

Systemic and personal factors that affect students' elective language other than English enrollment decisions

Stephanie Clayton 

The Challenge

Low enrollments in elective LOTE subjects are usually attributed to a lack of interest from students, but is this correct? Are students willingly abandoning LOTE learning, or is an interplay of factors preventing their elective enrollment? This study investigates the systemic and personal barriers experienced by students interested in LOTEs.

Faculty of Education, University of Tasmania, Burnie, Tasmania, Australia

Correspondence

Stephanie Clayton, Faculty of Education, Cradle Coast Campus, University of Tasmania, Locked Bag 3502, Burnie, TAS 7320, Australia.
Email: S.M.Clayton@utas.edu.au

Abstract

In a world where English has achieved global dominance, it is unsurprising that the instrumental value of learning a language other than English (LOTE) for those already fluent in English is increasingly deemed unnecessary. There are significant enrollment declines postcompulsory second language (L2) learning in all English-speaking countries. To explore the common Australian “monolingual mindset” and students' reasons for (not) enrolling in elective LOTE subjects, a mixed methodology study was conducted with Tasmanian Year 9–12 students. While the findings highlighted the main (de)motivators experienced by students, one key finding was the lost cohort of students who want to study a LOTE but are prevented from doing so by personal and systemic barriers. A complex interplay of factors affects student decision-making regarding

This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs License, which permits use and distribution in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited, the use is non-commercial and no modifications or adaptations are made.

© 2022 The Authors. *Foreign Language Annals* published by Wiley Periodicals LLC on behalf of ACTFL.

elective LOTE enrollment. This article focuses upon those students who were forced to discontinue their languages study and the untold story of elective LOTE enrollment decline.

KEYWORDS

enrollment, L2 motivation, L2 motivational self system, mixed methodology, secondary

1 | INTRODUCTION

Promoting second language (L2) learning to students who have English as their first language can be a challenging task in a time when globalization is rapidly increasing, along with the spread of English as a global *lingua franca*. As Liddicoat (2002) argued, “we in the English-speaking world seem to have lost sight of languages as educationally useful and we have seen this view increasingly undermined by the argument that ‘everyone speaks English’” (p. 30). This argument can lead to students perceiving languages education to be irrelevant to their future lives. Ushioda (2017) suggested that the instrumentalist value of L2 learning places emphasis on transactional communication skills, which may not connect to learners’ motivations and priorities and, as Coffey (2018) stated, students can easily refute these motives if they do not envision requiring these skills, assuming that English will suffice for any future transactional communications.

However, while it may be true that English has become the *lingua franca*, monolingual speakers are no longer the norm. This is recognized in the *Australian Curriculum: Languages* rationale, which states “a capability in English only is no longer sufficient” (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, n.d.b, para 3). Despite this, at the end of compulsory languages other than English (LOTE¹) learning in secondary school, which is the cliff edge where motivational factors interplay, enrollment rates experience a massive decline, with the majority of students going over the edge. Superficially, this would appear to indicate a lack of perceived value in LOTE learning, with enrollments steadily decreasing each Year level to leave only a small percent of students graduating from Year 12 with a LOTE. However, in this study, it was suspected that within this exodus, there would be students desiring to continue their learning but prevented from doing so by barriers, suggesting they were pushed over the edge instead of willingly jumping.

This study’s aim was to investigate the factors that affect students’ motivation to study an elective LOTE and how these factors affect their subject choices. Using an explanatory mixed methods approach provided a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. To explore the Tasmanian context, a state-wide survey was conducted ($n = 528$), followed by focus group interviews with students in seven schools ($n = 37$). Participants were in Years 9–12, as in these Years LOTE is not mandatory, and electives comprise some or all their subjects. Data analysis consisted of descriptive and inferential statistics for the quantitative data and thematic analysis techniques for the qualitative data.

Along with using Dörnyei’s (2005, 2009) L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) theory as a framework for analysis, Martin and Jansen’s (2012) framework of motivational profiles was

adapted to include additional classifications, which reflected the complexity of the data. Six learner profiles were created to further classify students' motivations: Continuing students, Forced Continuing students, Forced discontinuing students, undecided students, new discontinuing students, and discontinuing students. This study highlights the forced discontinuing students category to explain factors that affect students who strongly value LOTE learning but do not choose it as an elective subject due to personal and systemic barriers.

A literature survey of published studies conducted by Boo et al. (2015) demonstrated a dominance of research investigating *motivations to learn English* and *second language learning at the tertiary level*. In a critical research synthesis study, Mendoza and Phung (2019) found L2MSS research in inner circle English-speaking countries was typically conducted in tertiary settings, with a focus on the L2 Learning Experience dimension. With more than 70% of the surveyed studies focusing on English as the target language, there is a clear language bias, and Ushioda and Dörnyei (2017) identified that the dominance of English has had a substantial impact on the reconceptualizing of L2 motivation with the focus on self and identity, arguing that these notions have become “mainstream in our field” (p. 1). However, the question is now being asked as to what extent, if any, this conceptual reframing applies to LOTE learning, with a special issue of *The Modern Language Journal* dedicated to exploring L2 motivation beyond global English (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017). As Ushioda (2017) argued, the motivation to learn a LOTE differs greatly from the motivation to learn English, which Graddol (2006) referred to as becoming less a “foreign language” and more a “basic skill.” Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie (2017) described five aspects in the divergence of English-LOTE learning motivation, however, these characteristics are mainly considered when a LOTE and Global English are learnt in conjunction. Little discussion in recent literature is focused on investigating native English speakers' (NES) LOTE learning, an area which needs further distinct consideration of learners' motivations to address the even more nuanced representation of motivation in this context. This is recognized by Dörnyei and Al-Hoorie (2017), who added that there are unique issues posed when considering NES' LOTE motivations, but which were outside their paper's scope. The dominance of English and tertiary contexts evident in much L2 research highlights the significance of the present study's findings, which address two gaps in the research: first, *English-speaking* students' motivations to learn an elective L2; second, their elective L2 study during *secondary school*. Addressing students' personal and systemic barriers within this gap constitutes this article's focus.

