"Developing Language Learners with Dörnyei: a Study of

Learning Environments and Motivation at a Swedish Upper-

Secondary School"

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Abstract

This is a small, mixed-methods study focusing principally on the *learning experience* element of Dörnyei's *L2 motivational self system* and its effect on students' *ideal* and *ought-to* selves. The specific purpose of this investigation was to explore the L2 classroom environment and explore any potential relationship to the *ideal* and *ought-to* selves of the students. The secondary element of this study was to discover whether this potential relationship could impact teacher-training and how.

The study was conducted in two English (L2) classes at a Swedish upper-secondary school. A quantitative questionnaire was compiled using features from previous studies in this field and questions designed for this particular study. Each student filled out a questionnaire individually. The results of these were then analysed to establish a picture of the students' general level of motivation, their *possible selves,* their classroom environment, and how they felt the former was affected by the latter. Qualitative contributions to the investigations were made through interviews with individual students and observation of lessons.

The results indicated that, for the majority, four components of the classroom environment impacted significantly on the *ideal* and *ought-to* selves of the students, namely, the teacher, the group cohesiveness and orientedness and finally, the facilities. However, one factor did not demonstrate such a noteworthy influence: course material. The implications of these findings are that course material may not be as critical as originally thought in influencing student motivation. Moreover, teacher-training could, in future, include training on *ideal* and *ought-to* selves in order to maximize the positive effect of the classroom environment, as a whole, on individuals. This could be achieved by, for example, adapting the classroom facilities to suit different student needs, forming groups based on common interests and allowing for extra-curricular activities to enhance group-cohesiveness.

Key words: Motivation, L2, Learning Experience, Ideal and Ought-to Selves

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1.0 Introduction

According to a paper written for the British Council, around two billion people in the world will be learning English by 2021 (Graddol, 2006). That is a just under a third of the world population, and does not begin to cover the numbers of people in the world learning other foreign languages. People learn languages in many different ways, through media such as their everyday cultural immersion, or formal instruction in the classroom. There are also multiple reasons for learning languages, namely for academic purposes, work, or even survival. There are, therefore, many different mental processes behind learning a foreign language and one particularly prevalent one is motivation. This then begs the question as to what is motivation. A typical dictionary definition would be: "The act or an instance of … providing with a reason to act in a certain way" (Dictionary.com website). Therefore, motivation essentially means the reasons a person has for doing something. However, it has also come to mean the drive or desire to do something and to keep doing it. Consequently, someone who is *highly motivated* has significant reasons and a strong drive to carry something out, whilst someone who is *unmotivated* or has a low motivation has very little drive to do so.

Motivation has become an important area of study within academia due to its potential effect on learning and performance. Why are some people more motivated to learn than others? Does that motivation mean the difference between success and failure? How can we use that knowledge in the field of education in order to improve and enhance learning conditions? Questions like these have puzzled psychologists and specialists of various fields for many years. Research on this topic, within the second language (L2) learning field, started in Canada with Robert Gardner and his associates. Their study in 1959 showed what they called: "The importance of the 'motivational factor'" (Gardner and Lambert, 1959, p.271). Thus they were the first in this field to seriously suggest the prominent impact of motivation on success. They concluded that, for L2 French learners in the bilingual setting of Canada, motivation had an equally significant role to play in achievement as linguistic aptitude did. They were pioneers in this research arena and many theorists have followed in their wake, trying to better understand the role of motivation, particularly with regards to L2 learning.

With Gardner and Lambert's theories as a starting point, many concluded that a desire to integrate (*integrativeness)* into the L2 language community (the group which uses the L2) was a driving force (see Clément 1980, 1986, Schumann, 1978, 1986 and Clément and Noels 1992, 2001). However, this idea was also challenged and other perspectives became important for learners who were not attempting to integrate into a particular community. Accordingly, research turned to the 'situational' and focused instead on the classroom environment. This was followed by an emphasis on the actual tasks that take place in the classroom and, eventually, a more dynamic approach taking into account the vast differences between students, caused by personality and context. Psychology played an important part in this dynamic approach. Studies dictated that motivation was heavily influenced by *possible selves* (Markus and Nurius 1986 p. 1 and Higgins, 1987, p. 319): the image one has of one's self in the future.

Using the *possible selves* theory, a prominent motivational theory was developed by Dörnyei. He called it the "L2 motivational self theory" (Dörnyei, 2009, p.3). Dörnyei's model suggests that motivation is based on three main considerations: the *ideal* self, the *ought-to* self and the *L2 learning experience* which concerns the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, peer group or experience of success but also many areas outside of the classroom. It is this precise theory that I have chosen to investigate further in this paper. It is relevant for me because I am studying to complete my teaching qualifications to teach 16 to 19 year olds. I have also studied three foreign languages and had strong *possible selves* which have motivated me. It is predominantly the *L2 learning experience* in the classroom which is of interest to me. Specifically, I intend to investigate to what extent the classroom learning environment at a Swedish gymnasium affects the *possible selves* of the students and what potential impact that may have on teacher training.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 A History of the Main L2 Motivation Theories

2.1.1 The Different Stages of Research

Dörnyei and Ushioda's *Teaching and Researching Motivation* (2011) includes a comprehensive summary of the main advances in this field and divides the different theories into four main periods.

They call these periods the "social psychological period" (Ibid, p.40), the "cognitive situated period" (Ibid, p.47), the "process-oriented period" (Ibid, p.61) and finally, the current period which they call the "socio-dynamic period" (Ibid, p.69). In the first part of this section I am going to discuss these different periods, the main theories, and the researchers concerned with each one. For clarity I will use Dörnyei and Ushioda's terms as listed above.

2.1.2 The Impact of Society on Learner Psychology

This period, called the *social psychological period* by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011), is characterised by the influence of social factors on psychology, and thus on language acquisition. Research was mainly based in bilingual communities and the psychological effects of social relationships between the two language communities.

Gardner and Lambert were the first to seriously suggest that motivation played an important role in learning an L2, when they questioned high school students in bilingual Canada (Dörnyei, 2011, p.40). The important "motivational factor" they highlighted consisted of the students' level of achievement (reported by teachers) with relation to various factors.

These factors included, amongst others, an "orientation-index", or the students' reasons for learning; an "attitude scale", which demonstrated how they felt about French-Canadians and, finally, a "motivational-intensity scale", involving factors such as effort expended and future plans (Gardner, C and Lambert, W, 1959, p267-8). The students were asked to answer questions based on the various factors. Gardner and Lambert concluded that: "[there are] two orthogonal factors equally related to ratings of achievement in French: a "linguistic aptitude" and a "motivational factor" (Ibid, p.272). Thus, they had completed an empirical study, demonstrating the importance of motivation in language learning, and not simply linguistic ability, as previously thought. An analysis of this research, and many other investigations on this very theme, was completed in 2003, covering 75 studies and 10,485 learners. When discussing the findings of this study, the authors stated that the results offered: "strong support for the hypothesis that these variables (attitudes, motivation and orientation) are related to achievement in a second language" (Masgoret and Gardner, 2003, p.194). Therefore, the relationship between motivation and achievement has been reinforced by this study and several others since 1959.

As a result of Gardner and Lambert's 1959 study, the authors categorised motivation for learning into two distinct areas: "integrative" and "instrumental". The former was intended to encompass the desire to learn in order to integrate into French-speaking society, and the latter incorporated goals such as passing an exam (Gardner and Lambert, 1959, p.267). They found that integrative motivation was more effective than instrumental amongst their subjects (Ibid, p271). However, they also state that they cannot be entirely certain that this would always be the case (Ibid, p271). Nevertheless, this study paved the way for a new direction in motivation studies.

Clément investigated Gardner and Lambert's ideas about integrativeness further. He also studied bilingual French and English speaking students in Canada, this time at the University of Ottawa (Clément, R. 1986, p. 274). Clément's participants were asked to complete a questionnaire and undergo an oral proficiency test. His intention was to find out how social factors affect achievement and integration. He referred to *status* or *ethnolinguistic vitality,* by which he meant the degree to which a language is supported by individuals and institutions in society. He hypothesised that, when the L1 is only spoken by a minority and has a low *status*, L2 proficiency should be an attractive prospect and this should increase motivation to integrate (Ibid, p.272). Better integration (or *acculturation*) would in turn increase proficiency (Ibid, p.287). His results, however, showed no such relationship between *status* and motivation in this particular situation. The results in fact made a stronger case for a relationship between *status* and frequency of contact, self-confidence and acculturation (Ibid, p.288). However, Clément acknowledged that he had chosen a context for his study within which learners had *chosen* to be in a bilingual situation and that, therefore, motivation was already strong. He argued, moreover, that there is an indirect link between proficiency and both attitude and motivation because they both influence amount of contact, and therefore ultimate proficiency levels (Ibid, p. 288).

Another important model from this period is Schumann's *acculturation theory.* Schumann defines *acculturation* as: "The social and psychological integration of the learner with the target language (TL) group" (1986, p.1). He claims therein that a person can be integrated both socially and psychologically into the new language community. He also proposes that learners can be placed on a continuum, which describes their "social and psychological distance" (or proximity) to the TL community, and suggests that at learner will acquire the L2 "only to the degree that he acculturates"

(Schumann, 1986, p.379). Schumann believed, therefore, that acculturation, or social and psychological proximity to the TL group, is instrumental in successfully obtaining the language.

In summary, the social psychological period encompassed the idea that motivation was heavily influenced by social and psychological factors. The main theories claimed that in order to successfully learn an L2, it was important to have intrinsic motivation and to be positively influenced by social factors such as relationships to the target language community.

2.1.3 A Focus on the Mental Processes Taking Place in a Learning Environment

This next period was influenced by cognitive psychology: the study of how people acquire, process and store information. Most of this research was linked to the learning situation. Dörnyei and Ushioda call it the *cognitive-situated period* (Dörnyei, 2011. P. 47). During this period, linguists and psychologists explored the mental processes of learner in the situation they were in, more specifically, the classroom. The findings were often used in teacher education.

An example of a classroom-based model of motivation theory is Keller's ARCS model (1983). This model was Keller's interpretation of what was needed in teaching to achieve optimal learning conditions. The key concepts are: attention, relevance, confidence and satisfaction (Keller, 2011). He suggested that, in order for students to be and stay motivated in the classroom, each of these four elements is necessary. It is necessary to capture and hold a student's attention, the work needs to be relevant to them personally, they need to gain confidence and they need to be satisfied with the results in order to be motivated to do more (Ibid). This theory is used in language teaching all over the world today.

In the same period, Deci and Ryan (1985) divided motivation into *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* factors as part of their *self-determination theory*. Firstly, the authors referred to *intrinsic* motivation in the following way: "The innate, natural propensity to engage one's interests and exercise one's capacities" (p.41). The idea is that this type of motivation is initiated in the individual's mind, and that motivation is the simple pleasure, or satisfaction, gained in the completion of a task. This is in opposition to *extrinsic* motivation, which involves the influence of outside factors, such as the opinions of others, or receiving an extrinsic reward, like a good grade (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011,

p.23). Deci and Ryan argued that *extrinsic* factors could be demotivating because they may impose pressure on the individual which could, in turn, impede their learning (Deci and Ryan, 1985, p.270). However, they also stated: "[an individual] acquires an attitude, belief, or behavioural regulation and progressively transforms it into a personal value, goal or organization" (Ibid. p.270). They used the term *internalization* here to describe this process of an *extrinsic* stimulus being absorbed by the individual, and transforming into an *intrinsic* influence. A person who is free from outside pressures, who is not controlled by extrinsic factors, was said to be *self-determined (*Ibid. p.29) and this was presented as something very positive for learning. Finally, Deci and Ryan highlighted the importance of *autonomy.* They claimed: "Several studies have shown that autonomy-supportive (in contrast to controlling) teachers catalyze in their students greater intrinsic motivation, curiosity, and the desire for challenge". They argued therein that allowing learners to be more in charge of their own learning was more likely to keep them motivated.

In summary, the cognitive situated period involved investigations into the mental processes of learning, specifically in the classroom, and how this knowledge could help teachers create the ideal learning environment for students.

2.1.3.1 The Classroom Environment

During this same period, in 1994, Dörnyei specified what he believed was important in the classroom to create a motivated environment. He divided the components into the following areas (p.277):

a) Course-Specific

b) Teacher-Specific

c) Group-Specific

Under Course-Specific, he included the four elements of Keller's ARCS system (p.277):

- Attention

- Relevance

- Confidence

- Satisfaction.

Under Teacher-Specific he included (Ibid, p.278):

- A good relationship between the teacher and the students in order to promote a desire to please the teacher

- Supporting autonomy in learning by involving the students in decisions about learning

- Student attitudes and orientations toward learning are modelled on their teachers' so they should be positive role models

- Task presentation should raise students' interest

- Feedback should attribute success to effort and ability

    Finally, under Group-Specific, he included (Ibid, p.278):

- Goal-orientedness: the extent to which the group is attuned to pursuing its goal together

- Norm and reward system: Groups develop norms and rewards or punishments should be designed to encourage or discourage these

- Group cohesion: promoting motivation by promoting a good relationship between students

- Classroom goal structures: competitive / cooperative / individualistic – he claims the cooperative goal structure is most powerful in promoting intrinsic motivation (Ibid, p.279)

It is these criteria upon which the research in section 2.0.2.4 is based.

2.1.4 Task-based Research

This period of research was termed *process-oriented* by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011, p.47), which refers to the fact that motivational studies were now being narrowed down from the classroom to the level of the individual task. According to Dörnyei and Ushioda (Ibid, p.61), Williams and Burden were the first to highlight the difference between motivation *for* a task and motivation *during* a task. This led to the development of various process models.

An example of a process model is Dörnyei and Otto's p*rocess model of L2 motivation* (1998, in Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.65). This model attempted to incorporate many different lines of research and include the whole motivational process from the stage of goal setting, all the way through the completion of the task, to post-task evaluation (Dörnyei, 2011, p.65). They included *preactional, actional and postactional* phases which allowed them to group and investigate each phase in detail.

The *preactional* stage included emotional influences such as desires and wishes which lead to goal setting. This then leads on to the forming of an intention and the initiation of the action intended (Ibid, p.65). The *actional* phase described when an action actually takes place and can be influenced by many different motivational factors, namely teacher and peer influences, a sense of autonomy, or the quality of the task itself (Ibid, p.66). Finally, the *postactional* phase is the time when a learner evaluates the task that has been completed and forms new goals for future tasks (Ibid, p.66).

2.1.5 Motivation as a Dynamic System

Socio-dynamic is Dörnyei and Ushioda's name for the most current period of research and is characterized by a much less linear cause-effect perspective than previous theories (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2011, p.69). The models show an understanding of the complex, ever-changing nature of such psychological processes as motivation.

