. Summary of responses to <u>l</u>~~L~~earner strategy questionnaire.

Strategies ~~that were~~ not used by the <u>learner</u>~~Learner~~ ~~included~~<u>were</u>: functional planning, self-management, elaboration, translation, questioning and co-operation.

The learner was asked to indicate how helpful ~~they~~ <u>she</u> thought each type of strategy was on a scale of ~~one~~ <u>1</u> to ~~five~~<u>5</u>~~,~~<u>.</u> ~~the~~ <u>The</u> types of strategies were described

to the learner as shown in Table 1, with ~~'~~5~~'~~ being the most helpful to ~~their~~ her learning. This section also asked whether actively maintaining ~~their~~ her motivation to learn was helpful to ~~their~~ her overall learning.

Table 1

Caption for table

Type	Statement presented to ~~l~~Learner	~~S~~score
Metacognitive	Taking an active role in planning, organising~~organizing~~ and controlling your learning process	4
Cognitive	Processes such as repetition, memorisation~~memorization~~, induction, deduction and note taking using resources (such as textbooks or audio)	4
Social ~~m~~Mediation	Interaction with other people in your target language or asking for help	3
Socio-affective	Actively maintaining your motivation for learning your second language*	5

Note. * ~~t~~The learner included a written annotation on the questionnaire that ~~they~~ she found maintaining motivation the most helpful but also the most "tricky".

Although social mediation was not used by the learner and ~~was~~ she considered it the least helpful ~~to them~~, the lack of access to L1 speakers within New Zealand appears to be ~~the~~ correlated to this ~~as~~ because during the interview she expressed a desire for the possibility of speaking with an L1 speaker ~~was desired~~. The learner ~~believes~~ stated that a "*fluid (~~self directed~~self-directed style) would have worked fine if I'd been living over there and had more exposure to the people.*".

The learner's~~Learners~~ experience of interacting with an L1 speaker was described as usually being very brief: "*It's like—— 'do you speak any of it (Welsh)?' you know, and then you rattle off a few words and that person's usually satisfied enough.*"

~~They~~ She also indicated that ~~they~~ she would have preferred ~~a~~ more formal tuition with the aid~~e~~ of a teacher or a class of other learners despite the availability of

Commented [AC10]: Please insert a caption for this table.

Commented [AC11]: Spelling has been changed to New Zealand English conventions.

app~~lication~~s and online resources ~~available online~~. When asked why ~~they~~ she felt this way, she stated that the option to use the language in a meaningful way ~~was~~ was the primary motive: "~~...~~*being able to use the language ... I think you can expand your lexicon through fluid means ... but to actually be able to use it to* come *end ...*"

Given the longstanding preference in Wales for using English ~~within Wales for so long~~, it is not surprising that the learner observed that ~~family~~ members of her family who ~~did~~ do know the language~~,~~ prefer to speak English. Bourhis, Giles, and Ta~~i~~jfel~~,~~ (1973) described this willingness to adopt speech norms as "not uncharacteristic of ethnic minority groups" and noted that (at the time of writing) Received Pronunciation was considered the social standard ~~was considered to be Received Pronunciation~~.

The learner's desire to communicate in the ~~second language~~L2 supports Gardner's (2001)~~'s~~ "integrativeness" motivation definition; however, it is at odds with the learner's~~Learners~~ earlier indication that ~~they~~ she did not~~didn't~~ find social mediation a useful strategy. This may suggest more of a cultural desire for a *"sense of belonging"* than a specific motivator in the early stage of language acquisition. Bourhis et al. (1973) observed that the desire to speak and to learn the Welsh language is a determinant of Welsh self-image (p. 450). ~~T~~When the learner was asked whether ~~or not they~~ she felt ~~they~~ she had experienced a shift in ~~their~~ her identity since beginning to learn ~~their~~ her ~~second language~~L2, ~~they~~ she responded~~:~~. "*I would say so, you feel closer, in particular if you actually go there and you can understand some of it (Welsh), it definitely changes your perception.*"

Specific goals identified by the learner were obtaining written and reading comprehension; however, when prompted to describe the measures she used to monitor ~~their~~ her progress in meeting those goals, she stated that she ~~listening~~ listened

to songs ~~was used~~ to measure her comprehension. -The use of an auditory comprehension to monitor~~,~~ what the learner identified as~~,~~ predominantly written or visual learner strategies identified in the questionnaire suggests that a teacher would ~~be beneficial to~~benefit this particular learner ~~to by attune~~ attuning the ~~her~~Learner's strategy preference to meet ~~their~~ her own needs (Oxford, 2001).

The pattern identified in the questionnaire follows the prediction made by Chamot (2001)~~,~~ that strategies such as visualisation~~visualization~~ and categorisation~~categorization~~ of words or content~~,~~ which were ~~favored~~favoured by the learner, are effective only for those learners who do not already have ~~alternate~~ alternative strategies or strong memorisation~~memorization~~ abilities.

Specifically~~,~~ the learner~~Learner~~ felt the biggest barrier~~s~~ to communication with an L1 speaker ~~was~~were ~~their~~ her memory and her concern for the inaccuracy of ~~their~~ her pronunciation. -This language anxiety relates to an anticipated fear of ~~being~~ being judged on her performance~~being judged~~, and as Young (1998)~~, notes~~ noted, this can sabotage a learner's progression.