2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 | Global context

While many countries have strong rates of student participation in L2 learning, often due to strong policies in which it is mandated, Anglophone countries share the challenges of declining L2 enrollments and an “English is enough” mindset. In addressing the Anglophone L2 crisis, Lanvers et al. (2021) created a volume which investigates L2 learning in NES contexts regarding challenges and possible ways forward, aiming to redress the imbalance created by the dominance of studies where English is the L2. There are specific challenges for NES language learners due to the context of Global English, and at the micro-, macro-, and meso-levels “the hypercentrality of English contributes to the structural facilitation of the learning process” (Lanvers et al., 2021, p. 4). According to the Asia Education Foundation (2014), the United

Kingdom (UK), New Zealand (NZ), and Australia remain at the bottom of the L2 education list in terms of provision and implementation. The UK has long experienced language enrollment declines, with Worne (2015) summarizing the national outlook on L2 education as a case of “can’t, won’t, don’t” (para 1). The UK’s decision to leave the European Union (EU) (termed “Brexit”) has major impacts, with Copland and McPake (2021) explaining “Brexit has constituted a ‘real-world’ crisis for the UK, in which our relationships with Europe and the wider world have become salient and unsettled” (p. 3). The British Council’s Languages Trends 2020 report (Collen, 2020) revealed that in 2018, 34% of respondents believed Brexit was creating negative attitudes toward language learning, and the following survey in 2019 found 45% of state schools thought it affected the provision of high-quality language teaching. A National Strategy for Languages has been called for, due to the drastic and continued decline in languages enrollments in secondary and tertiary settings over the past 20 years (British Academy Academy of Medical Sciences Royal Academy of Engineering & The Royal Society, 2019). In NZ, although now a separate curriculum subject which schools must offer (or be working toward offering) for Year 7–10 students, L2 learning at school is not compulsory, nor is there a national language policy (East, 2021). NZ has also been experiencing a steady L2 enrollment decline, cumulating with the lowest enrollment rate recorded in 2014, with only 20.3% of students studying an L2 (Tan, 2015). Enrollment data from 2018 demonstrates a steady decline from Years 9 to 13, despite the hope for more uptake after the 2010 implementation of the revised curriculum with the dedicated *Learning Languages* subject area, and more provision in early schooling years (East, 2021). Like Australia, there are different language policies across the US states. The 2017 National K-12 Foreign Language Enrollment Survey Report found only 20% of students were enrolled in an L2 subject (American Councils for International Education, 2017). The report explained that 11 states require an L2 subject for graduation, 24 have graduation requirements which can be fulfilled by a range of subjects (including an L2), and 16 states do not require an L2 for graduation. The Australian context, in which this study was conducted, shares a similar L2 situation to these Anglophone countries.

2.2 | Australian context

The *Foundation—Year 10 Australian Curriculum: Languages* learning area includes Arabic, Auslan (Australian sign language), Chinese, the Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages, the Framework for Classical Languages, French, German, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Spanish, Turkish, and Vietnamese (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, n.d.b). Languages education differs throughout Australia’s states and territories, leading to a variety of implementation strategies within schools. Stakeholders have criticized the lack of mandated hours for teaching LOTE, arguing it affects the implementation and provision of languages, as only indicative times are provided as recommendations (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2016). This is to allow flexibility for differing school policies regarding language provision (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, 2017), however with no mandated hours, few state/territory policies meet the minimum of time allocation for languages (see Table 1). Hennebry-Leung (2021) found only the Australian Capital Territory, Northern Territory, and Victoria met the recommendation of 870 h. Comparatively, New South Wales mandated only 100 h of language learning in Years 7/8 or 9/10, and Tasmania had no languages policy.

TABLE 1 Indicative hours for Languages learning per Australian state/territory

Year level	Indicative time allocation (h)
Foundation to Year 6	350
Years 7 and 8	160
Years 9 and 10	160
Years 11 and 12	200–240

There is a common perception that Australians do not value L2 learning or recognize its importance due to an “English is enough” monolingual mindset (Clyne, 2005; Clyne et al., 2007; Lo Bianco, 2005). The most recent data indicates that of Year 12 tertiary-recognized subjects, Languages had the lowest enrollment rate (Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, n.d.c). Only 10% of Year 12 students were enrolled in a languages subject in 2019, compared to the second-lowest subject (the Arts, 25%), and third-lowest (Health and Physical Education, 30%). The 15% gap between Languages and the Arts highlights the dire situation of LOTE enrollment. This enrollment data spans 2010–2019 and shows Languages enrollments have remained steady since 2010, with a 1% fluctuation, whereas there is a 15%–19% difference for the second-lowest subject (the Arts). Cole (2007) argued that the problem of Australia’s languages education was “a culture of valuing a second language does not exist. Untangling what are the causes and what are the symptoms of this failure to ignite students’ interest in second language learning is complex” (pp. 8–9). However, lack of interest in languages subjects may not be the only problem affecting enrollment, and Spence-Brown (2014) and Parrish and Lanvers (2019) argued that multiple factors can converge to impact on students’ enrollment decisions, some of which include the systemic and personal barriers preventing willing students from studying an L2 at school.

2.3 | Tasmanian context

There are many challenges to Languages provision in Tasmania, especially the lack of policy and appropriately skilled teachers. The lack of a policy means that Languages are not mandated, and this affects students’ learning cumulatively and progressively, as although guidance comes from the Australian Curriculum, there is no official scope and sequence document such as is provided in some other states (e.g., Victoria). The Tasmanian Government Department of Education (n.d.) and Catholic Schools Tasmania (2021) state they support the Australian Curriculum, while Independent Schools Tasmania (2021) states their schools are fully autonomous, therefore Languages teaching would be at each school’s discretion. State-wide in Years 11 and 12, French, German, Italian, Chinese, and Japanese are accredited and assessed by the Office of Tasmanian Assessment Standards and Certificates (TASC) at levels 2 (Foundation) and 3 (Continuing). The 2019–2020 TASC Annual Report (Office of TASC, 2020) shows that from 2015 to 2019, 5% of Year 12 students studied Languages, dropping to 4% in 2018. Like national data, this is incredibly low compared to the next lowest subjects, Technologies (24%) and The Arts and Health and Physical Education (both 27%). This data cannot be directly compared to national data, as in other states students study courses for 2 years, compared to 1-year courses in Tasmania, however, it is the closest available comparison. For students who

have never studied a LOTE due to its unavailability, choosing it as an elective in this late stage of schooling can be daunting, thus Tasmania's lack of mandated L2 learning is a key factor affecting elective LOTE enrollment.

2.4 | Enrollment factors

Several key factors affect students' motivation to enroll in a languages subject, one of which are the barriers preventing them from doing so. These barriers can be classified according to three main themes: availability, language learning pathways, and subject choice and priority.