Ushioda's *Person-in-contact* theory argues that motivation studies must recognise individuals as having different and personal mental processes and the varying influences that vast ranges of contexts can have. She calls it a: "Complex multiplicity of internal, situational and temporal factors that may impinge on individual motivation" (Ibid, p.76). This perspective calls for a quite different method of study and Ushioda suggests that an effective way of doing this would be to study classroom talk (Ibid, p.79). She suggests that observing teacher-student and student-student talk over time, and allowing the students to talk about the things they are interested in, instead of asking them to practice certain forms, may allow us to understand if such methods affect their motivation (Ibid, p.79).

Another interesting theory, which is going to be central to my own study, is Dörnyei's *L2 Motivational Self system.* He suggests that there are three key parts that make up the motivation of an individual (Ibid, p.86):

1. The *ideal L2 Self* – the future image one has of oneself as an L2 user according to one's own wishes.

2. The o*ught-to L2 Self* – the future image one has of oneself as an L2 user according to what others expect.

3. The *L2 learning experience* – This concerns the impact of the teacher, the curriculum, the peer group or the experience of success or failure.

Dörnyei argued, with this theory, which he adapted from psychological research about *possible selves* (Markus and Nurius, 1986 – see next chapter), that individual motivation was also affected by the learning environment, such as the classroom. This last model has sparked considerable interest and many studies have since been carried out with the intention of testing parts or all of this theory. The next section will discuss some of these in more detail.

2.2 Methods of research

Linguistic goals involve developing skills in the four main areas of language learning namely reading, writing, speaking and listening. The non-linguistic aspects of an individual's goals, however, have traditionally been difficult to define. One frequently used measuring tool, however, is Gardner's "Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (ATMB)" which was first developed in 1952 but reviewed and revised several times since (Gardner, 2008.) It assesses how much various non-linguistic factors of an individual's life, and experience, affect their motivation. This method of research is useful for studies concerning the nature of individuals' motivation.

This paper is principally concerned with motivation within the classroom. One method frequently used to analyse motivation in the classroom is MOLT, which stands for: "motivation orientation of language teaching" and was created by Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008, p.55). It is used as an observation tool and is quite comprehensive. It looks at twenty five "motivational variables", previously defined by Dörnyei (2001), and observes their use in the classroom (Ibid, p.62). These variables include: the level of attention students are paying, their participation, strategies used in structuring activities, promoting cooperation between students, group and pair work, and feedback processes, including praise (Ibid, p.63-4). The full MOLT can be seen in Guilloteaux and Dörnyei 2008 pp. 62 - 64. It is a comprehensive tool which enables the observer to record motivational practices and behaviour every minute in real time.

Another measurement tool frequently used is the MSLQ created by Pintrich *et al* in 1986. MSLQ stands for the "motivated strategies for learning questionnaire". This tool has a section which

aims to capture the level of motivation within students in order to gain an understanding of how motivated the students are, before it continues to investigate why.

2.3 Focus on the L2 Motivational Self Theory

2.3.1 Background

In 2009, Dörnyei and Ushioda wrote: "L2 motivation is currently in the process of being radically reconceptualised and retheorised in the context of contemporary notions of self and identity" (p. 1). Here they recognised that motivation research was undergoing significant changes which aligned closely with psychological research on identity. There was recognition that humans are individuals with very different ideas and behaviours and that this needed to be taken into account when studying motivation. Due to these changing ideas, Dörnyei started to look to *possible selves* as a focus for his studies (Ibid, p. 25). He also believed that English was a language that needed to be treated differently, as it was now a global language. Therefore, he believed that there was no longer one general English-speaking community to be seen as a target. Therefore, Gardner and Lambert's *integrativeness* could not really be applied (Ibid, p.1 and 25).

Possible selves, then, were the focus for Dörnyei's new L2 motivational self theory (Ibid, p.25). The term *possible selves* was coined by Markus and Nurius (1986, p.954) and defined as follows: "Individuals' ideas of what they might become, what they would like to become, and what they are afraid of becoming" (Ibid, p.954). One definition, therefore, is that it is the sort of person that individuals may imagine, hope, or fear they will become. They continued to state: "*Possible selves* are important because they function as incentives for future behaviour (i.e., they are *selves* to be approached or avoided)" (Ibid, p.955). This can be interpreted in an educational context to mean that a *possible self* can be an incentive or a disincentive to learn, and is therefore closely linked to motivation. Higgins (1987) distinguished between three "domains of the self" which he listed as the *ideal, ought* and *actual* selves (p. 320). *Actual* selves are described as the attributes that someone has in reality, the *ideal* as what a person hopes they are, or will be, and the *ought* self as what an individual, or others around them, think they should be (Ibid, p.320, 321). It is the latter two that Dörnyei developed in his L2 motivational self theory.

2.3.2 The L2 Motivational Self System Described

        In section 2.0.1.5 there is a brief description of the L2 motivational self system which aims to describe motivation in L2 learning. Dörnyei breaks motivation down into three distinct areas: the *ideal L2 self,* the *ought-to L2 self* and the *L2 learning experience* (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2009, p.86). In 2011, he examined, and evaluated, previous theories of motivation, including *possible selves* and Gardner's *integrativeness.* Moreover, in 2002, Dörnyei and Czisér carried out a study in Hungary that led them to the conclusion that *integrativeness* needed to be redefined. They suggested that what had previously been called *integrativeness* needed to be conceptualised rather as an "identification process" linked to the "self-concept" (2011, p.25). Dörnyei concluded that integrativeness is not always relevant in a situation where an L2 is learnt at school, and in the absence of any direct contact with a 'language community' or a community of target language users (Ibid, p.24). He added: "the problematic nature of integrativeness has been amplified by the worldwide globalisation process and the growing dominance of Global World English as an international language" (Ibid, p.24). Therein, he suggested that, because English no longer belongs to one or several individual communities, there is no specific target-community into which a language learner can integrate. Instead, he contended that *possible selves* are a promising area of research because a vision of the future (an ideal L2 self) keeps learners "on track" (Ibid, p.25).

        After drawing these conclusions, he began to build his model. He started with the *ideal* and *ought* selves, and added the *L2 learning experience.* When explaining his reasons for this third category, he suggested that some learners may not have future-self images before they begin to learn a language, and may actually produce some due to the learning experience itself (Ibid, p.25). Under this category he included the impact of the teacher, curriculum and peer group, amongst other factors (Ibid, p.29). The specific areas of *possible selves* have been investigated by psychologists for many years, but Dörnyei claimed that the *L2 learning experience* needed to be investigated in future research and elaborated on, especially its impact on the *possible selves* (Ibid, p.29).

2.3.3 The L2 Motivational Self System Evaluated and Tested

Substantial research has been carried out to test and develop Dörnyei's model and some of these works have been collected in *Motivation, Language Identity and the L2 Self* (Dörnyei and Ushioda, 2009). In chapter three, Macintyre *et al* argues that we need to be careful with trying to measure *possible selves* and other elements of this theory, because of their ever-changing nature and factors such as cultural variations (Ibid, p.58). Taguchi *et al* on the other hand, have carried out studies in Iran, China and Japan that confirmed the results and conclusions of Dörnyei and Czizér's study in Hungary (2002) and Dörnyei's L2 motivational self system (2009, p.88). Kormos and Czisér carried out an investigation of Hungarian secondary school and university students and concluded that both the *ideal self* and the learning experience had a significant effect on both groups, but that the *ought self* had minimal influence (Ibid, p. 109). Stephen Ryan has studied Japanese learners of English and suggests, in the same volume, that *integrativeness* is just one element of the "L2 self concept" and that this concept is the important one when considering students' motivation (Ibid, p. 137). Al Sheri's study of Saudi Arabian students at home and in the UK, studying English as a second language, also supports the importance of the *L2 deal self*. He concluded from his results that students with a visual learning style (a style that uses images and visual prompts to learn) have stronger *ideal self* images and demonstrate a stronger motivation for learning (Ibid, p.168). Finally, Ushioda's *person in contact* theory is discussed in section 2.0.1.5 and in her contribution to Dörnyei's 2009 work she related her theory to Dörnyei's model. She stated that:

> A person-in-context relational view of motivation may, through the analysis of relevant discourse data, help to illuminate how language learners' current experiences and self-states (characterised broadly as "L2 learning experience" in Dörnyei's L2 Motivational Self System …), may facilitate or constrain their engagement with future *possible selves* (Ibid, p. 225).

With this statement, Ushioda claimed that the fact that context can have a profound effect on individuals suggests that the *L2 Learning Experience* can influence the *possible selves*, and therefore motivation.

2.3.4 The L2 Learning Experience Tested with Relation to the L2 *Possible selves*

None of the researchers included in Dörnyei and Ushioda's volume performed studies on how the learning environment can affect the *possible selves*. However, several studies have since been carried out and two are discussed below.

Papi carried out an investigation in Iran in 2012, the main aim of which was to observe the relationship between teachers' practices and students' motivation (Papi et al, 2012, p.571). One of their specific aims was to find any possible connections between EFL learners with high, or low, motivation and their *ideal* and *ought-to* selves (Ibid, p.579). They wanted to discover if motivation levels were reflected in the *ideal* and *ought-to* selves of the students. They used an observational tool developed by Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) and questionnaires for the students to gauge their motivation levels. The participants were male, high school student in Iran (Papi et al, 2012 p.580). The instruments used included MOLT. They discovered a strong correlation between motivational practices and student motivation levels (Ibid, p.587), but no significant relationship between L2 *possible selves* and motivational behaviour in the classroom (Ibid, p.588). They explained this last result by referring to previous conclusions drawn by, amongst others, Dörnyei in 2009. They claimed that "future self-guides" need to be complemented by a plan, and effective guidance, in order to be effective (Ibid. p.588).

Another significant study made in this field was completed by Asker in 2011. His research was based in secondary schools in Libya and aimed to do something that had not yet been specifically investigated, namely to examine the relationship between the learners' possible L2 selves and their L2 learning situation (Asker, 2011, p.1). Asker took a year to complete his study and included both quantitative and qualitative methods (Ibid, p.1). He investigated both the *macro* and *micro* contexts of the learning situation and their relationships to the L2 selves (Ibid, p.84). *Macro* includes social aspects such as background, personality, past learning history and *micro* involves the classroom itself, including the teacher, the environment and the students (Ibid, p.84). He used student questionnaires to collect quantitative data, and collected qualitative data in interviews, observations and through student diaries (Ibid, p.88). In the questionnaires, the categories in the below list were investigated (Ibid, p.114). My own summaries are included in brackets.

1. Ideal L2 self   *(what you would ideally like to become)*

2. Ought-to L2 self   *(what others believe you should become)*

3. Intended effort *(how much effort the students intended to expend)*

4. International posture *(attitudes towards English as an international language)*

5. Integrativeness *(Gardner's term for wanting to join another community by learning an L2)*

6. Instrumentality promotion *(positive aspects of Gardner's instrumentality such as learning to reach an academic goal)*

7. Instrumentality prevention *(negative aspects of Gardner's instrumentality)*

8. Parental encouragement   *(positive influence from parents)*

9. Teacher competence   *(the standard of the teaching)*

10. Teacher rapport   *(the relationship of the teacher to the students)*

11. Group cohesiveness   *(whether the learning group have a good relationship or not)*

12. Group goal orientedness   *(the level of cohesiveness amongst student goals)*

13. Course materials *(the types of activities given)*

These categories were all based on different sources, amongst others Csizer & Dörnyei, 2005; Ryan, 2009; Taguchi et al., 2009 (Ibid, p.111). Asker's findings were that the classroom did not provide the tools needed for the students to reach their ideal-self goals (Ibid, p.238). Instead, he concluded that the students adjusted their future-self images to better fit their learning situation (Ibid, p.238).

2.4 Summary

The *L2 Motivational Self System* has therefore been tested and confirmed by many different studies. Some focussed more on the learning experience, and others on the L2 future-self guides. There appear to be very few, however, that specifically investigate the relationship between the learning experience and the L2 *possible selves*. Asker completed his study on this specific area in Libya, over an entire year. He did not limit his investigation to the classroom, but also looked at *macro* factors such as

social influences in the students' lives outside of the classroom. Due to time constraints, I have chosen to investigate the classroom specifically, in Swedish gymnasium schools (ages 16 to 19) and how this particular part of the learning experience can influence the L2 *possible selves* of the students.

3.0 Methodology

3.1 The Foundations of the Study

As I have previously mentioned, this study is an investigation of Dörnyei's *L2 motivational self system*. In particular, it is an investigation into the relationship between the *L2 learning experience* and the *possible selves*. The *L2 learning experience* is a very broad concept and could include countless elements of learning an L2, including daily interactions with others, watching television or listening to the radio, reading signs, and much more. I have therefore chosen to narrow down my investigation to the learning experience of the language classroom. In addition to this, since beginning this investigation, I have discovered a study carried out by Asker (2011) which also investigates elements of the relationship between the learning experience and the *possible selves* (see section 2.0.2.4). Similarly to Asker's study, I have chosen to use questionnaires, observation and interviews to investigate the relationship between *possible selves* and the *L2 learning experience*. However, my investigation will also differ from his because I will be looking at upper-secondary school students (16 to 19 year olds) in Sweden, and I have created questionnaires with a different focus to his. I have chosen to concentrate on the specifics of the *ideal* and *ought-to* selves and the classroom environment, which I have based on Dörnyei's criteria for motivation in the classroom (1994). This will be discussed in more detail below.

3.1.1 Subjects and Setting

The current investigation has been carried out in an upper-secondary school for 16 to 19 year olds in southern Sweden, in 2013. Specifically, the students are learning English as a second language and their teachers are native Swedish and Danish speakers with a very high standard of English. The students are enrolled on two different programs, the first of which is a science-based program. The

second is a sociological program, which includes media, communication and politics, amongst other subjects. Both programs include English as a mandatory subject, but the sociological program requires the students to learn at least one other modern language. Some of the students are studying a mixture of the two.

3.2 Methods

3.2.1 Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

Motivational studies tend to lend themselves to qualitative methods of investigation, because of the complex and dynamic nature of motivation (Dörnyei, 2011, p.204). It is difficult to gain a comprehensive picture of an individual's motivation, including changes over time, and emotional factors, without asking them about their experience and opinions. One effective way of understanding an individual's thoughts, therefore, is to ask him or her questions and analyse his or her answers. In addition to this, observation can help to confirm or refute accounts. For these reasons, I have decided to carry out an observation in class, in order to understand better what the classroom environment is actually like in this particular scenario. I have also decided to conduct interviews with two students to get a clearer picture of their *ideal* and *ought-to selves* and their *classroom environment*. The quantitative element of this investigation is based on questionnaires given to 48 students regarding their *possible selves,* their impression of the *classroom environment,* and how it affects them. The aim of this data is to support or contradict my observations from the classroom and interviews.