During the interview~~,~~ the question was raised as to whether the learner~~Learner~~ felt ~~they~~ she would have been better equipped to learn the language during childhood. Her answer supports the "younger is better myth" (Scovel, 1999~~, p. 1~~, as cited in Brown, 2007)~~, stating that~~: "~~..~~*You could easily argue that* (children learn better) *you just need to look at* [a friend of the learner~~Learner -~~. X]*, X speaks three languages fluently because his parents spoke two language to him when he was a child.*"

When the learner was prompted to explain why ~~the she~~Learner felt this was the case~~,~~ she replied that the crucial difference between child and adult learners ~~was~~is the child's exposure to the language, constant use and correction. ~~While~~Although the ~~Critical~~ critical ~~Period~~ period ~~Hypothesis~~ hypothesis supports the idea of a biological

timetable for learning languages (Brown, 2007), many adults successfully learn multiple foreign languages to varying degrees of proficiency. -What ~~does~~ seems more likely is that children are capable of implicit learning~~,~~ that is to say, they can learn through exposure a-lone; moreover ~~and not only that but~~, children do not have the inhibitions of adults.

~~As such~~Therefore, the myth that children learn better in all cases~~,~~ may actually be negatively affecting learner anxiety around using new language skills with other people, especially in Western cultures where mistakes are viewed not as learning opportunities but as something to be ashamed of: "*it's quite a difficult thing to get over, you say it slightly wrong and you are saying something else so it's ...*"

My observation~~s~~ from this investigation is that despite the availability of resources online for learning the lexicon and grammar of a language, ~~the~~ a lack of communication opportunities with native speakers hinders learners' confidence in using the language, which in the case of the Welsh language has strong ties to the cultural identity of the individual. The lack of communication partners was described by the learner as ~~being~~ the largest inhibitor to ~~the her~~Learner's ongoing motivation~~, there is~~. She expressed a ~~real and~~ strong desire to speak with a "~~'kinsman'~~kinsman", which goes beyond the novelty of using another language:

"…Motivation is one of the hardest things to maintain when you are trying to learn a language and there is no one else around you doing it, and no ~~one~~one's even heard of it before sometimes, ~~its~~it's so difficult to stay motivated. Resourcing can be an issue but ~~its~~it's really finding that motivation to carry on~~"~~.
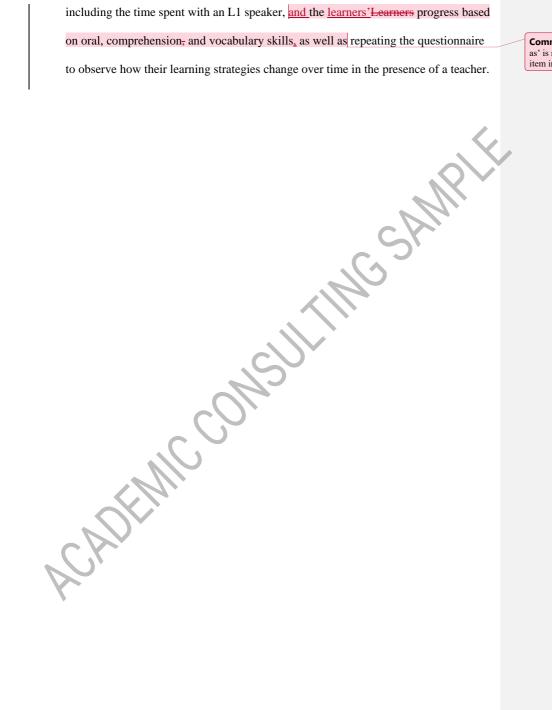
To further examine the effect of L1 contact on learners'~~learners~~ motivation. I ~~would~~ propose a longitudinal cohort study over a series of months~~,~~ with variables

Commented [AC21]: 'As such' means 'with respect to its inherent nature' and must refer to an antecedent noun or noun phrase to make grammatical sense. The antecedent (what was just mentioned) must be able to answer the question 'as what?' It is not a substitute for 'therefore'.

Commented [AC22]: Is this a general statement (if so, consider whether this always holds true) or are you referring to the research participant in particular (if so, please specify this)?

including the time spent with an L1 speaker, and the learners'Learners progress based on oral, comprehension, and vocabulary skills, as well as repeating the questionnaire to observe how their learning strategies change over time in the presence of a teacher.

Commented [AC23]: I have added 'and' because 'as well as' is not equivalent to 'and'. It can't be used before the last item in a series to replace 'and'.

References

Bourhis, R. Y., Giles, H., & Tajfel, H. (1973). Language as a determinant of Welsh identity. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 3*(4), 447–460. doi:10.1002/ejsp.2420030407

Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of language learning and teaching* (5th ed.). White Plains, NY: Longman.

Chamot, A. (2001). The role of learning strategies in second language acquisition. In M. Breen (Ed.), *Learner contributions to language learning: New directions in research* (pp. 25–43). Harlow, UK: Longman.

Davies, J. (2014). *The Welsh language: A history.* Cardiff, Wales: University of Wales Press.

O'Malley, J., & Chamot, A. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Ortega, L. (2009). *Understanding second language acquisition.* London, UK: Hodder.

Oxford, R. (2001). Language learning strategies. In R. Carter & D. Nunan (Eds.), *The Cambridge guide to teaching English to speakers of other languages* (pp. 166–172). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.