2.4.1 | Availability

The availability of languages and classes is a key barrier to learning an L2 at school. The inability to study their preferred language at their school was cited by students as a major barrier to LOTE learning (Asia Education Foundation, 2014). Minimum class sizes were reported by Gould-Drakeley (2016, as cited in Munro, 2016) as an issue affecting the offering of Languages classes in government schools, and Rothman et al. (2014) argued this is a problem in all sectors which can discourage enrollment. Small enrollment numbers often result in only one class, regardless of students' language background and learning requirements (Asia Education Foundation, 2014). Principals reported the demands of the curriculum "make it difficult to offer more than a 'taste' for a language, particularly in the junior secondary years" (Rothman et al., 2014, p. 59). This highlights the issues of students not perceiving L2 learning as worthwhile, and not experiencing enough progression to feel successful, and thus motivated to continue. Linked to this theme is teacher supply. Lo Bianco (2009) proposed "teacher supply is arguably the most significant challenge facing languages education in Australia" (p. 42), which is supported by Rothman et al. (2014), who argued that access to quality teaching is the biggest barrier for schools to provide a solid Languages education. The availability of classes and teachers can both act as major barriers preventing students from L2 learning, especially their preferred language, and creates difficulty for students to maintain learning continuity and establish pathways throughout their schooling, allowing them to build on their previous language learning.

2.4.2 | Language learning pathways

These learning pathways are also referred to as "articulation" which in terms of L2 learning, Kleinsasser (2001) described as the coordination of languages programs between all levels of schooling to facilitate students' L2 proficiency. If students do not perceive suitable L2 study pathways, their current language learning can appear a pointless undertaking, resulting in demotivation and enrollment attrition. Lo Bianco and Aliani (2013) argued that students' boredom and repetition concerns lead to cynicism about policy and its intended aims, further damaging L2 learning perceptions. Many students experience issues in their transitions from primary to secondary school, with feeder schools often offering different languages to the secondary school (Steigler-Peters et al., 2003). Articulation affects students' ability to enroll in their preferred language, which becomes a major factor when considering subject choice and priority.

2.4.3 | Subject choice and priority

Personal and systemic barriers related to students' decisions regarding choice and prioritization of subjects include the allotted number of elective subject enrollments, language availability, prioritization of subjects, and consideration of future study and other interests. The number of subjects in which students can enroll for their timetable is a major factor affecting Languages enrollment. The Asia Education Foundation (2014) report suggested enrollments in languages increased when students were able to enroll in five or six subjects in Year 12, as they had more room to accommodate subjects related to both future career and studies, and personal interests. Languages subjects are often not viewed as vocationally beneficial, as demonstrated by students reporting that “a perceived lack of usefulness for future study/career” (Rothman et al., 2014, p. 4) was a strong factor for not choosing an elective LOTE. Subject prioritization for careers or future study is a strong influence, however another barrier which students report as a deterrent is the languages offered by their school. This is a major factor for discontinuation, with results from Zammit (1992), Kohler and Curnow (2007), and Rothman et al. (2014) all finding that students are much less motivated to study an L2 when it is not their preferred language. This is corroborated by Parrish and Lanvers (2019), who reported that perceptions of the usefulness of languages differed between individual students, thus student interest “could be directly affected by the languages on offer” (p. 293). Subject choice and priority factors are an important consideration when students choose their elective subjects, as demonstrated by the range of sub-themes within this factor.

2.5 | Theoretical background

In recent years, as Boo et al. (2015) demonstrated, worldwide empirical studies which applied Dörnyei's (2005, 2009) L2 Motivational Self System (L2MSS) theory have been prolific. In 2005, Dörnyei proposed three components comprising the L2MSS: (1) the *Ideal L2 Self*, which is the future self the learner imagines they could be based on their ideal L2 use, and this internal image provides motivation for learning; (2) the *Ought-to L2 Self*, an image created by the learner based on the self they think they should be to meet external expectations or avoid negative outcomes associated with L2 learning; and (3) the *L2 Learning Environment*, comprising motives related to the immediate learning environment and the learner's present experience (see Dörnyei, 2009, for a detailed description). The L2MSS theory was used as the analytical framework for the present study, with the key finding of learning barriers considered within the theory's third component. Although the L2MSS is the overarching theory, the development of six student profiles assisted qualitative data analysis, providing a deeper understanding of student enrollment. These categories were partially informed by Martin and Jansen's (2012) classification table regarding student commitment and enrollment circumstances, comprising three categories: Committed, Doubters, and Quitters. Martin and Jansen (2012) aimed to go beyond the dichotomy of continuing/discontinuing students, however, lack of numbers for the “highly motivated but discontinuing students” category necessitated collapsing the two discontinuing categories into the “Quitters” category. Committed students were classified as continuing students with high commitment, while the Doubters were continuing students with low commitment. In this study, an additional student category was hypothesized: those previously enrolled in an elective LOTE but not anymore. However, thematic analysis of focus group interview data revealed the need for creation of three more categories to further

TABLE 2 Classification of students' commitment to languages study

Commitment to language studies	Continuing students (enrolled in elective L2)	Discontinuing students (not enrolled in elective L2)
High	Continuing students	Forced Discontinuing students
Medium	Undecided students	New Discontinuing students
Low	Forced Continuing students	Discontinuing students

classify students: reinstating the distinction between *Forced* Quitters and *New* Quitters, and a mid-level commitment classification of students unsure of continuing in the future. A new classification table (Table 2) was conceptualized based on Martin and Jansen's (2012), which consisted of six categories and new terminology to describe students' classification (outlined in Section 4.2 of this article).

3 | METHODOLOGY

The aim of the main study was to understand Tasmanian students' motivations for (not) choosing an elective LOTE subject. An explanatory mixed method design was used, where quantitative data are further explained by qualitative data to provide a deeper understanding of the problem (Creswell, 2014). A state-wide survey gathered quantitative data concerning students' perceptions of LOTE learning and their reasons for (not) choosing an elective LOTE subject. This was followed by focus group interviews to further understand the survey data, and this additional qualitative depth allowed the development of a rich, detailed understanding of the motivational factors affecting Tasmanian students' LOTE enrollment. It is recognized that there may be some social desirability bias due to the nature of self-reported data, however, the survey was anonymous (unless students self-selected for the focus group, in which they provided their name and school, but were assigned a pseudonym for data analysis and reporting) and participants were informed that their answers were confidential. Neither method of data collection involved sensitive topics where participants would feel compelled to answer in accordance with societal expectations. Project approval was granted by the University of Tasmania Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC), the Tasmanian Department of Education, and the Catholic Education Office. The Independent schools only required HREC approval. All participants were required to provide consent before completing the survey, with Tasmanian Department of Education policy requiring participants under age 18 to obtain parent/guardian consent. All focus group participants were required to provide consent, and parent/guardian consent if aged under 18.