3.2.2 Questionnaires

The questionnaires are designed to gain a representation of the students' *ideal self, ought-to self* and their observations, and thoughts, on their *classroom environment.* In addition to this they are intended to capture their perceptions as to whether the *classroom environment* enhances, or mitigates against their *possible selves.* The questionnaire uses statements, and a scalar from 1 – 5 which allows the students to rate their own assessment from *very true of me* to *not at all true of me.* Some of the questions are negatively weighted in order to try to make the questionnaire as neutral as possible.

Before the questionnaires were handed out, the students took part in an oral exercise to help them start thinking about themselves in the future, and what they wanted to do with English. I asked them to work in pairs and talk about how they imagine themselves in the future, and *if* and *how* they would be using English. I then asked them to feed back to me, and the rest of the class, in order to a) ensure they completed the exercise, and b) help them inspire each other. I then asked them to complete the questionnaire and, where possible, write a few sentences about their current area of study, and their intentions for using English in the future. The aim of the latter part of the exercise was to try to clarify some of their ideas about how they envisaged their future.

Section A of the questionnaire is taken from the MSLQ created by Pintrich *et al* in 1986. I used the section which aims to capture the level of motivation within students, in order to gain an understanding of *how motivated* the students are, before investigating *why*. I chose to omit the sections which looked at *self-efficacy for learning and performance* and *test anxiety* because confidence is covered in later sections of the questionnaire and I am not including the test environment in this study. The sections I have included are *intrinsic* and *extrinsic goal orientation, task value,* and *control of learning beliefs.* The first of these categories looks at the *intrinsic* reasons for participation, such as challenge and satisfaction (Ibid, p.9). The second looks at *extrinsic* reasons, such as praise and grades (Ibid, p.10). The third looks at the student's estimations on how useful or important the tasks are (Ibid, p.11) and finally, the fourth looks at the students' belief that they control the outcome of their studying depending on how much effort they put in (Ibid, p.12). Section B asks questions to establish the *ideal L2 self* and the *ought-to L2 self* of the learner whilst Section C looks at the classroom environment. Finally, section D aims to capture whether the learners feel, or perceive, that the learning environment has an effect on their *ideal* and *ought-to* selves, and if so, to what extent. The statements in sections C and D are based on the classroom environment criteria specified by Dörnyei in 1994 (p.277 and 278. See section 2.0.1.4 of this paper)

3.2.3 Observation

Due to time and size constraints on this investigation, it is not appropriate to use MOLT (see section 2.0.2). I have therefore created an observation sheet which is simplified and which will allow me to

make a note of my observations during a one and a half hour lesson. I have included the elements of Dörnyei's classroom environment (1994) mentioned above as broad categories for my note-taking (see Appendix 1). The aim of the observation sheet is to allow me to match my own observations to the students' questionnaire answers, regarding the classroom environment. I am not making a detailed investigation of the classroom environment, but rather using the student perspective and enhancing or redefining it with my own observations. The observations can also be further investigated through individual interviews.

3.2.4 Interviews

Semistructured interviews will be carried out with two students from the different classes. There will be no strict format for the interviews, but they will instead be conducted as an informal conversation, in order to keep the students relaxed and encourage them to be as truthful as possible (Dörnyei, 2011 , p. 236). See interview guide in Appendix 5. The students' questionnaire results will be examined first, to decide whether there is anything in particular that is unclear or of particular interest, and should therefore be highlighted in the interviews. I will also try to delve further into the *ideal* and *ought-to* selves described by the questionnaire and writing exercise and, moreover, investigate the students' opinions and observations as to how their classroom environment affects their *possible selves.* If I have observed anything interesting in the classroom in terms of the behaviour of the student or teacher, for example, I can clarify this in the interview too.

3.3 Analysing the Data

3.3.1 Questionnaire Analysis

The questionnaires will comprise the quantitative element of the investigation, and the observations and interviews will be used to complement this information. The overall level of motivation in the classes will be recorded from Section A (using the total scores) and each student's personal type and level of motivation can be used to compare with their answers about their *possible selves.* This should

help achieve a clearer picture of their personal *ideal* and *ought-to* selves. Each student's ideal and ought-to self will be examined individually but will also be used to create an impression of different patterns of motivation and *possible selves* in each class. For instance, there may be one or several typical *ideal selves* in each class. This can then be compared with section D to establish whether there is a link between the *possible selves* of the class as a whole, and the classroom environment. Section C should give an indication of the nature of the classroom environment itself, what is available and how the relationships between teachers and students and between fellow students are. Finally, section D will be analysed to get a general and individual pictures of how the students' feel their classroom affects their *possible selves*. In summary, the questionnaires will give both a general class-picture, and an individual one that can be investigated further through observation and interviews.

3.3.1 Observation Analysis

The notes from the lesson observation will be used to confirm or refute the information given by students on their classroom environment in the questionnaires. This information can in turn be used in the interviews to clarify further and to encourage the students to delve deeper into their thoughts on the classroom environment, and how it affects or does not affect their goals, in particular their *possible selves*.

3.3.1 Interview Analysis

Firstly, I will use the information gained in the interviews to compare to the results of the questionnaires in order to highlight any particular areas of interest, namely; differences or similarities with their answers in the two scenarios. Moreover, I will specifically look for the *possible selves* of the interviewed students, and try to get as clear an image as possible. I will then look at their observations and feelings about the classroom, and how it may, or may not, affect their goals and *possible selves*. It will be important to refer back to both the questionnaires and the observation notes in order to draw any conclusions about the effect of the classroom on the *possible selves* of the students in question.

3.4 Expected Outcomes

It is difficult to know at this stage how motivated these students are, and what their classroom environment is like. However, I expect to find that the classroom environment has quite a profound effect on the students' *possible selves*. I would envisage it as having a strong link to their *ought-to selves* because the teacher and their peers make up a large part of this *self image*. The effect on their *ideal selves* is more difficult to predict. It has been my own experience, as a motivated language learner, that all the elements of Dörnyei mentions, in particular the teacher, can have an impact on the *ideal self*. However, this is quite personal and can be different for different personalities.

3.5 Limitations

This study is limited in time and scope, as previously mentioned, and therefore cannot give us a comprehensive overview of the relationship between *possible L2 selves* and the *L2 learning experience* outside of the classroom. It is limited to these particular students, in an upper-secondary school classroom environment in Sweden. In order to expand on this investigation it would be necessary to spend considerably more time investigating students from different schools, in different countries over time. It would be useful, for instance, to conduct follow-up interviews to establish if *possible selves* are affected over time by the classroom environment, and to compare results from different countries. Other aspects of the *L2 Learning experience* should also be investigated, including factors such as background and home environment.

4.0 Results and Analysis

4.1 Summary

There were 48 students involved in the questionnaire and observations, from two different classes. The students were also from a range of different programs, including social studies and sciences. They demonstrated a vast range of motivational levels, but on average the group was reasonably motivated. Their *ideal* selves were, on average, stronger than their *ought-to* selves, suggesting that their own plans and desires for the future were stronger than the pressures they may have felt from others. When the overall motivation was measured for each student against their *possible selves* there was no

obvious connection between, for example, a highly motivated person and a strong *ideal* or *ought-to* self. In terms of their environment, the majority of both classes scored their teachers highly although there was quite a range of results, and there were greatly varying results for group cohesiveness, group orientedness and course material. Facilities scored highly for the majority of students.

4.2 Questionnaires

4.2.1 The Whole Group – Level of Motivation

Table 1
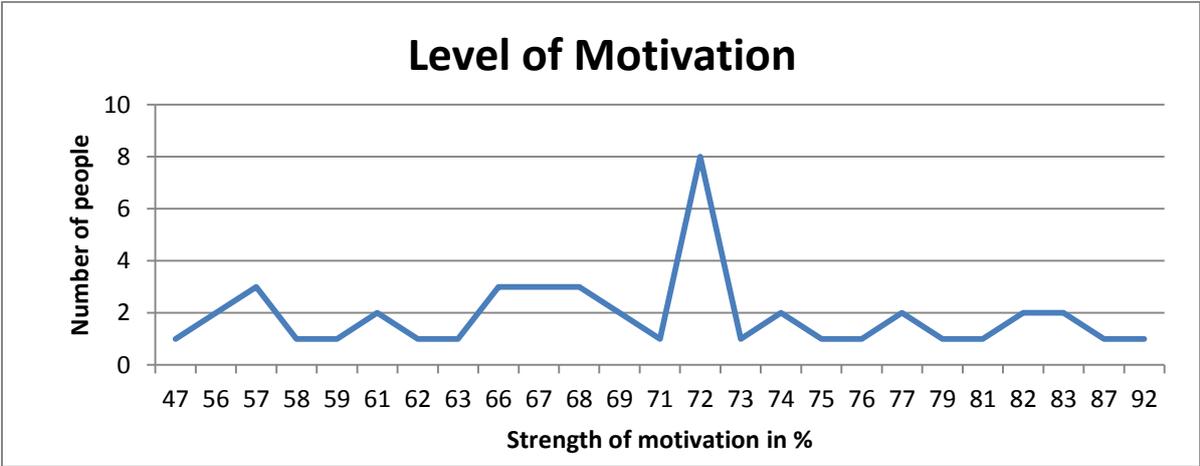
There was a vast range of motivation levels, ranging from 47% to 92%, so the minimum motivation in the class was 47%. Only one person was under 50%, and just one had over 90%. The mean level of motivation for the group was 70%. Therefore, the group had relatively strong motivation to learn English as a whole, but it exhibited a wide range of levels.

4.2.3 The Whole Group - Frequency of Strength of *Ideal* and *Ought-to* Selves

Table 2

Strength of *ideal* and *ought-to* selves
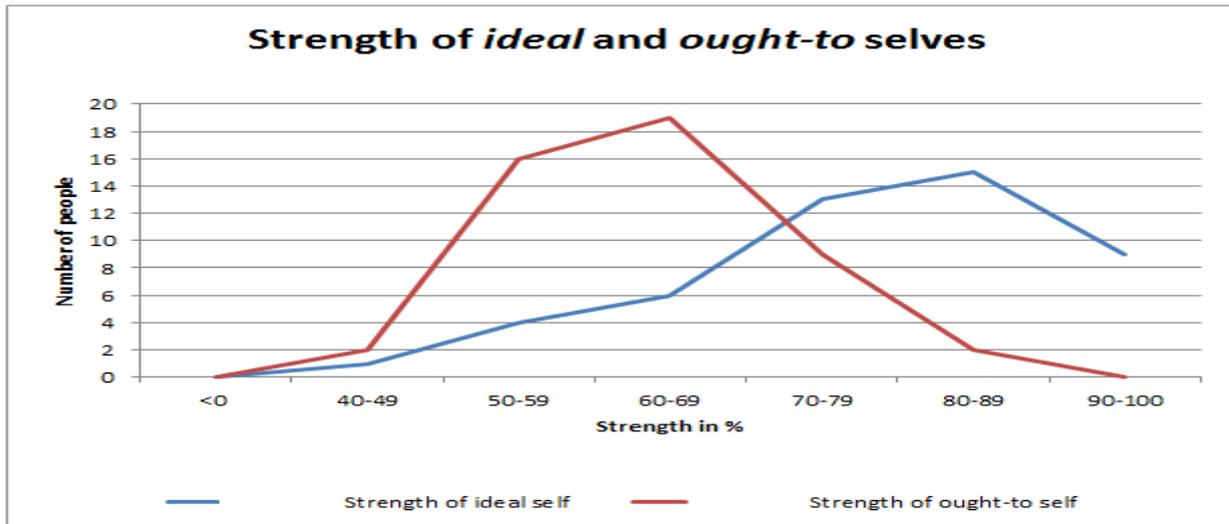
The strength of the *ideal* selves of the students ranged from 45% to 98% and the mean strength was 78%. The strength of the *ought-to* selves of the students ranged from 43% to 83% and the mean was only 63%. The majority of the students had an *ideal self* strength of 60 – 90% whilst for the *ought-to self* the majority scored between 50 and 70%. Therefore the *ideal* selves of the students were generally stronger than their *ought-to* selves.

4.2.4 The Whole Group - Information about the Classroom Environment

Table 3

Range	Teacher	Group cohesiveness	Group Orientedness	Course Material	Facilities
20-29	0	0	1	0	0
30-39	0	0	1	1	0
40-49	2	1	6	2	2
50-59	7	4	11	8	4
60-69	11	11	13	14	9
70-79	11	12	8	16	17
80-89	12	14	6	5	10
90-100	5	6	2	2	6
Total	**48**	**48**	**48**	**48**	**48**

Table 3a

Classroom Environment Scores
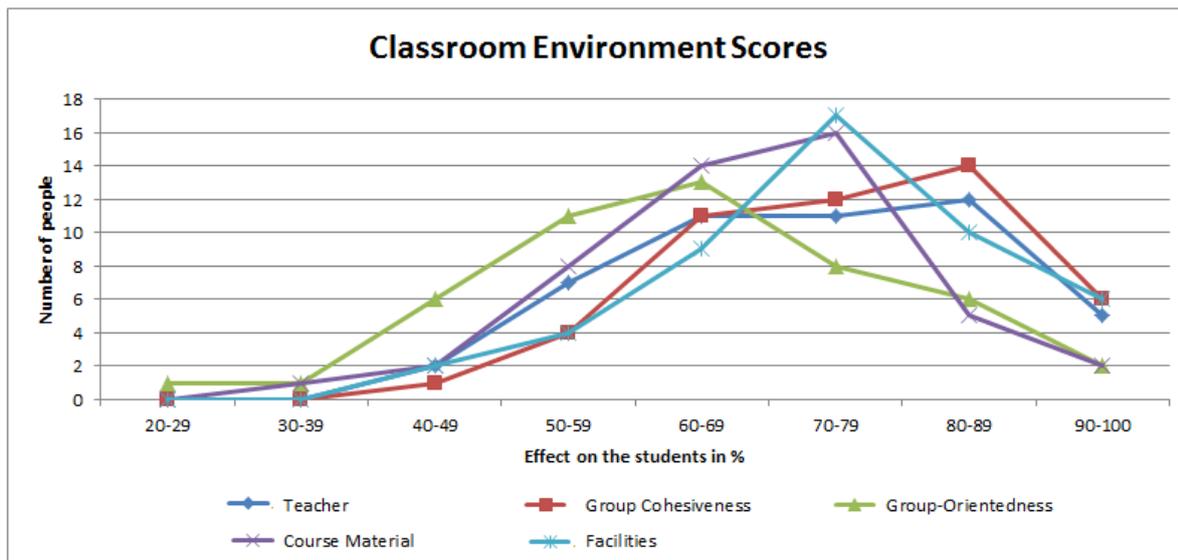
There was a most even spread of results for the teacher, who was rated between 43% and 98%, with the majority scoring over 60%. The group-orientedness and course material scores were more extreme. They started as low as 25% and 35% and reached a peak of 90% and 95% respectively. The lowest scores given were for group-orientedness. Over half of the students gave the facilities a rating of 70% or higher, and the same was true of group cohesiveness.

Table 4

Mean scores for classroom environment
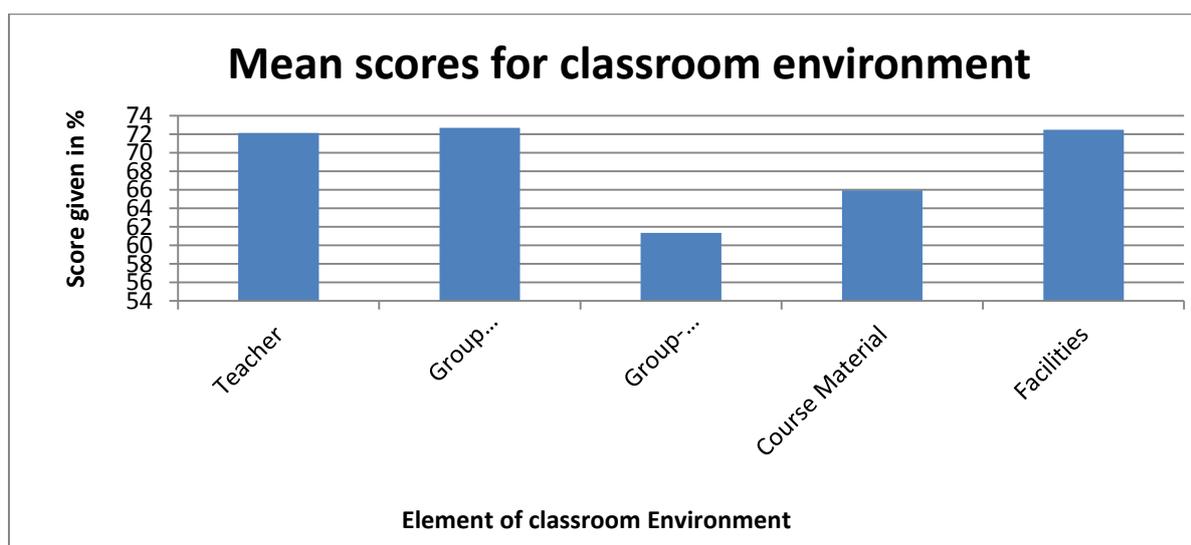
The students scored their teachers highly in general, and there was a mean score of 72%. The range was from 43% to 98% but only one fifth of them gave them a score under 60%. Therefore, there was a

generally positive attitude to the teachers. The group cohesiveness was rated at an average of 73% by the whole group and 90% of them rated the group cohesiveness at over 70%. Consequently, the majority of students believed the group worked well together. The group-orientedness (common goals) had a rather lower mean score of 61%, suggesting that the groups' goals were more individual. The lowest score given was 25% and the highest was 90% , so there was a considerable range of opinions. The course material's mean score was also lower, at 66%. The majority of students gave the course material a score of between 50% and 80%. Therefore, the course material could be defined as average in the eyes of the student. They did not appear to think that it was either particularly bad or particularly good. Finally, the facilities were given a mean score of 73% and ranged from 45% to 100%. This was the area that was given the largest number of scores over 70% suggesting that this was the area they felt most positively about as a group.

4.2.5 The Whole Group - Effects of the Classroom Environment on the *Ideal* and *Ought-to* selves

Table 5
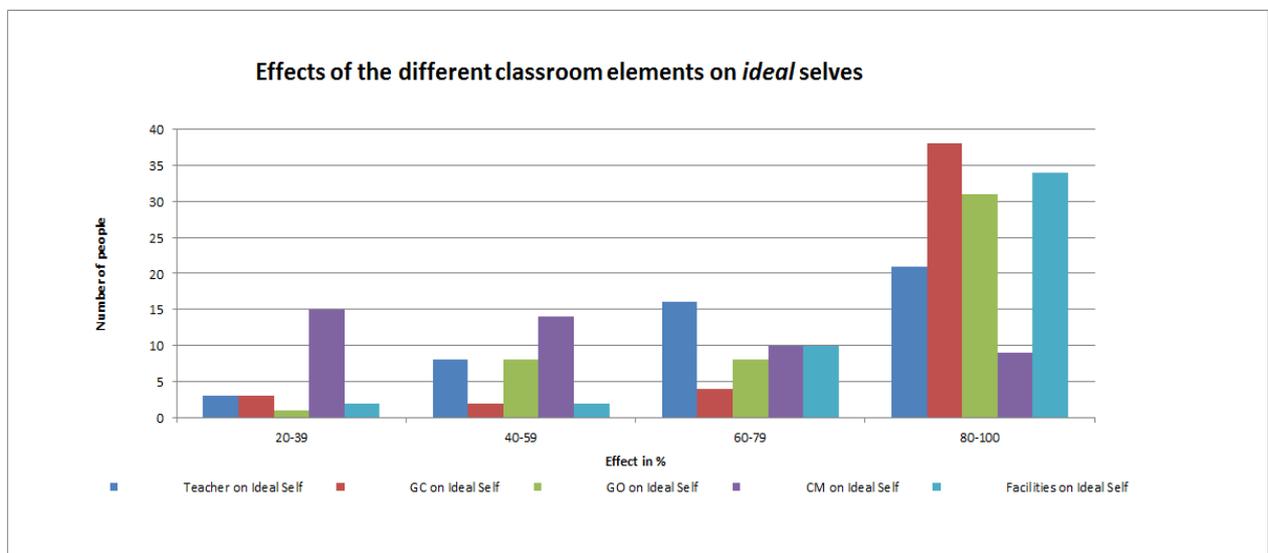
This diagram demonstrates that a substantial number of the students in this experiment rated group cohesiveness, group orientedness, facilities and even the teacher to a slightly lesser extent, as important influences on their *ideal selves*. Course material, on the other hand, seemed to have quite a

varied effect on the individual students. Similar numbers rated it at each of the stages between 20 and 100%.

Table 6
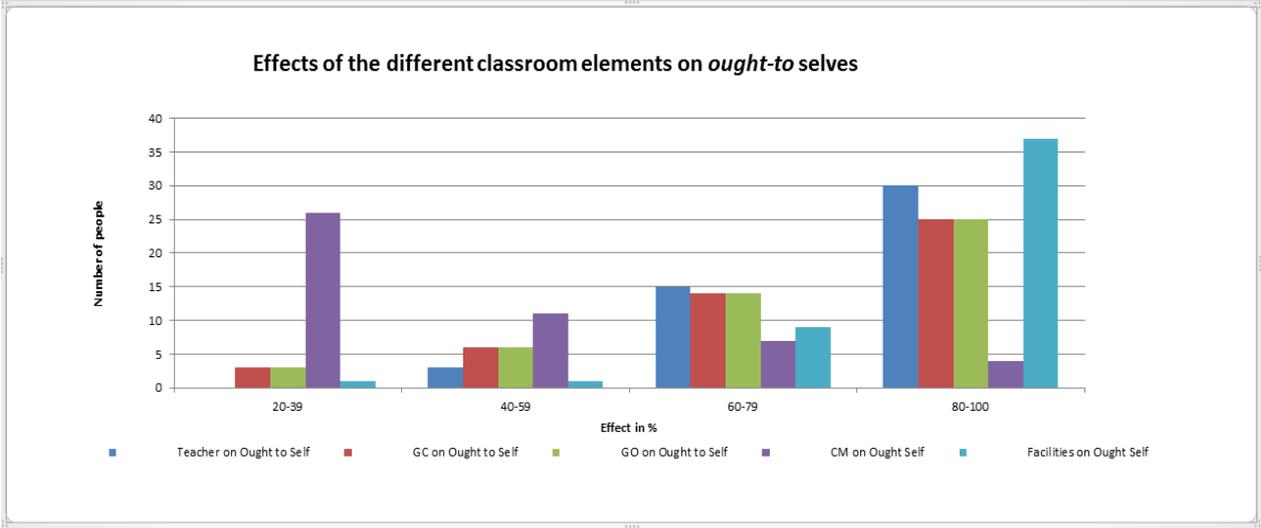
The results for the effect on the *ought-to* self were quite different. The course material still appeared to have very little effect for a majority of students whilst the teacher and the facilities had a significant influence on over 30 of the 48 students' *ought-to* selves. Group cohesiveness was more evenly spread, suggesting that there was more discrepancy as to how much the individual students felt it affected their *ought-to* selves.

Table 7

Mean effect of classroom environment on students
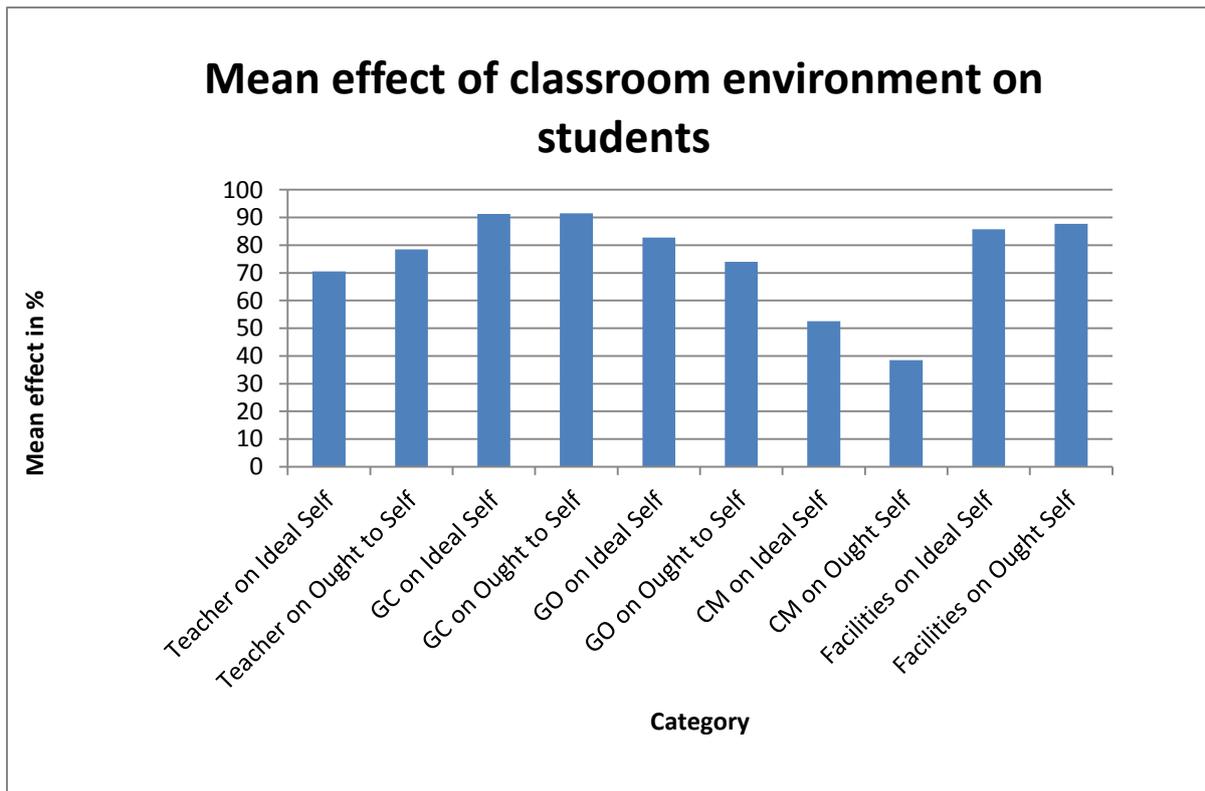
There was a generally similar pattern for the effect on the *ideal* and *ought-to* selves. The course material (CM) had a low effect on either of the selves showing an average of just over 50% effect on the *ideal* self and just under 40% on the *ought-to* self. Group cohesiveness (GC) appeared to have had the strongest effect on the group as a whole with a mean effect of just over 90% on both the *selves* and 38 out of 48 people giving its effect on their *ideal* self a score of over 80%. For the *ought-to* self, the category that appeared to have the most effect is the facilities. Interestingly, the course material seemed to have the least effect on both, with a mean score of just 58% effect on the *ideal* self and 38% on the *ought to* self.

4.3 The Interviewees

Table 8

Strength of motivation and the possible selves
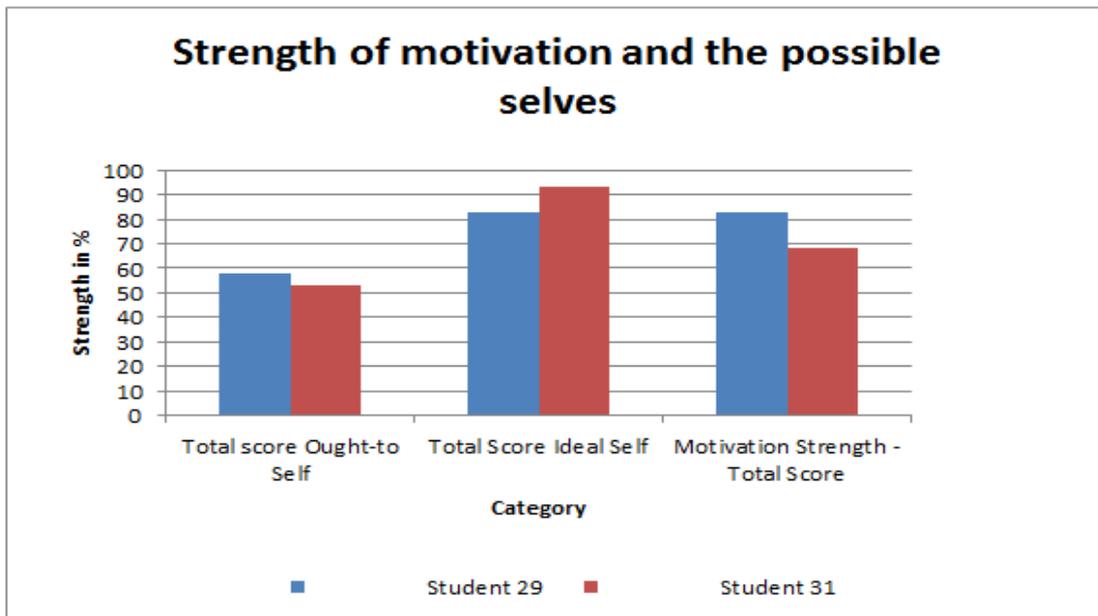
Here it is possible to see that both students had low to average strength *ought-to* selves, around the 50% mark, whilst both had an *ideal self* strength of over 80%, which was higher than the class mean of 78%. Their total motivation was over 80% for student 29 and just under 70% for student 31. The class mean was 70% so the two students were either side of this mean.