The following research questions were posed to guide the study and address the problem being investigated:

1. What factors influence students' enrollment decisions when considering elective second language subjects?
2. Are there any barriers which prevent students from enrolling in an elective second language subject?

This article predominately addresses research question two, with some discussion regarding research question one when providing context of enrollment factors.

3.1 | Phase 1—Quantitative

Participants: This study aimed to invite the entire population of Tasmanian students in Years 9–12 to participate in the first phase of the study. This population had been chosen as the participants for this study because generally after Year 8, students have the option to choose a LOTE as an elective subject. From the 94 eligible Tasmanian schools, 17 schools agreed to participate, which resulted in a total of 528 voluntary survey responses, 372 of which were fully completed ($n = 528$).

Procedure: The survey instrument (which can be freely downloaded on the IRIS Database: iris-database.org) was an online questionnaire based on previous studies (Busse & Williams, 2010; Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010; Zammit, 1992) and included information concerning students' motivations when considering choosing an elective LOTE, their beliefs and values pertaining to LOTE learning, and general demographic and personal information such as age, school, and postcode. It was expected to take students no longer than 20 min to complete and consisted mostly of Likert scale items. The survey was open for 11 weeks to allow a maximum response rate in consideration of the time frame of recruiting schools and students to the study. Schools were e-mailed an invitation to participate, which contained instructions for student recruitment. It was recommended to schools that student invitations were communicated via e-mail, student intranet, and form teachers.

Instrument design: The questionnaire was designed mainly on the instrument devised for Zammit's (1992) nation-wide ACER study, with Ideal and Ought-to L2 selves item inclusions from the questionnaires of Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) and Busse and Williams (2010). Many questions from Dörnyei and Taguchi's (2010) were repeated in Busse and Williams (2010) questionnaire, and were thus used in this study's instrument design because Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010) recommended using items from other questionnaires, as these will already have been sufficiently piloted. To allow a comparison, the design of the survey was deliberately kept very similar to Zammit's (1992) instrument. To keep the survey length manageable, five items from each L2 selves scale were replicated from Dörnyei and Taguchi's (2010) and Busse and Williams (2010) instruments, with no items added from the L2 Learning Experiences scale, as items from Zammit's (1992) instrument were applicable. Acquiescence bias was addressed by using positively and negatively worded items so participants responded using both sides of the scale, and Dörnyei and Taguchi's (2010) recommended six-step scale was adopted to avoid a "neutral" middle answer for unsure or ambivalent responses. The online instrument was tested for layout, correct logic flow, and question clarity by two students (non-Tasmanian and thus not in the sample) who were in Years 8 and 10.

Section 1 of the survey assessed students' overall attitude to school and school subjects. The attitude to school subscale was found to be highly reliable (16 items, $\alpha = .85$). Section 2 regarded attitude to LOTE, consisting of 10 subscales (8 from Zammit's instrument, with the added Ideal- and Ought-to L2 Selves items). A Cronbach's α coefficient was performed to determine the reliability of the 10 subscales, eight of which appeared to have good internal consistency: Influence of peers, $\alpha = .77$; relative importance of LOTE, $\alpha = .77$; LOTE compared to other subjects, $\alpha = .73$; LOTE effort outside of school, $\alpha = .83$; parental influence, $\alpha = .79$; Gender stigma, $\alpha = .66$; Ideal L2 Self, $\alpha = .89$; and Ought-to L2 Self, $\alpha = .83$. The relative

difficulty of LOTE and cultural heritage/society subscales were not found to be reliable ($\alpha = .16$ and $\alpha = .56$, respectively), therefore were omitted from the analyzes. The non-LOTE experiences subscale consisted of 12 items ($\alpha = .85$) and the non-LOTE reasons subscale consisted of 17 items ($\alpha = .93$) which were both found to be highly reliably. Section 4 was also highly reliable, with the 12 LOTE experiences ($\alpha = .82$) and 17 LOTE reasons items ($\alpha = .80$).

Data analysis: Survey data were analyzed using the software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, Version 22). Analyzes included mean, standard deviation, and 95% confidence intervals. The quantitative data analysis informed the second phase of the explanatory sequential design.

3.2 | Phase 2—Qualitative

Participants: For the second phase of data collection, seven schools were chosen as research sites based on the number of students who had self-selected and school demographics (type, location, social economic status). A single focus group was held in each school involving students of mixed Year level, gender and Languages enrollment status, except at one site where participation numbers were high enough to conduct two focus group interviews (one LOTE and one non-LOTE enrollment). A total of 37 students were interviewed across the seven research sites ($n = 37$).

Procedure: Consistent with an explanatory mixed methods design, the focus group interview schedule was created based on the analysis of survey data to identify key themes and areas requiring further explanation. Focus group interviews were chosen to maximize student participation, as group conversation is more naturalistic than in an individual interview, and allowed more participants and research sites to be included during the data collection time-frame (Creswell, 2015). The focus groups were held during students' school hours and lasted 28–56 min.

Data analysis: Braun and Clarke's (2006) six phases for conducting thematic analysis were followed to ensure a deliberate and rigorous analysis was achieved. The online data management program NVivo 11 was used, which was useful during the iterative nature of qualitative analysis, where themes were often reorganized and redefined. Emergent themes were categorized underneath the three L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2005) constructs, and students were classified as one of six learning profiles, which were conceptualized for this study.

Once the audio recordings were transcribed, multiple close readings enabled a strong familiarization with each transcript while checking it against the original audio recording for accuracy. This involved “active” reading, which involves searching for meanings and patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Creating summaries of each interview and potential codes provided an initial “big picture” of sites and participants, and built on the previous analytical thoughts and ideas that stemmed from the act of data collection. After first level coding in Phase 2, Phase 3 involved collating codes and organizing them into the overarching themes of Dörnyei's (2005) L2MSS dimensions (Ideal L2 Self, Ought-to L2 Self, and L2 Learning Experiences). There were several subthemes within these three dimensions, especially in the L2 Learning Experiences. Thematic mind maps were created during Phases 3 and 4, and careful meta-analysis was required due to the hierarchy of themes, which was an iterative and cyclical process. In Phase 5, data extracts were selected which best described the essence of the theme; theme names were finalized; and the “story” each was telling, individually as well as within the broader “story” of the data, was considered (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Student profiles: Focus group participants were profiled based on their survey and focus group data and classified under one of six categories:

- Continuing students ($n = 12$) are highly motivated students, currently enrolled in an elective L2 subject, and indicated likely enrollment next year.
- Forced Discontinuing students ($n = 10$) are highly motivated students who are not currently enrolled in an elective L2 at school but indicated a desire to be.
- Undecided students ($n = 6$) are currently enrolled in an elective L2, but have a medium level of motivation for L2 study as they are considering discontinuing the subject next year.
- New Discontinuing students ($n = 2$) have a medium level of motivation as they are not currently enrolled in an elective L2 class but have been previously.
- Forced Continuing students ($n = 0$) have a low level of motivation as they are enrolled in an elective L2 but do not want to be.
- Discontinuing students ($n = 8$) have a low level of motivation as they are not enrolled in an elective L2 and have never been.