Table 9

Effects on the *ideal* selves
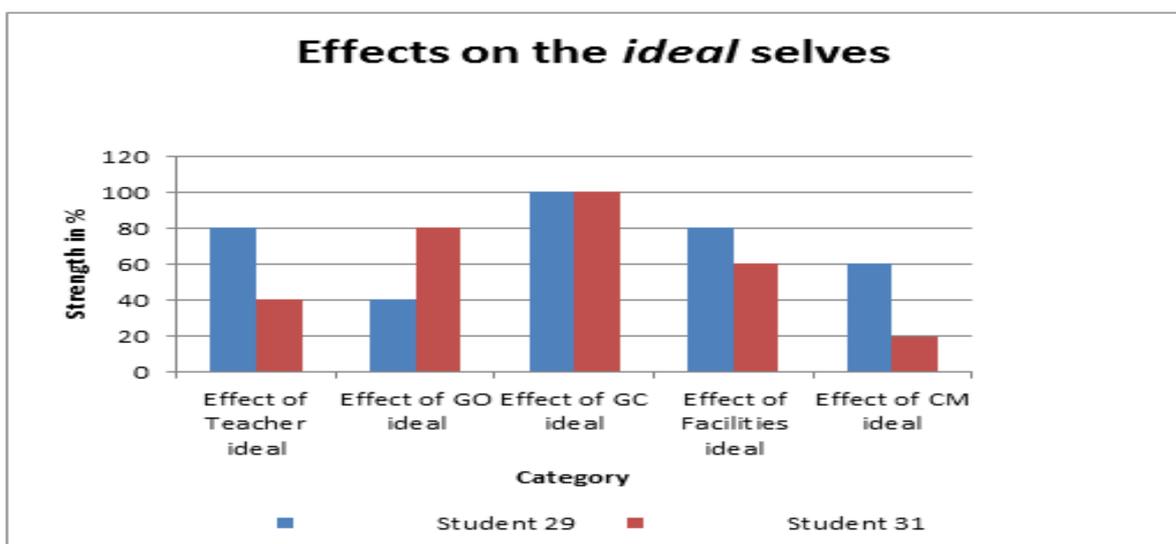
Student 29's *ideal self* was mostly affected by the group cohesiveness (GC), then the teacher and the facilities, followed by the course material (CM) and finally the group-orientedness. Student 31's *ideal*

self was also mostly affected by the group cohesiveness, but then by the group-orientedness, the facilities, the teacher, and least by the course material.

Table 10
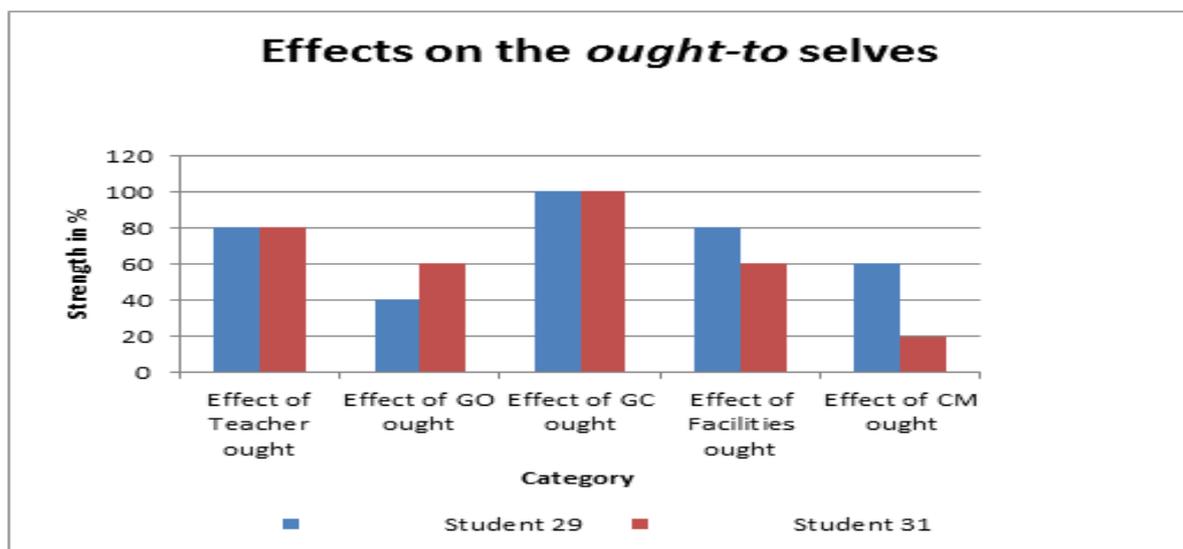
The effect on the *ought-to* selves of both students was equally high for group cohesiveness (100%) and the teacher (80%). For student 29, the next most influential element of the classroom environment was facilities, then course material, and least, the group orientedness. For student 31, the order was slightly different and group orientedness and facilities showed a 60% influence, while course material only gave 20%.

4.4 Observations

Below is a table showing the observation notes from the two different classes.

Table 10

Observation Area	Class 1	Class 2
Lesson content / Theme	*They watched a clip of a scientist who had been researching love. They stopped and talked about it at different intervals. Then they were asked to discuss it in groups. The teacher stopped the clip at various*	*Practice for the national oral tests. The discussions were about a topic on which they had written essays: the right to bear arms. They read an article, had to define the underlined words to each other, to check understanding, and then answer*

	intervals to check understanding.	*questions together.*
Interest?	*Students seemed interested, but a small group were talking to each other and looking at their mobiles. She had to tell a few of them to put their mobile telephones away. Otherwise students could answer her comprehension questions.*	*All the students appeared to be interested as they were concentrating on the task. The teacher only had to say to one person that they would have to move if they did not concentrate.*
Relevance?	*Very relevant as it was about love, which appeared amusing and interesting to these teenagers.*	*The subject was familiar to them as they had written essays on it previously. Therefore it was relevant to this group. The practice itself was relevant too because they were practising for a test they would all be completing.*
Confidence / Expectancy?	*Difficult to tell, but no nervous questions. Most students seemed happy to do the exercise. No protests or nerves were apparent.*	*There did not appear to be any nerves - no nervous questions asked; they just got on with the task in hand.*
Satisfaction?	*The students appeared happy to do the task and there was a sense of satisfaction in being able to talk about these subjects in English.*	*The students appeared satisfied with the task. No-one protested or felt it was too difficult - or at least they did not voice this.*
Students wanting to please teacher?	*Generally, yes. Only a few were not paying attention. Others did as she asked happily and spoke English to each other about this topic. They also answered her questions in English.*	*Yes, the students showed respect to the teacher. One or two had mobile telephones out at the start, but as soon as they were reminded to put them away, they did so and got on with the task in hand.*
Autonomy? Students involved in decisions?	*The students could choose whom to work with but not what to talk about.*	*They were allowed to choose whom to work with but not what to talk about.*
Modelling / Enthusiastic?	*The teacher spoke only English with the students and showed enthusiasm by doing so. She asked comprehension questions and used humour to keep the students interested.*	*Yes, the teacher spoke mainly English with the students, and this encouraged them to answer his questions in English.*

Task presentation? Capture students?	The teacher asked comprehension questions and used humour to keep the students interested.	The task was introduced and comprehension checks were done so the students were ready to do the task. They listened and answered his questions diligently.
Feedback?	The students were asked comprehension questions during the clip - to make sure they were keeping up and understood. She did not correct their English as they answered her. When they were working in groups she went round to each group to help them individually.	The teacher went around to each group individually and gave feedback and help as they worked.
Group mood? (goal-orienedness)	Most students were involved and enthusiastic. However, some students were on their mobile telephones and computers instead of watching and participating.	Most people in the group were working hard on the task. The national test is a common goal for all of them.
Group norms?	The norm appeared to be to concentrate and participate. As above, though, there were a few who were not focussing.	The girls sat on one side of the classroom and the boys on the other. There were not many who wanted to talk in front of the others, so there were a few who answered all the questions. However, they worked more happily in groups.
Group Cohesion?	Most of the group seemed to work well together and get on. I was in a couple of lessons and noticed that people did not always sit with the same friends or in the same place.	I was in a couple of lessons and noticed that people did not always sit with the same friends or in the same place. However, there was a boy-girl split in both lessons.
Competitive / cooperative / individualistic goal structures?	They seemed to work well together, there did not seem to be anything very individualistic. They may have different personal goals, but they cooperate to reach them as far as I could see from this lesson.	They may well have individual goals but they cooperated well in their groups. There was only one student who seemed to be competitive and show signs of wanting to be better than the others, but this was also apparent in the questionnaires. The teacher handled him well and drew him back into the group.

Although the themes and lesson content were different for each of the lessons, there was a high level

of interest and relevance for both. In the first case, the subjects were relevant to teenagers and in the

second, the subject was something the students knew something about due to having written an essay on it earlier.

Confidence and expectancy appeared to be high too. No students appeared nervous about the assignment and no questions were asked in either class. The students simply tackled the task in hand. There seemed to be a relatively high level of satisfaction during and after the exercise in both classes, because there were no complaints and the students appeared reasonably content while they worked.

Most students appeared to want to please the teacher, in both lessons. However, there was one in the second class, and two or three in the first class, who were using their mobile telephones instead of listening to the teacher, or completing the assignment. In both cases, however, once the teacher asked them to put the mobile telephones away, they did so immediately.

Both teachers modeled by speaking English, and showing enthusiasm. Yet, in the second class there were moments when the teacher used Swedish to check comprehension. All the students who answered questions did so in English, without protest. Feedback was given to groups individually during the discussions. In both classes, the students were able to choose who they wanted to work with but not what they talked about or what kind of task they were to complete.

Both groups appeared to get along well together, and the only difference was that in the second class, the girls sat on one side of the classroom, and the boys on the other. I was present in more than one lesson during this experiment and, in both classes, the students chose to sit in slightly different places and sometimes with different people in each of the lessons.

Group norms seemed to be that listening and concentrating was important, but that the occasional student did not concentrate, and instead played on his or her mobile until asked to put it away. In the first class, the goals appeared to be generally cooperative as the students helped each other and did not try to distract or disrupt others. In the second class, however, there was one student who displayed a desire to be superior to the rest of the class. He used a very formal register of English, almost literary, to correct another student's English. The teacher soon corrected this by explaining that it was not appropriate to correct another student and that although what he said was also correct, it was too formal for the needs of the task.

4.5 Interviews

The two students interviewed came from different classes. They demonstrated some similarities and some clear differences in terms of their *ideal* and *ought-to* selves. The interviews were designed to elaborate on the results of the questionnaire and delve more deeply into the opinions and observations of the two students. A comparison is made in the discussion section (section 5.0).

4.5.1 Student 29

 (See appendix 4 for transcript)

In the interview, it became apparent that this student was highly aware of his own level of responsibility in learning and becoming a successful English speaker. When asked who was responsible for his learning, he said "If you're negative about your future you can't reach your goal!"

He did not have a particularly specific image of his *ideal* future self, but he was able to narrow down a couple of goals. He said: "I'm not really sure what I want to do in the future, but I have been able to narrow it down to helping people" and he complemented this statement with: "I can imagine myself working in other countries." In addition to this, he demonstrated confidence in his own abilities, when he said: "I have a pretty good opinion of my English knowledge". Thus he was confident he would achieve, but not entirely clear about what he was trying to accomplish.

He was, however, clear about what his parents and friends expected him to be. He said: "my family think I might become a doctor or something." He explained this with his interest in science, but he was not sure whether he shared this goal with them. When asked about the influence of the rest of his class, he said that for those that he does not particularly get on with: "I don't like them that much, so I just don't care what they think!" When questioning him about his *ought-to* self, I asked if the following statement was true: "You're not particularly worried about what other people think about your English, but you would like to be seen as good at it" and his answer was "Definitely".

When questioned about his teacher, he said that he found her very good, and named in particular that she was "helpful … enthusiastic … (and) cares about you". The facilities were not discussed. He said about that group: "Some people just don't get along." However, he added later that he thought his group had a better relationship than many other groups in his opinion. He praised the course book and confirmed that he thought most of what they did in class was relevant to them and interesting.

Finally, the effect of all these elements on his *ideal* and *ought-to* selves was mixed. He was quite positive about his teacher in the interview and was able to pinpoint the fact that the teacher demonstrated that she cared about them and was enthusiastic. The interview analysis suggests that saw the group as generally quite cohesive, and that only a few had differing goals. He suggested that he was not affected by the different goals in the class. Finally, he talked highly of the course-book they used online, and was mainly positive about the work they do in class.

4.5.1 Student 31

 (See appendix 6 for transcript)

Student 31 stated in the interview that his motivation was higher at the beginning of term and tended to tail off towards the middle. He confirmed that he wanted to get a good grade for English but that he knows he could have done better if he had kept working at the level he had started the term with.

When asked about his *ideal* self, this student suggested that he knew he wanted to be a lawyer. When asked if he was very sure about what he wanted in the future he said: "Right now I am, but it can change". Therefore, he currently has a very strong *ideal* self image, but he is aware that it could change with time.

In the interview, he mentioned that he was involved in young people's political groups and that therefore his friends and family probably expected him to become a politician. He also believed that people would respect him if he became a successful English user. In addition to this, however, he implied that he was not affected by what other people wanted or expected of him, he had confidence in himself. Therefore although he appeared to have a clear image of what other people expected, he did not let it affect him very much, hence the low score for *ought-to* self.

The student said about his teacher: "I've always, always felt that he cares about us, he always asks if we understand". This confirmed that he rated his teacher highly. When we talked about the course material he suggested that it was sometimes too difficult, so he did not read it properly. He also said that he liked most of the work, but thought that reading books and doing reviews was "unnecessary". The interview did not successfully highlight anything in particular about the group

cohesiveness or orientedness because the student was not able to elaborate further than that the group mostly had a good relationship and that most of them had similar goals, but some did not. Finally, In terms of the facilities, the element that the student commented on was the computers they have access to and that they are effective for their purpose.

The effect of all these elements on the student varied depending on whether they were being related to the *ideal* or *ought-to* self. Student 31 demonstrated an awareness that some members of the group had different goals to the majority, but did not state that this fact had any particular effect on either of his *possible selves*. He was both positive and negative towards the content of the lessons but did not appear to feel that it had any particular effect on his goals. He stated that he could not think of anything that could be done better in class to help him reach his goals. Finally, with regards to facilities, he suggested that he personally preferred not to use a computer in class because it could be a distraction, but that he thought it was useful on many occasions.

There was a misconstruction in the question asked with regards to group cohesiveness and orientedness: I suggested that there was an overall low effect of the classroom on both his *selves* and he confirmed this, which could have been because of the leading nature of the question.

5.0 Discussion

5.1 The Implications of the Questionnaire Results

The aim of this study was to determine whether there was a connection between the classroom environment and the students' *possible selves*. The questionnaire results indicated that group orientedness and cohesion had a significant impact on most students' *ideal selves*, and even the *ought-to selves*. The teacher also had an important impact particularly on the *ought-to* self, but also on the *ideal* self. Equally, the vast majority of students found that the facilities had a significant impact on their *possible selves*. On the other hand, course material had a very varied effect on both.

The implications of these results are that the group had the most important impact on the students' *possible selves* and that, therefore, it is important to have a group who works well together

and has similar goals in order to enhance future *self* images and motivation. Further research may confirm or deny this proposition but if it is found to be true, the implications for language learning are that groups could be designed based on common interests and encouraged to work and socialize together outside of the classroom to enhance cohesiveness.

Moreover, both the teacher and the facilities played a significant role in the *ideal* and *ought-to* selves of students learning English. If this theory is also supported by further studies, the implications for teacher training and classroom design would be significant. Teacher training could include learning about the nature of *possible selves* and how to investigate and develop them for individual students. It could, in turn, have implications for the curricula for language learning. In addition to this, classroom design and learning tools could be developed to enhance the positive possible self-images the students may have. In the case of the students involved in this particular study, the learning tools were all available on their individual computers and this, according to the questionnaire, was satisfactory for them. Other students may prefer to have books and other tools available. Classrooms could be made agreeable to several different requirements.

Much focus has previously been placed upon course material, but the results of this questionnaire suggest that the content of the learning is not necessarily important to all students. In the case of English, some of the students felt that everything they learnt was relevant because they would always need English in the future. Most of them were satisfied with the course material in general, so this could also account for the varying results in terms of its impact.

5.2 The Implications of the Interview Analysis

5.2.1 Student 29

According to the questionnaires student 29 had a motivational strength of 83% and the same strength for his *ideal* self. As discussed in the results section, he did not have a clear *self*-image for his future. Therefore, he was not aware that he had such a strong *ideal* self as his questionnaire suggested. His *ought-to* self was much lower at 58% but, in the interview, he stated that he thought his family and friends expected him to become a doctor because of his interest in science, and he wanted to be seen as being good at English. Therefore, I would conclude that he was more interested in what other people

think than he realised. On the other hand, although he was clear on what people expected of him, he did not necessarily feel pressured to adhere to their expectations, which could explain the low *ought-to* self strength.

This same student gave the teacher a high score of 83%. His answers also showed that she had an 80% effect on both his *ideal* and *ought-to* selves. If he valued her highly, it could be argued that she allowed him to develop his English in a way that he liked, and therein his *ideal* self could be developed. The strong connection to his *ought-to* self may be due to the nature of this *self* which requires the individual to have an image of what others, including the teacher, expect of him. He confirmed his high opinion of the teacher in the interview when he said: "She's very helpful, in class, and … you see that she's enthusiastic about teaching English … you can notice she cares about you". This implied that, for this particular student, his teacher was effective because she was helpful, enthusiastic, and caring. If further study is carried out on teachers that students see as effective, and non-effective, it may be possible to determine common factors, and teach some of the positive skills during teacher-training or to select candidates for study or employment.

Student 29 gave one of the lowest scores for group cohesiveness and orientedness at 60% for each**,** but the interview did not exactly confirm this. He said: "The class as a group gets along pretty well, better than most classes" but**,** in the same interview, he suggested that there were clear subgroups within the group and that there were some people he did not like. Therefore**,** it is not entirely clear what he thought, but there was definitely a sense given that there was at least a small subgroup of people that did not fit in with the rest of the group socially. Notably, the effect of the group cohesion on both of his *selves* was, according to the questionnaire, 100%. In the interview, he said of the small number of people he disliked: "I don't like them that much, so I just don't care what they think!" but this contradicted the results of the questionnaire. It is possible that he was trying not to let it affect him**,** but that this was not something he could control emotionally. The results for group orientedness were more in line with the impression he gave in the interview, because the questionnaire suggested a 40% effect on both selves. This result was markedly out of step with the majority of other students in the group, and is a reminder that each student is individual and that should be taken into account in lesson planning and teacher training.

Finally, he gave a score of 70% to the course material, and 60% to the effect on both his *selves*. He therefore rated the material highly but perceived an average effect on his motivation. In the interview, he praised the course-book they used online, and was mainly positive about the work they do in class, suggesting it is mostly relevant. However, he also stated that he thought everything was relevant because it was English and he would need it in the future. These results imply that, although the course material was useful, it was, in his opinion, neither particularly good nor particularly bad in terms of helping him reach his goals.

Therefore, this interview confirmed the strong effect of his teacher, the average effect of the course material and the minimal effect of the group orientedness, while it contradicted the stark effect of the group cohesiveness perceived in the questionnaire answers.

5.2.2 Student 31

Student 31's motivation was quite low according to the questionnaire. He had a score of 68%. This appeared inconsistent with his 93% *ideal* self strength. This was something that could not be explained by the questionnaire results alone. In the interview, he said that his motivation was high at the beginning of term, but had tailed off over time. He did not appear, however, to be concerned that he would not do well despite this. It is possible, therefore, that he was motivated to get a good grade, but confident enough not to have to try too hard. The implication of this is that a strong *ideal* self does not necessarily mean a strong motivation in class. Therefore, in order to help this particular student reach his optimum level of English, changes may need to be made in the classroom. An example of such a change could be to change the level or type of text they are using in order to inspire him more. He complained that the texts are sometimes too difficult and that he then tended to lose interest.

His *ought-to* self was only scored at 53% but he seemed quite sure what others expected of him. He said that he knew others expected him to be a politician, because he is involved in young people's political groups, but he actually wants to be a lawyer. This would explain the discrepancy because, although he was aware of what others expected, he did not feel he had to please them and therefore his *ought-to* self was low. This was the case with the other interviewee too. Therefore, it is

possible to conclude that when confidence and the *ideal self* are strong, there is not necessarily a need for a strong *ought-to* self in terms of enhancing motivation.

When asked about the classroom environment in the questionnaire, student 31 gave scores between 70% and 75% for all elements. He said about his teacher: "I've always, always felt that he cares about us, he always asks if we understand". For this student then, two positive and significant features of a good teacher were paying attention and caring about the students. These features were also important to student 29. The implications are the same as stated above, notably, according to the questionnaire, the teacher did not have a particularly high effect on his *ideal* self (40%). This could be explained by the fact he has such a strong *ideal* self and therefore draws motivation from his own dreams rather than his teacher. However, the teacher had an effect of 80% on the *ought-to* self, which could, like with student 29, be attributed to the nature of the connection between the teacher's opinion and this type of *possible* self.

In terms of the course material, this student gave a score of 75% in the questionnaire, However, when we talked about it in the interview, he suggested that it was sometimes too difficult, so he did not read it properly. In terms of the effect on his *possible selves* he perceived a minimal effect of 20% on both. Therefore, he had an opinion about the effectiveness of the course material, but did not associate this with a particular connection to his own motivation. Again, as with student 29 and the results for the group as a whole, this suggests that course material was actually not particularly noteworthy in terms of the effect it has on motivation.

In the questionnaire, he gave his highest scores (100%) to the effect of the group cohesiveness on both his *ideal* and *ought-to* selves. This was not successfully confirmed or denied by the interview because of a misconstruction in the question asked. I suggested that there was an overall low effect of the classroom on both his *selves* and he confirmed this, which could have been because of the leading question. Group orientedness, however, had an 80% effect on the *ideal* self and 60% on the *ought-to* self. In the interview he simply demonstrated awareness that some members of the group had different goals from the majority, not that this fact had any particular effect on either of his *possible selves*. These results suggest that the group's nature and goals can have a considerable impact on motivation.

Finally, his questionnaire answers suggested a 60% effect on both *selves* by the facilities available. This average scoring was confirmed when he suggested that he personally preferred not to use a computer in class because it could be a distraction, but that he thought it was useful on many occasions. This student, therefore, was not greatly affected by facilities and is again, a reminder of the individuality of students and the importance of recognizing this in lesson planning and teacher-training.

5.3 Interviews as a Medium of Research

The fact that the interview highlighted some areas that contrasted with the questionnaire results confirm that quantitative data is not enough to draw conclusions on something as complex as motivation, and that qualitative results can prove an important complement. It also highlighted the importance of investigating the individual, and not simply drawing blanket conclusions for whole groups.

5.4 The Implications of the Observations

The observations confirmed what was said in the interviews, and the majority of the questionnaires. The teachers were enthusiastic and mainly used English, so they were modeling for the students. The majority of students were interested and the tasks appeared relevant to them. The level of motivation was generally high and only a few students demonstrated low motivation by not contributing to class. Both groups appeared to cooperate well and, although students may have had different goals for English, the majority appeared to be focusing on achieving a reasonable grade in English and demonstrated this by concentrating and participating in class. There were exceptions, as the questionnaires and interview highlighted.

5.5 The Implications of the Study as a Whole

There are several aspects of the classroom environment that appear to have an impact on students' *ideal* and *ought-to* selves, namely, the group cohesiveness and orientedness, the teacher, the facilities and, to a lesser extent than expected, the course material. If we assume that having a strong

ideal and *ought-to* self can improve motivation, these findings have various implications for further study, teacher-training and the classroom environment.

First of all, it would be important for trainee teachers to learn about *possible selves* and to develop means for discovering the *ideal* and *ought-to* selves of students. This would allow tailoring of groups, teaching and learning methods, classroom design and course material to suit the *possible selves* of the students in each group. For example, tailoring groups to enhance cohesiveness and common goals may well improve motivation. Extra-curricular activities may also be useful in promoting the cohesiveness of the group outside of the classroom, which in turn may positively influence the group relationships in class. Moreover, groups may be created according to common goals to allow for a stronger group orientedness.

Facilities had a significant impact on students, and the interviewees specified their own opinions on the use of computers. One, for example, liked to use the computer, while the other preferred not to. This highlighted for me the diverse needs of different students and the importance of allowing the students to have a choice of tools in the classroom. This may also apply to other resources such as books and films or video clips.

The teachers in this investigation were rated positively by the students on the whole, and the interviewees pinpointed why they felt their teachers were successful. In this case it was because they were helpful and showed that they cared. My observations showed enthusiastic teachers who modeled English for their students, which appeared to encourage students to speak English, too. Further study with multiple teachers and groups, therefore, may highlight certain perceived effective traits and thus allow for the teaching of certain skills and perhaps even selection criteria for trainee teachers.

In addition to this, the questionnaire results and the interviewees suggested that the content of the learning, or course materials, were not necessarily of great importance to motivation. Student 31 felt that although the course material was mostly relevant and interesting, he did not see it as something that would particularly help or hinder him in reaching his goals. On the other hand, the fact that the course material used during the observations was relevant and interesting to the students, and that the students appeared engaged in the tasks, is an indication of the positive effect it can have on motivation.

Finally, there were some interesting findings in the relationship between the *possible selves* and motivation itself. Firstly, having a strong *ideal* or *ought-to* self does not necessarily equate to strong motivation. This was clear from the questionnaire results of the whole group. Student 31 was an extreme example, because his results showed a very strong *ideal* self, a low *ought-to* self and a relatively low general motivation. He explained this as discussed in section 5.0.3.2, but it demonstrates the fact that there is not always a clear connection. This particular student had a strong *ideal self* but was not particularly motivated in class. The implications of this are that he is perhaps more motivated to use English outside of class, or that something needs to change in the classroom for him to reach his potential. He also had a weak *ought-to* self which could be affecting his motivation levels. It is worth considering the possibility that he needs a stronger *ought-to* self to be more motivated overall. Further investigations would need to be made to clarify this for further action. Interestingly, the teacher did not seem to have much of an effect on this student's *ideal* self either. Again, this could be because his *ideal* self is so strong, he does not feel the need to concern himself with what others expect from him. However, it could be an indication that he needs more stimulation in class to gain a positive effect on his personal goals.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The Importance of Motivation Research

As previously discussed, motivation has been of serious interest to linguists and psychologists since Gardner and Lambert's 1959 study. As a result of this, many researchers have concentrated on how to improve motivation for learners, not least in the classroom. Dörnyei's L2 motivational-self theory is one of the most current models of this kind. This, like many other current theories, needs to be tested further in order to reach conclusions about how to take concrete steps to improve learner motivation. Until we have these conclusions and the tangible steps we need to take, there can be no real advances in teacher training in this field. For this reason, I believe it is essential to continue research until some concrete conclusions are made. Regular updates can be implemented according to current findings.

6.2 The Intentions and Findings of this Investigation

At the start of this study, I intended to investigate to what extent the classroom learning environment at a Swedish gymnasium affected the *ideal* and *ought-to (*or *possible)* selves of the students and what potential impact that may have on teacher training. I adopted the viewpoint that motivation enhances achievement and that motivation can be manipulated in the classroom. I have discovered that, in this case, the aspect of the classroom environment that had the strongest effect overall was the *group*, both the cohesiveness and the presence, or absence, of common goals (orientedness). This was followed by *facilities* and the *teacher*, and finally by the *course material*. The investigation also confirmed that although there are trends within groups, it is important to remember the individual in this type of research and to therefore allow for deviations from the norm. Because of the impact of these different elements of the classroom environment, the possible influence on teacher training is also significant. For example, trainee-teachers may benefit from learning about *possible selves* and how to gain an understanding of them for their students, and in turn how to adapt their lessons to the individual students.

6.3 Opposing Viewpoints and the Advantages of the L2 Motivational Self Theory

As stated above, this paper specifically aimed to investigate the effect of the classroom environment on the *ideal* and *ought-to* selves and any possible implications on teacher training, within the framework of the L2 motivational self theory. This position assumes the fact that strong motivation (in this case specifically relating to *ideal* and *ought-to* selves) enhances performance and that this motivation can be manipulated in the classroom.