The following quantitative and qualitative results concern data pertaining to the reasons why participants in the present study were not enrolled in an elective LOTE to address this article's focus.

4 | RESULTS

4.1 | Quantitative findings

Students not enrolled in an elective LOTE subject were asked to use Likert scale responses (strongly disagree, disagree, partly disagree, partly agree, agree, and strongly agree) for statements regarding why not. Of the 17 possible statements offered (see Table 3) for why students chose to discontinue their language learning, the most prevalent reason was that students believed they could use English if they traveled overseas (mean 4.23). This was followed by the reasons “I do NOT need LOTE for my future studies” (mean 4.05) and “I could NOT fit LOTE into my course of study” (mean 3.96).

Of most interest to this article's focus are the following three objective statements: LOTE clashed on the timetable with subjects I preferred; I could not fit LOTE into my course of study; and the LOTE I wanted to study was not offered. For each of these statements, more than half of the non-LOTE students agreed to some extent that this was a reason they were not currently enrolled in an elective LOTE subject. The mean (3.59) demonstrates that just over half of the participating non-LOTE students agreed they experienced a timetable clash, while a higher mean (3.96) was found for the statement they could not fit a LOTE into their course of study. Overall, just over half (mean 3.62) of these students agreed that one reason they were not currently enrolled in an elective LOTE was because the language they wanted to study was not offered.

The following five subjective statements were of interest regarding why students were not enrolled in an elective LOTE: I did not want to study a LOTE; I did not like learning a LOTE; I will never have the opportunity to use a LOTE; I did not like the LOTE class; and LOTE will not get me a better job (see Table 3). Importantly, this study shows that nearly half (mean 3.62) of non-LOTE students disagreed they did not study an elective LOTE subject because they did not

TABLE 3 Mean, standard deviation, and 95% confidence intervals (CI) for statements of language other than English (LOTE) discontinuation reasons

#	Likert scale statement	Mean	SD	95% CI
1	I can use English if I go overseas	4.23	1.39	4.08–4.39
2	I do NOT need LOTE for my future studies	4.05	1.50	3.89–4.22
3	I could NOT fit LOTE into my course of study	3.96	1.62	3.78–4.15
4	I found LOTE learning required constant work	3.88	1.44	3.72–4.05
5	The LOTE I wanted to study was NOT offered	3.72	1.80	3.52–3.92
6	My friends dropped LOTE	3.63	1.67	3.43–3.82
7	I did NOT want to study a LOTE	3.62	1.73	3.45–3.81
8	LOTE clashed on the timetable with subjects I preferred	3.59	1.64	3.41–3.77
9	LOTE will NOT get me a better job	3.49	1.50	3.33–3.66
10	I did NOT like the LOTE class	3.38	1.70	3.19–3.57
11	I did NOT like learning a LOTE	3.32	1.70	3.13–3.51
12	I was NOT good at LOTE	3.30	1.59	3.12–3.47
13	I did NOT like the way LOTE was taught	3.30	1.60	3.13–3.48
14	I did NOT like the LOTE teacher	3.04	1.73	2.85–3.22
15	I will never have an opportunity to use a LOTE	3.01	1.54	2.84–3.18
16	I did NOT get on with the LOTE teacher	2.86	1.67	2.68–3.05
17	The teacher advised me not to continue with LOTE study	2.34	1.45	2.18–2.50

want to. Second, just over half (mean 3.32) of the non-LOTE students *disagreed* with both of the following statements: they did not like learning a LOTE (mean 3.32) and did not like the LOTE class (mean 3.38). Again, just over half (mean 3.49) of the non-LOTE students disagreed that LOTE would not get them a better job, suggesting that this is a benefit of L2 learning. The subjective statement with which students disagreed the most was “I will never have the opportunity to use a LOTE” (mean 3.01). The reversal of these statements will be considered in the discussion section of this study.

4.2 | Qualitative findings

Six classifications, inspired from Martin and Jansen's (2012) initial three classifications, were used to categorize students according to their commitment to L2 study and their enrollment status at the time of data collection. With the focus of this article on demotivations, data is reported from the L2 Learning Experiences dimension of the L2MSS. The use of the classification system on data extracts developed a deeper understanding of the barrier issues being explored. Figure 1 shows the thematic analysis themes relating to this article's focus.

Students reported experiencing barriers with their LOTE learning which related directly to structural institutional decisions, such as “language choice,” “timetable constraints,” and “lack

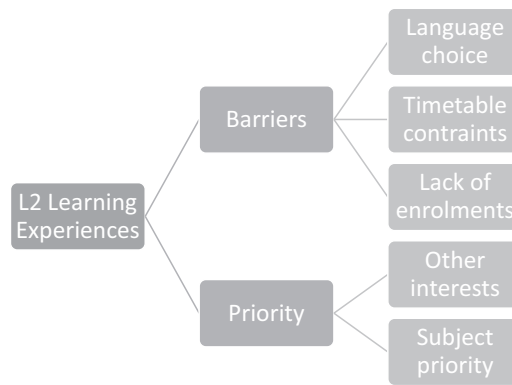


FIGURE 1 Qualitative analysis themes

of enrollments,” which emerged as the most prevalent subthemes during the thematic analysis. Many students in the focus groups, regardless of their L2 learning profile classification, expressed the desire for their school to offer a wider range of elective LOTE subjects, and cited this as a reason that they or their peers were not enrolled in an elective LOTE. Several students suggested a range of elective LOTE subjects would encourage their peers to enroll in one. Kimberley and Jace, both Forced Discontinuing students, cited space and the number of electives as barriers:

Kimberley: I probably would have picked the language, but because there's such a limited space for things to do, I just picked whatever I wanted to do more.

Jace: I liked doing Japanese... [But] I won't be doing it next year [Year 10] because of space.