Some theorists (Sparks et al, 2000, p.7) have claimed that motivation is a symptom rather than a cause of differences in performance. However, the link between motivation and L2 achievement has also been tested and supported numerous times, since 1959 (see Masgerot and Gardner 2003, Bernaus and Gardner, 2008, p.387, Dörnyei, 2005). Moreover, others have suggested that measuring motivation is difficult because there has been a lack of consistent empirical evidence, with different studies using different criteria to define and measure motivation (Gardner and Tremblay, 1994, p.524). It is, however, important to remember that measuring a complex, dynamic psychological concept such

as motivation is principally possible through qualitative measures such as interviews and observation. Quantitative data can be collected, as in this investigation, through the use of questionnaires and tools such as MSLQ, and models of observation such as MOLT. The questionnaires from this investigation were valuable in gaining a picture of the group as a whole, as were the observations. However, as this study has established, interviews can reveal discrepancies in studies. These particular interviews proved beneficial in investigating personal aspects further and confirming or refuting the information gained quantitatively. In the future we may be able to measure motivation using brain scans and other scientific methods but, currently, a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods is the most effective.

It is clear from this investigation that the classroom environment can have an effect on both the *ideal* and *ought-to* (or *possible*) selves. In some cases this effect is quite profound, such as the case of group cohesion and orientedness, and the effect of the teacher and facilities. In other cases the effect is not as intense as could have been expected, such as in the case of the course material and its relevance to the students. For this reason, I argue that elements of the classroom environment can have a significant effect on the individual's *ideal* and *ought-to* self and therefore on their motivation. If we assume that their motivation can, in turn, affect their performance, this has considerable implications for future teacher-training, as discussed in the previous section.

6.4 Further Research Possibilities

Further research would need to be conducted to confirm the results of this particular investigation and thus the importance of the classroom environment with regards to motivation. Additional quantitative data must be captured in multiple classrooms, in different countries, with different students. In addition to this, qualitative research must be completed to complement and clarify the results of such data. The results of such studies may prove extraordinarily important for language learning and further investigations in this field are therefore essential if we are to solve the challenge of motivating learners to their achieve their ultimate potential.

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Appendix 1 – Questionnaire

Dear Students, thank you so much for helping me with this study.

I am studying motivation in the English Classroom and would like you to to complete this questionnaire to help me. The following questions ask about your motivation in English. Remember there are no right or wrong answers, just answer as accurately as possible.

YOUR PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY AND NOT RELATED IN ANY WAY TO YOUR GRADE IN THIS CLASS

The information you give is confidential so please be honest in your answers and try to answer as accurately as possible.

If you would like to see the results of your questionnaire I am happy to provide them at a later stage

INSTRUCTIONS:

Use the scale below to answer the questions. If you think the statement is very true of you, circle 5; if a statement is not at all true of you, circle 1. If the statement is more or less true of you, find the number between 1 and 5 that best describes you.

Section A

Getting a good grade in this class is the most satisfying thing for me right now

1 2 3 4 5

I am very interested in the content area of this course

1 2 3 4 5

I like the subject matter of this course

1 2 3 4 5

I think I will be able to use what I learn in this course in other courses

1 2 3 4 5

I think the course material in this class is useful for me to learn

1 2 3 4 5

I want to do well in this class because it is important to show my ability to my family, friends, employer or others

1 2 3 4 5

If I can, I want to get better grades in this class than most of the other students

1 2 3 4 5

If I don't understand the course material, it is because I didn't try hard enough

1 2 3 4 5

If I study in appropriate ways, then I will be able to learn the material in this course

1 2 3 4 5

If I try hard enough, then I will understand the course material

1 2 3 4 5

In a class like this, I prefer course material that arouses my curiosity even if it is difficult to learn

1 2 3 4 5

In a class like this, I prefer course material that really challenges me so I can learn new things

1 2 3 4 5

It is important for me to learn the course material in this class

1 2 3 4 5

It's my own fault if I don't learn the material in this course

1 2 3 4 5

The most important thing for me right now is improving my overall grade point average, so my main concern in this class is getting a good grade

1 2 3 4 5

The most satisfying thing for me in this course is trying to understand the content as thoroughly as possible

1 2 3 4 5

Understanding the subject matter of this course is very important to me

1 2 3 4 5

When I have the opportunity in this class, I choose course assignments that I can learn from even if they don't guarantee a good grade

1 2 3 4 5

Section B

English is important to me because other people will respect me more if I have knowledge of English	1 2 3 4 5
I can imagine feeling bad if I disappoint my teachers	1 2 3 4 5
I can imagine myself finding it difficult to make international friends because of my English	1 2 3 4 5
I can imagine myself jobless as a result of failing my English studies	1 2 3 4 5
I can imagine myself speaking English with international friends	1 2 3 4 5
I can see myself as a successful user of English in the future	1 2 3 4 5
I study English because my friends think / say it is important	1 2 3 4 5
I think my parents would be disappointed with me if I was not good at English	1 2 3 4 5
I want to get respect from others for speaking English well	1 2 3 4 5
I worry about letting my friends down if I failed	1 2 3 4 5
I worry that most people I meet will be better at English than me	1 2 3 4 5
I would be embarrassed to admit it to others if I was bad at English	1 2 3 4 5
My parents believe that English is important and I want to please them	1 2 3 4 5
Other people would not respect me if I didn't speak English	1 2 3 4 5
Studying English is important to me in order to gain the approval of my teachers	1 2 3 4 5
Whenever I think of my future career, I imagine myself using English	1 2 3 4 5

Section C

Scale 1 - 5

A lot of friendships have been made in this class	1 2 3 4 5
A lot of the things we do are things that relate to us **personally**	1 2 3 4 5
I am often bored in class	1 2 3 4 5
I hardly ever feel satisfied after completing the work we are given	1 2 3 4 5
I think the teacher is enthusiastic about English	1 2 3 4 5

I think we learn lots in class	1 2 3 4 5
I usually feel **confident** that I can do the activities	1 2 3 4 5
Most of us want to be good at English	1 2 3 4 5
Most students in this class take part in class discussions and activities	1 2 3 4 5
It sometimes feels like the teacher doesn't have time to help us	1 2 3 4 5
Students don't do much work in this class	1 2 3 4 5
Students in this class don't know each other very well	1 2 3 4 5
The classroom is **comfortable**	1 2 3 4 5
The teacher chooses work that isn't interesting to us	1 2 3 4 5
The teacher makes us feel comfortable in class	1 2 3 4 5
This class is more a social hour than a place to learn something	1 2 3 4 5
We are often distracted by noises outside of the classroom	1 2 3 4 5
We are not distracted by **what we can see** outside the classroom	1 2 3 4 5
We don't get to decide how we learn	1 2 3 4 5
We get useful feedback, given in a supportive way	1 2 3 4 5
We do not have enough tools to use like computers, CDs and dictionaries	1 2 3 4 5
I prefer to work on my own, rather than in groups	1 2 3 4 5
I am not interested in what the teacher thinks of me or my work	1 2 3 4 5
We work in groups a lot	1 2 3 4 5

Section D   **Scale 1 - 5**

The teacher understands what I want to get out of my English lessons	1 2 3 4 5
The teacher expects me to do well	1 2 3 4 5

The classroom doesn't have the things I need to help me reach my goals	1 2 3 4 5
The classroom is not good enough for me to do what is expected of me	1 2 3 4 5
The activities we do will not make me good enough at English to gain respect from others	1 2 3 4 5
The activities we do will help me be as good as I want to be at English	1 2 3 4 5
I don't think the rest of the group would care if I failed in English	1 2 3 4 5
It doesn't matter to me what the rest of the group want, my goals are what's important	1 2 3 4 5
Being happy in the group does / would help me do what is expected of me	1 2 3 4 5
Being happy in the group does / would help me do well	1 2 3 4 5

Please write a short piece (a few lines) about how you imagine yourself in a few years time, using English (or not!)

Include things like what your job might be or involve, who you are speaking English to, how well you are using English and where you are living.

"My Course is: (for example: Naturvetenskap or Naturvetenskap och samhälle)

_____

My Ideal future:
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you!!!

Appendix 2 – Observation Sheet

Lesson content / Theme	

Interest?	55
Relevance?	
Confidence / Expectancy?	
Satisfaction?	
Students wanting to please teacher?	
Autonomy? Students involved in decisions?	
Modeling / Enthusiastic?	
Task presentation? Capture students?	
Feedback?	
Group mood? (goal-orienedness)	
Group norms?	
Group Cohesion?	
Competetive / cooperative / individualistic goal structures?	

Appendix 3 – Interview Guides

Student 29

Interview Guide

Summary

- High grade motivation
- Motivation just under the mean but seems to have misunderstood some of the questions – answered 5 for some and 1 for others meaning the same thing.
- Indifferent about course material
- Low ought-to self
- High Ideal self
- Not too interested in pleasing friends, family and teachers
- Wants to have international friends and gain respect
- Scores the teacher quite high (29/40)
- Interested in what the teacher thinks but indifferent about how comfortable teacher makes him / the work given
- Thinks work given is mostly personal and relevant
- Rates group cohesiveness somewhere in the middle
- Rates group orientedness average
- Rates facilities just below the mean
- Learning experience seems to have a minmal effect on both ideal and ought to selves – on all scores

1. Would you say you have high or low motivation to learn English?

2. What makes you want to learn?

3. How do you imagine yourself in the future?

4. How will your lessons help you get there?

5. Is there anything you would change in your lessons?

6. How do you think your parents / teachers / friends think you will do?

7. Is it important to you what they think?

8. What is more important, what you want or what they want?

9. Why?

10. Do you think you will reach your goal? How?

Student 31

Interview Guide

Summary

- High grade motivation
- Motivation just under the mean but seems to have misunderstood some of the questions – answered 5 for some and 1 for others meaning the same thing.
- Indifferent about course material
- Low ought-to self
- High Ideal self
- Not too interested in pleasing friends, family and teachers
- Wants to have international friends and gain respect
- Scores the teacher quite high (29/40)
- Interested in what the teacher thinks but indifferent about how comfortable teacher makes him / the work given
- Thinks work given is mostly personal and relevant
- Rates group cohesiveness somewhere in the middle
- Rates group orientedness average
- Rates facilities just below the mean
- Learning experience seems to have a minmal effect on both ideal and ought to selves – on all scores

11. Would you say you have high or low motivation to learn English?

12. What makes you want to learn?

13. How do you imagine yourself in the future?

14. How will your lessons help you get there?

15. Is there anything you would change in your lessons?

16. How do you think your parents / teachers / friends think you will do?

17. Is it important to you what they think?

18. What is more important, what you want or what they want?

19. Why?

20. Do you think you will reach your goal? How?

Appendix 4 – Transcription from Student 29 interview

Student 29

I explained that I had looked through the questionnaire answers and that I wanted to clarify a few things.

A: Ok, so I wrote down that you have really high motivation. Do you think that's true? Are you quite motivated with English?

S: Yeah

A: You think it's true?

S: Yeah, I agree

A: Yeah, ok. Erm, What makes you want to learn English? What makes you think "yeah, I wanna do well?"

S: It's such a big language internationally, so I think it help me make good connections with the rest of the world, I can express my opinions, over the internet for example.

A: Yeah, that's true.

S: And most countries, they have English as a second language, so.

A: That's true as well. … Ok, so is that a social goal do you think, or is that more for work? What do you aim to do? Is it because you want to meet lots of people and speak English to them, or is it a work thing?

S: That's one part of it. Actually I, also think … I think I can express myself better in English. Actually, I have a better grade in English than in Swedish.

A: Do you? I love it!

S: I also think in English rather than Swedish.

A: Can we move, is that ok? Hold that thought … Ok so sometimes you think in English too?

S: Yeah

A: I know how that feels, I have learned other languages. It's madness isn't it? You dream in it too sometimes. So strange (laugh). So I've also written that you are positive about the things you do in class. I call it the course material.

S: The English class?

A: Yeah, the English class. It's all about the English class.

S: Ok

A: Is that true? Do you like the things you get to do in class and your course book that's online, and …?

S: I really like the course book, its some nice exercises.

A: Helpful?

S: Yeah, they really help me to understand the grammar better actually.

A: Is grammar quite a tough thing otherwise?

S: I have forgotten most of it.

A: Who hasn't? (laugh) From school?

S: Yeah. During summer break and such.

A: That's what happens, isn't it? When you don't use it. It doesn't sound like it, but if you say so (laugh).

S: Some things stay.

A: It's good to refresh??

S: Yeah.

A: Ok, so the course book's good. How about the things you do in class? Are you happy with that too? A bit of both?

S: I am, actually.

A: That's awesome, we like positives!

S: Ok, I've written that you like a challenge. Even if you get something that you find hard, you are happy to get stuck into it.

A: Yeah, it's like getting a challenge makes me want to understand it more!

S: It does? So, it gives you perhaps even more motivation? I like it! …

A: Ok, erm, I have got that you are independent. That you take responsibility for your own learning. Is that true? Who do you think, erm, has responsibility for your learning? Is it up to your teacher? You? Is it up to your friends to help you?

S: It's up to me and my teacher. I can't learn anything if I don't have a good teacher, but I also have to be motivated and …

A: Yeah, so you say a bit of both then. Ok good, because it's a bit funny. Some people think that their teacher is solely responsible for them and blame them if they don't do well, so it's good, you take responsibility yourself as well. Ok, I've got two things that I'm looking at, specifically. One is called an *ideal self* and that is what you picture yourself to be in the future and what you want (with English) And the other one is what you think people expect you to become in the future. Let's call it a *should* self: what other people expect, and an *ideal self* - what you want.

S: Alright

A: And I've written that your ideal self is quite strong. Would you say that you have quite a good image of yourself in the future? To work towards?

S: I'm not really sure what I want to do in the future, but I have been able to narrow it down to helping people.

A: Ok, so that's a major thing to you, to make sure you're helping people.

S: Yeah.

A: Yeah, It's very hard to know at this stage. I still don't know what I want to do and I'm 32! So it's completely normal, don't worry! You know you want to help people. Do you know if you want to work in Sweden or somewhere else?

S: I can imagine myself working in other countries.

A: You can?

S: I can, actually. I think it would be interesting.

A: Ok, so you'd quite like to?

S: Yeah, experience the culture, yeah.

A: And I guess English is definitely going to help you there, huh?

S: Yeah (laugh) So I can work, and work with other people.

A: Ok, so perhaps we could say that your future image is that you will be somewhere, perhaps in Sweden, perhaps somewhere else. Using English in your daily work, maybe, but maybe just socially?

S: Yeah.

A: Ok, however, it doesn't seem that you are, have, erm, this *should self,* the one about what other people expect of you – that's not particularly strong. Would you say that it's fair to say that you are not too worried about what other people expect of you, you're more interested in what you want from … ?

S: To some degree, but my family think I might become a doctor or something.

A: That's what they want you to do?

S: Er, because I'm so interested in medicine and biology. It's one of my major, erm, what's it called?

A: Erm, interests?

S: Yeah, interests.

A: Is that something you would consider being? A doctor?

S: Well, maybe, but it's so difficult to get into that …

A: Crazy, it's years of education. You've got to really want it.

S: Exactly, so ..

A: Ok, so in terms of your English, do you feel any particular pressure from anyone else? Your teacher, or your friends or parents?

S: For my English?

A: Yeah, do you feel any pressure from any of those areas to do well at English?

S: No, not exactly.

A: Ok so that might be a reason why your *ought-to* or your *should self* wasn't very strong: because you don't feel any particular pressure from anyone else. Do you see what I mean? Does that explain it?

S: Erm..

A: It's ok, it's a good thing!

S: Oh, ok.

A: Erm, I've written that you're not particularly worried about what other people think about your English, but you would like to be seen as good at it. Is that right?

S: Definitely.

A: Yeah? Ok, good. But would you be disappointed if, I don't know, say if one of your friends said that you weren't as good at English as you wanted to be? Imagine they said that. How would you feel? Would you be disappointed or would you think, "phw" you don't know anything?

S: Yeah, I have a pretty good opinion of my English knowledge.

A: Good, so that's basically what it said. That you're not too worried about what other people think because you've got such a strong motivation in yourself, and a confidence in yourself.

S: Yes.

A: Good, I've got that you gave your teacher a very high score, one of the highest that she got. She got good scores of course, but one of the highest was from you. What do you feel that she does that is good? And do you think that's she's good? Just to check that the questionnaire is right.

S: Yeah, I think she's good.

A: Can you pinpoint anything that she does that is particularly good?

S: That's difficult.

A: I know, it can be. Erm, some of the things that… I asked for instance if you thought that she was enthusiastic, and if you thought she was helpful, and you scored her highly on both those things.

S: She's very helpful, in class, and er, you see that she's enthusiastic about teaching English. She's very helpful in class and shows you can notice she cares about you.

A: Ok, and does that motivate you? Does that make **you** think, yeah, I want to do this too?

S: Yeah, because she is motivated, and she teach me, I can be motivated about learning.

A: Exactly, so definitely, ok. It sounds obvious, but there are other people that perhaps aren't that motivated, and sometimes having a motivated teacher helps them, and sometimes they're just not affected by it. So it's good that you're both motivated, it's a good recipe! (laugh). Ok, I wrote that I'm

not sure if you think that the work that you're given is relevant to you. So, how do you feel about the work that you're given? Do you feel that it has some kind of personal connection to you?

S: Everything is relevant, because I'm going to use it in the future.

A: Yes, but let me put it this way then, the subject areas, are they, for instance, let me give you, just for the one you're doing today, you're doing some speaking exercises, preparing for a national test, based on different subjects. And the subjects are supposed to give you a reason to talk.

S: Yes.

A: So these are the ones that she gave you in there. There's one thing I noticed that they've all got in common, or that a lot of them have got in common.

S: Yes, er, my, teenagers.

A: Yes, exactly, that was the first thing I noticed. So therefore that's relevant to you guys because you're all teenagers. So although it may not all be relevant to you personally, a good deal of it probably is. Would you say that that was true of most of the work that you get? That it's relevant to you, or do you feel sometimes, "why are we doing this?"

S: Erm, most of it is relevant to my particular age.

A: So, therefore, perhaps your interests, as well?

S: Yeah, some of it.

A: Yeah, ok. Erm because that was what I wasn't clear on from the questionnaire. Erm, I have put interestingly, that the group as a whole, the cohesiveness of the group, so how well the group gets on, you've rated it quite low. I don't know if that was confusion with the questionnaire, or whether that is how you feel. How do you feel about the group? Do you get on well?

S: Most of us do, actually.

A: Would you feel that there are groups within the group? Quite strong ones, or ...?

S: I feel like that.

A: Ok, and what makes these different groups?

S: Some people just don't get along.

A: Ok, so there is a sense of that in the classroom too? Because I think that's normal in a class of 30 people, but I'm just interested to know, there are little groups and some don't get on with others…

S: Mmm

A: Ok, do you sense that in your English lessons, or does it not really affect you?

S: Not really, I just some people, but actually but the class as a group gets along pretty well, better than most classes.

A: It does? Ok. But there are still a few that don't. The majority do, but some don't, is that what you're saying?

S: Yes.

A: Ok, does that ever affect you in the classroom? … I know personally that when I was in the classroom, when I was younger, probably younger than you guys, that if you were in a language lesson, for example, often, it would take a lot of … you would have to be quite brave to say something in another language. I know that's not perhaps the case now, but if there is someone in the group that you think "oh, I don't know if they like me" or "we don't get on very well" then it might make it harder to say things in another language. Does it ever feel like in there, or is it ok?

S: Well I actually haven't experienced that. There are some people that I don't get along with but I …

A: It hasn't affected you?

S: I don't want to let it.

A: No, but that's good, that's kind of what I'm looking at, because what I'm looking at, I'm looking at these *selves* – these *ideal and ought-to selves* and whether the learning environment affects any of them. And it doesn't sound like there is. If you think that there are people that you perhaps don't get on with, but it doesn't bother you in the classroom.

S: I don't like them that much, so I just don't care what they think!

A: I like it! No, that explains it for me, that makes it make perfect sense. Ok, because you were actually one of the few … who rated the group cohesiveness – how well the group gets on – quite low. So that's why I was interested in it, because other people have given it average or high. But I think we could maybe summarize in that you think most people get on, but maybe there are some that don't get on.

S: Yeah.

A: Ok, erm, … what I found out from your questionnaire is that there doesn't seem to be any major effect from the classroom on your, or the group or the teacher, on your personal images of the future. Would you say that's true? That your images are there and that they stay there no matter what happens in the classroom? That you know what you want to get to?

S: It might be like that.

A: How do you feel? I don't mean to put words in your mouth. Do you think it has an effect on your motivation, on your plan for the future? Anything in the classroom? Either a good effect or a bad effect?.

S: I'm not quite sure actually.

A: You haven't really thought about it?

S: I haven't.

A: Well I guess that means that you don't really have any strong feelings one way or the other. I think otherwise, you perhaps would have done. Let's put it this way: Do you think it's going to stop you reach your goal, anything in the classroom?

S: No, I don't think so.

A: Ok, do you think anything in the classroom is really going to help you get there?

S: It might.

A: Ok, so that's probably why you've got it kind of average. It's fine, it's perfect. It just helps me to know that the questionnaire got what it needed to get. Last question – do you think you'll get there? Do you think you'll reach your goal? Do you think you'll end up doing what you want to do?

S: I think so, actually.

A: Good for you, I'm sure you will.

S: If you're negative about your future you can't reach your goal!

A: Good, so something you do to keep you motivated, is be positive about it and be confident. Well it seems to me like you are. Thank you very much.

Appendix 5 – Transcription from Student 31 interview

Student 31

I explained that I'd looked at the questionnaires and wanted to clarify a few points and asked a few questions.

A: So I've got that you've got quite a high grade motivation, which means that you…

S: Yeah

A: Is that right?

S: Yeah.

A: But your general motivation, you know, how much you really want to do well, it was sort of average, which surprised me when you have a high grade motivation, so I wonder if, because some of the questions were quite confusing, there were some negative phrased ones and some positive ones to try and make it fair, but I think a few …

S: Yeah, some of them were a bit ..

A: Ok, so I just wanted to clarify with you how motivated you think you are.

S: Er, well, at the start of the year, no not the year, the term, you really are motivated, but with the time, and by the months passing you become a little bit unmotivated. You are back in the normal feelings that "whatever" …

A: … "it'll be alright, or?" …

S: Yeah, erm but in some subjects you have a bigger motivation.

A: How is it with English for you?

S: Well, erm

A: How motivated do you feel about English right now? None of this goes back to your teacher.

S: I wouldn't mind, but, erm, I want to have a high grade of course, but I know that I should and would have done better from the start to reach that, so in this situation I don't think I will be able to do it.

A: So have you lowered your expectations because you've relaxed?

S: Yeah, exactly, exactly.

A: Ok, alright, erm so, how about the course material, the things you do in class. How do you feel about them?

S: Erm, to me they are always kinda, I don't really understand all of them. Just some parts, so, because they are very, or they are not very confusing, but since they are confusing to me I really don't look at them, I just …

A: Ah, skim read?

S: Yeah.

A: That's what I just did with that article too! And it's my first language! I think that's good because he's giving you challenges. So that's really good, but sometimes you would say that the texts are a bit too hard.

S: Yeah.

A: Ok, do you feel that the things you do are relevant to you? Like, for instance this was about current affairs, and I guess you're studying history because you have him for history too?

S: Yeah.

A: So do you feel like that's relevant to you? Like interesting to you personally?

S: Yeah, yeah.

A: Is that the case with most of what you do in class? Because I think I got the impression that you were kind of average on that, you weren't quite sure what you felt.

S: Yeah, that can, I really, can you say the question again?

A: Sure, sorry, whether you think the things you do in English class (this is all about your English class) are relevant to you and therefore interesting, or is some of it interesting, and some of it, you think "why are we doing this?"

S: Yeah, well we have book reading, and book summaries. I don't really think it's necessary.

A: Ok, so it's a bit of both which is probably why we got a score somewhere in the middle then.

S: Yeah, I think so.

A: Ok, there are two things that I am looking at for everybody, and that is something called an *ideal self* and an *ought-to* self. So *ought-to* being like *should.* So and *ideal* self is your image of yourself, that you have, in the future. Not everyone has a very strong one, some people do; some people don't. Erm, but it's how you imagine yourself to be and want to be in the future, particularly with regards to English, and the other one is how you think other people expect you to be in the future. Everybody has these, but some people see them more clearly than others. And I'm kind of interested in those.

S: Alright.

A: So, I've actually got that your *ought-to* self, so your *should* self is not very strong, so you don't feel too much pressure from the outside to do well. Is that right?

S: No, exactly. Er well, both right and wrong.

A: Ok, go on.

S: Well, my self image is, if I, well, I want to be a lawyer, so in what country I really don't mind, but I think that the other one, where we're going to talk about, yeah the other one, probably won't, or I rather say, see me as a political, what do you say?

A: Erm, politician?

S: Yeah.

A: That's interesting, ok.

S: Yeah, I'm acting, er I don't really know how.

A: In politics?

Yeah …

A: In young persons' political groups?

S: Yeah, exactly.

A: Interesting, so you're interested in politics but your personal goal is to be a lawyer?

S: Yes.

A: Well the two things go very well together, so other people expect you to go into politics instead.

S: Yes, exactly.

A: That's interesting because I did see that you have a very strong ideal self, so it sounds like you are sure about what you want.

S: At this moment I have, but it can change.

A: Of course. I mean, mine's changing all the time. Ok so that is what your questionnaire said. But it also said that you are not that, if you have a weak *ought-to self* it kind of means that you are not really too worried about what other people think, but your goal is more important, does that sound right?

S: Yeah.

A: Is there anyone amongst your friends, family and teachers, who you think, you really care about what they think about your English?

S: Er…

A: Or do you just think "no I'm good enough, I don't need to know what they think"?

S: Yeah, that's how I feel.

A: Er, I've got that you score your teacher quite high. Some of the things I'm looking at are teacher, the course material, the classroom environment and the group, and I've got that you score your teacher quite highly. Can you tell me some things that he does that are good? First of all, do you think that he's good?

S: Yeah, I think so.

A: And why? What is it he does that makes him good?

S: Because I've always, always felt that he cares about us, he always asks if we understand, if we don't understand, if we, yeah, if we know what to do, and what not to do. And when we really really don't understand he says it in Swedish.

A: To make sure you get it?

S: Exactly, and if we have a test or something he prepares us early and if we fail or something, he says well we can do better next time.

A: Ok, I've got that you want to have international friends and gain respect for speaking English, does that sound ..?

S: I've never liked the word respect, of course I want to give people respect, but I don't want to have it back.

A: You don't expect it back?

S: Exactly, well, because I, it's kind of fun if you give someone respect and they give it back, but I don't want to be looking for it. I don't want people looking up to me.

A: Oh I see, in that way, because respect can be mutual as well. Ok so I will put the question to you a different way. Do you think that if you are good at English, people will respect you?

S: Yeah, I do think that, yes.

A: Ok, how do you feel about the group as a whole? Do you get on well? Or are there lots of small groups?

S: In our English class? Well I think it's kind of good.

A: The whole group gets on as a whole? It doesn't feel like there's one group here, and one there?

S: No.

A: Ok, because you put that as average, no better or worse than any other group, perhaps?

S: Yeah.

A: Erm, I've put that you've put average scores as well for people having similar-ish goals in the class. Do you think that's true?

S: Well, the majority of us, I think, but of course there are some who don't have the same goals.

A: So you maybe, most of you want to do well, but some of you aren't so concerned because they see other things as more important?

S: Yeah, exactly.

A: How about the facilities, like your classroom, the computers, all the things you've got to help you learn?

S: Well, I've never liked to have a computer in class, because always flies away to facebook or something, it's a distraction. So I'd rather have a book to learn from than have a computer, but it's kind of good that we also have computers, because when it's a very very long piece we have to write it's easier on the computer.

A: So do you have the choice?

S: Yeah, most of the times, we have, yeah, but it feels easier to do it on the computer, even if I don't really like it.

A: What I got from your questionnaire is that the learning experience; the classroom, the group, the course materials, the facilities and things like that, they don't really have much of an effect on your future image, your goal. What it tells me is that it doesn't hold you back, and it doesn't particularly push you towards … would you say that's fair?

S: Yeah, exactly, I agree.

A: Ok, so what do you think would help push you towards your goal? Do you think there is anything that could be done differently that would help you do that?

S: Well, I really don't have an answer to that right now.

A: There's nothing you can think of right now that makes you think "if only we could do this instead"?

S: No, exactly.

A: So you're relatively happy with it.

S: Yeah.

A: What is it that makes you want to learn English?

S: Well, I've always seen myself as, I don't know if that's the right English word, a social person?

A: Absolutely. Sociable I guess we'd say.

S: Exactly, and I like to communicate with people so we can communicate with people all around the world, it's kind of fun.

A: Ok, lastly, do you think you're going to reach your goal, to be a lawyer, and maybe speak English with international friends and colleagues?

S: I hope I do, I really hope I do, but anything can happen.

A: But you're determined to get there?

S: Exactly.

A: Thank you!