Jace and Ally (also a Forced Discontinuing student) understood that their future education in Years 11 and 12 would involve timetable constraints regarding the number of subjects allowed, and that this would affect if they could enroll in an elective LOTE in future schooling. Patrick, another Forced Discontinuing student, explained that:

I wanted to do French and Chinese in Grade 9, but they didn't let me.

This was due to both subjects being scheduled at the same time, which is a disappointing story to hear and highlights one example of when a timetable clash prevents willing students from enrolling in their desired class. The lack of student numbers in elective LOTE classes was an issue raised in six of the seven focus groups. This was an interesting theme, as some students experienced the lack of enrollments in an elective LOTE class as a barrier, while others were able to enroll but shared the issues they experienced by only having small class sizes, such as the teacher working between the level 2 and 3 students. With only a minority of students choosing to enroll in an elective LOTE subject, classes sometimes were not able to be offered, and school activities could be affected:

Caleb: I know there are a few people who wanted to do Japanese but I'm not sure there are enough people for a class to do Japanese, but there was at least one Indonesian class.

Ben: There's a China trip on next year. I think it might not run since... Well in our Grade, I think only two people are doing Chinese next year.

One of the more prevalent factors influencing elective LOTE enrollment was students' perceptions of the subject regarding time and priority. The theme "priority" was created to explain this factor, comprising the subthemes "other interests" and "subject priority." The majority of comments were by students who were not enrolled in an elective LOTE, and relate to why they did not choose to enroll. Students explained that while they enjoyed LOTE learning, they had other interests which they prioritized over studying it. This is demonstrated by three Forced Discontinuing students:

Kimberly: I think if we had that extra space of electives and [my school] did do Chinese I definitely would have picked it, but it came down to priority, and I just preferred other subjects.

Kurt: I'm a very outdoorsy person so I had other electives that appealed to my nature a bit more than what this one did. When I did learn LOTE when I was younger I learnt Japanese in Queensland and then French down here when I moved, and I did enjoy them a lot... I just prefer other options.

Aaron: I dropped out of the other languages because I had other interests that I would rather spend my time doing especially since they weren't the languages of my choice.

The subtheme "subject priority" was created from issues discussed in terms of the priority of languages compared to other subjects, and the need to prioritize career subjects over LOTE electives. Lucy, a Continuing student, Kate, classified as a Discontinuing student, and Patrick, a Forced Discontinuing student, highlighted the issue of subject choice and the need to prioritize:

Lucy: I did it [French] again in Grade 11, but I was a kind of a bit unsure whether I was going to do it because I quite enjoy science and it sort of took a science away to do a language.

Kate: There was always better things to choose so it [LOTE] just got pushed backwards.

Patrick: I probably would've done French, but I needed a science to be applicable for studying to be a pilot...I had to substitute that instead.

Career subject priority was discussed in all focus groups, demonstrating its importance as a demotivating factor for LOTE enrollment. Students cited a lack of benefits for general careers, languages not fitting the learning pathway for determined careers, and the need to enroll in other subjects as career-related study prerequisites.

These reported themes are summarized perfectly by Caleb, who was speaking on behalf of his focus group when he stated “I think that we can all agree that we would like to learn a language but we just don’t” adding that “time, the number of electives we can have and what language we have” were all barriers to learning. Caleb’s encompassing statement captures the general feeling that the researcher obtained from a significant number of students in the focus groups.

5 | DISCUSSION

The quantitative results provided a snapshot of student reasons for not enrolling in elective LOTE subjects, which were classified in the L2 Learning Experiences dimension of the L2MSS (Dörnyei, 2005). Spence-Brown (2014) posited that students’ enrollment decisions are influenced by a combination of factors which lead to complex, multifaceted reasons for (dis)continuing elective L2 studies, consistent with the results of this study. The survey results indicated that the top reason for discontinuation was that students believed they could use English if they went overseas, followed by future studies not requiring a LOTE, and not being able to fit an elective LOTE into their course of study. These first two demotivators suggest students’ agency in their choice to not enroll in an elective LOTE, and that these students are willingly jumping from the cliff edge. However, for the last of those factors, being unable to fit an elective LOTE into their timetable suggests that some students are being pushed over the edge into unwilling discontinuation of LOTE study. In support of the “pushed” argument, for discontinuing students who *were* interested in L2 learning, barriers to study such as timetabling structures, lack of room in their course, unavailability of preferred language, subject priority or prerequisites, or other interests being prioritized, all resulted in discontinuation, which confirms the findings of previous studies (Kohler & Curnow, 2007; Lo Bianco & Aliani, 2013; Rothman et al., 2014; Zammit, 1992). Students who chose to discontinue as they had no desire to study an elective LOTE cited a lack of interest and no perceived relevance as the main reasons, with negative previous experiences also influencing this choice, which is consistent with findings from Spence-Brown (2014), de Kretser and Spence-Brown (2010), Kohler and Curnow (2007), Lo Bianco and Aliani (2013), and Ren (2009).

This study’s findings provide a clear picture of the reasons why students do not continue their elective LOTE studies. However, further analyzing the responses to the statements regarding reasons for not enrolling in a LOTE, it is more interesting to look at the reverse side of these statements at the students who *disagreed* with these, and the revelations this provides in terms of the untold story behind elective L2 enrollment decline. Of most interest are the following three statements: LOTE study clashed on the timetable with subjects I preferred; I could not fit a LOTE into my course of study; and the LOTE I wanted to study was not offered. For each of these statements, more than half of the non-LOTE students agreed to some extent that this was a reason that they were not currently enrolled in an elective LOTE subject.

Just over half (mean 3.59) of non-LOTE students agreed that they experienced a timetable clash, while even more (mean 3.96) agreed that they could not fit a LOTE into their course of study. Timetable constraints impact students’ enrollment decisions with tension between wanted and needed subjects, which leads to prioritization of subjects. At times this is a personal preference due to other interests, or a forced choice in terms of prerequisite subjects for future study or career pathways. These results are consistent with other investigations into student L2 enrollment (de Kretser & Spence-Brown, 2010; Spence-Brown, 2014). A detrimental cycle is

created where these barriers result in fewer enrollments, which means less classes offered due to lack of perceived demand, which then further impacts interested students' ability to enroll. Students in lower Years then perceive there is no pathway to Year 12 (de Kretser & Spence-Brown, 2010), do not enroll in Languages classes, and the downwards spiral continues as it is mutually reinforced by the issues of availability and enrollment.

The statement "the LOTE I wanted to study was not offered" received the highest percentage of "strongly agree" responses (24%), indicating that this was an important reason for students not enrolling in an elective LOTE. This was the most prevalent theme from the focus group interviews, with the researcher leaving each research site with the strong impression that students were dissatisfied with their schools' Languages offerings. The theme "language choice" referred to a lack of LOTE subjects (few or none) offered at schools, students' desired language not being available, and the general desire for a range of languages to be offered. Zammit (1992) reported that 30% of her participants cited undesired language choice as a major reason for discontinuing. This is consistent with participants' responses in the present study, with this reason's total agreement rate of 55%. Rothman et al. (2014) also reported lack of access to the preferred language as a perceived barrier by senior secondary students, with language availability cited as one of the main reasons for discontinuation. The topic of this barrier was also prominent in the open-ended question at the conclusion of the present study's survey, with 11 participants motivated to comment about their school not offering the language they wanted to learn, or their wish that their school would offer a wider variety of languages. Similar comments were also expressed in the focus group interviews, consistent with findings from Lo Bianco and Aliani's (2013) study with secondary students, and from Schmidt's (2014) study regarding tertiary L2 learners of German.

The following five subjective statements were of interest regarding why non-LOTE students were not enrolled in an elective LOTE: I did not want to study a LOTE; I did not like learning a LOTE; I will never have the opportunity to use a LOTE; I did not like the LOTE class; and a LOTE will not get me a better job. While these are important reasons for discontinuing for the students who did agree with these statements, of greater interest is that nearly half of the students who are classed in the enrollment decline figures are students who enjoyed learning a LOTE and have the desire to continue. For example, although the mean was 3.62 for the statement "I did NOT want to study a LOTE," this is only slightly tending toward the "disagreement" side of the Likert scale, with a standard deviation of 1.73. Furthermore, just over half of the non-LOTE students disagreed that they did not like studying a LOTE (mean 3.32) and disliked the LOTE class (mean 3.38). This highlights the importance of positive learning experiences and achieving success with their LOTE learning. This finding links to other studies, as Rothman et al. (2014) found high enjoyment levels correlated with high levels of academic achievement and ease of learning, and de Kretser and Spence-Brown (2010) reported a positive experience, in which students liked the subject, teacher, and learning environment, as an influential factor. Five of the seven top motivating factors in this study relate to positive learning experiences, such as enjoying the subject, finding it interesting, and liking the teacher. This suggests that students are motivated to continue their studies due to intrinsic reasons, which is consistent with conclusions drawn by Spence-Brown (2014), Rothman et al. (2014), and Kohler and Curnow (2007) and highlights the importance of Dörnyei's (2005) L2 Learning Experiences component of the L2MSS.

The enrollment decline in postcompulsory LOTE subjects is often interpreted as a lack of interest from students. The findings of this study indicate that a significant number of students are prevented from studying an elective LOTE subject at school by a range of systemic and

personal barriers. The conclusion drawn from this finding is that the perception of student disinterest in elective LOTE may be incorrect or simplistic. Within the cohort of discontinuing students there are those who wished to continue but were unable to do so due to a range of barriers, thus classified as Forced Discontinuing students.

The (2014) suggested that “current conditions in systems and schools are not conducive to building and sustaining student demand for languages” (p. 13), however from the findings of the present study the proposed argument is that current conditions in systems and schools are also not conducive to *meeting* the demand and *enabling* students to study an elective LOTE subject at school. This has global implications for countries with similar LOTE education contexts. Like Australia, the UK, US, and NZ rank poorly on L2 education provision and implementation (Asia Education Foundation, 2014). Recognizing there are students who are forced to discontinue their LOTE learning due to barriers ought to encourage education stakeholders in these contexts to investigate the supply and demand situation regarding the provision of LOTE in schools. Addressing this issue would enable and encourage more students to enroll in elective LOTE subjects, halting and possibly even reversing the current downwards-spiraling cycle of LOTE availability.

Future research to gain further insight into these barriers and how they could be addressed to allow these students to enroll in an elective LOTE is needed. Barriers such as subject availability and timetable structuring, including the number of electives in which students can enroll, would be appropriate for future investigation. As discussed in the literature review, teacher availability, class structure and articulation are all elements which impact students' enrollment but which are outside their control, adding to the complexity of the issue. Further research to investigate the constellation of factors affecting LOTE elective enrollment is required to go beyond simply the student perspective. Furthermore, from these findings it is hypothesized that these barriers could be applied to a range of elective subjects to explain low enrollments. Availability of classes, subject prioritization based on future career/study or other interests, timetabling, and space are all valid reasons for students not enrolling in a variety of elective subjects offered at their school, for which the simple “lack of interest” argument could be applied for low enrollment numbers. Further investigation into the generalizability of elective subject enrollment barriers could highlight a host of subjects which are valued by students but unrecognised due to enrollment decline.

Despite not studying a LOTE, Forced Discontinuing students were identified as having strong Ideal L2 Selves, although in terms of personal barriers, this future self-vision was not strong enough to create the necessary motivation to address these barriers and enroll in an elective LOTE subject. However, if coupled with systemic barriers outside the student's control, the Ideal L2 Self was formed but unable to be actively used as a future self-guide to sustain language learning motivation. Retaining a strong Ideal L2 Self while not studying an L2 is an interesting finding from this study, suggesting that it can be maintained while not actively used as a motivator. As discussed, the majority of L2MSS studies are conducted with English as the target language (Boo et al., 2015; Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017; Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2017). Results from this study indicate that it can be effectively applied to language learners within the Tasmanian context, as well as non-English language learners, and those not currently studying a LOTE. Further research using the L2MSS in other non-English settings would assist in developing an understanding of its applicability in these contexts, which differ from where the target language of English is often easily accessible in non-Anglophone countries. While research is starting to investigate LOTE motivation when it is an L3 (with English the L2)

(Dörnyei & Al-Hoorie, 2017; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2017) there is still a nuanced difference for NES learning a LOTE compared to multi-L2 learners.

While many studies have used the L2MSS framework since its conception (see Csizér, 2019, for a comprehensive outline), the two *L2 Self* components have gained the most attention, leaving the L2 Learning Experiences component undertheorised. Dörnyei (2019) explained it was conceptualized to cover all other important aspects of language learning, learnt from the 1990s research era, but was left quite broad initially with the intention to return and further develop it. Csizér (2019) reported that it remains the neglected component, and further research is required to investigate the effect of L2 experiences on L2 motivation. In the editorial of a special issue dedicated to the L2 Learning Experiences, Csizér and Kálmán (2019) argued that it is a broader concept that combines present situational aspects as well as long-term effects, as experiences continue to evolve and impact, from which the past shapes the present. Many themes from this study's data were coded into the L2 Learning Experiences component due its broad concept, and this is where the themes of learning barriers fit. When considering the complexity of motivations and barriers that affected students' decisions to enroll in an L2, reconceptualising Martin and Jansen's (2012) framework to six student profiles was useful to help understand the interaction of situational aspects and students' Ideal L2 Selves, and how this translates to language subject enrollments. The present study's findings focus on students' L2 experiences which affect their desire and ability to enroll in an elective LOTE. Analyzing these factors adds to the understanding of the L2 Learning Experiences component, and found using student profiles useful to demarcate students' motivation and enrollment. These profiles allow an understanding of both LOTE motivation and enrollment to be developed, which in the case of barriers to learning, helps tell the story of students' personal constellations of factors which impact their subject choices. The forced discontinuing Student category comprises students with high LOTE learning motivation, but who are unwillingly pushed over the cliff edge to become a LOTE enrollment decline statistic. This finding means that not all students who discontinue LOTE learning are disinterested in L2 study, disproving the pervasive "monolingual mindset" narrative. Copland and McPake (2021) argued that the media constantly perpetuates this view, which does not help to dispel this outlook. Mason and Hajek (2020) found that the Australian press usually focus solely on economic advantages when reporting L2 benefits, whereas promoting social benefits could positively impact student elective choice. More recognition of L2 interest is needed to help shift the conversation away from the neo-liberal, economic benefits and toward the social, more holistic benefits, and could thus assist in addressing enrollment decline by society's shifting mindset.

A limitation of the present study is that focus group data would not be generalizable, however, do serve to illustrate the data as presented within this study's context. A larger study involving sampling from the target population in all states/territories and a wider spread of focus group interviews would be beneficial in determining the generalizability of these results nationally and allow for a more comprehensive data comparison including between school sectors, metro/rural/regional locations, and the structure of elective subject systems in schools. Another limitation of the study is the low numbers of students in some classification categories, whereas more data in these categories would allow for deeper analyzes of the motivations, experiences, and contexts which categorize participants in each classification. Further research of the classifications is needed to develop a deeper understanding of these student profiles.

6 | CONCLUSION

The severe decline in elective second language enrollments seems widely interpreted as indicative of a lack of student interest in L2 learning. The real story, however, may be more complex, and in this study, it is argued that there are six categories by which to class students' motivations for choosing whether or not to study an elective L2 subject at school. The Forced Discontinuing students category, classifying students who want to learn an L2 but cannot due to personal and systemic barriers, has been explored, and the data indicates that there is a large number of students who are inspired by an Ideal L2 Self, and thus value L2 learning, but are experiencing institutional barriers. The two most common barriers arise in relation to the desired language not being offered at their schools, and career-focused subjects taking precedence. This is significant in understanding the problem of enrollment declines, as there are students wishing to learn an L2 but prevented by institutional factors. Languages need to be made an attractive option that fits within students' learning pathways, as opposed to being a fun luxury in which only some students can partake. Commitment to Languages subjects needs to be made by schools and systems, so students recognize languages are valued, and there are learning pathways and timetabling structures which make them accessible. While this is not a simple problem to solve, recognition of this category of students is essential in addressing the enrollment issue to prevent a misguided attempt to enlighten students of the value of L2 learning.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am blessed to have had a supervisor I also call a friend. This article and the research behind it would not have been possible without the support and guidance from Dr. David Moltow, who continues to be a primary source of advice whilst navigating post-PhD endeavors. Thank you for all your time and support since we met in my undergraduate degree! A special thank you to Dr. Mairin Hennebry-Leung for your time and advice during the revision process, which without a doubt enhanced this article. Also, unending appreciation goes to Dr. David Hicks for your exceptional quantitative guidance. Thank you for taking the time to answer all my questions! I truly appreciate the reviewers' comments in assisting me to further strengthen my article and thank them for the time spent on their reviews. I am grateful to the University of Tasmania, which has given me the opportunity to study, and now work, at such a wonderful institution, and thank you to all colleagues who have provided advice and support. Last, thank you to my parents, Joanna and Guy, and my partner Adam, for your endless support. Open access publishing facilitated by University of Tasmania, as part of the Wiley - University of Tasmania agreement via the Council of Australian University Librarians.

OPEN RESEARCH BADGES



This article has earned an Open Materials badge for making publicly available the components of the research methodology needed to reproduce the reported procedure and analysis. All materials are available at <https://www.iris-database.org/iris/app/home/detail?id=york:939973>

ORCID

Stephanie Clayton  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8091-8393>

ENDNOTE

- ¹ Although the term “language/s” is now preferred in the Australian context, the term “LOTE” has been used in this article to align with its use in international research. The terminology “L2” is used when discussing second language learning in general, while the term “LOTE” is used when specifically discussing the contextual focus of this study, which is native English speakers learning a second language. The term “Languages” is used when referring to the Australian Curriculum subject.

REFERENCES

- American Councils for International Education. (2017). *The national K-12 foreign language enrollment survey report*. <https://www.americancouncils.org/sites/default/files/FLE-report-June17.pdf>
- Asia Education Foundation. (2014). *Senior secondary languages education research project: Final report*. http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/docs/default-source/research-and-policy-pdfs/senior_secondary_languages_education_research_project_final.pdf
- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. (n.d.a). *Languages*. <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/languages/>
- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. (n.d.b). *Languages: Rationale*. <https://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/f-10-curriculum/languages/rationale/>
- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. (n.d.c). *Year 12 subject enrolments*. <https://www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national-report-on-schooling-in-australia/national-report-on-schooling-in-australia-data-portal/year-12-subject-enrolments>
- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. (2016). *Australian curriculum: Languages consultation report*. <https://www.acara.edu.au/docs/default-source/default-document-library/20160916-australian-curriculum-languages---consultation-report---v2.pdf?sfvrsn=2>
- Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority. (2017). *Australian curriculum: Languages (information sheet)*. https://www.acara.edu.au/docs/default-source/curriculum/20170118-australian-curriculum_languages_info_sheet.pdf?sfvrsn=2
- Boo, Z., Dörnyei, Z., & Ryan, S. (2015). L2 motivation research 2005–2014: Understanding a publication surge and a changing landscape. *System*, 55, 147–157.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101.
- British Academy, Academy of Medical Sciences, Royal Academy of Engineering, & The Royal Society. (2019). *Languages in the UK: A call for action*. <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/documents/61/Languages-UK-2019-academies-statement.pdf>
- Busse, V., & Williams, M. (2010). Why German? Motivation of students studying German at English universities. *Language Learning Journal*, 38(1), 67–85. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571730903545244>
- Catholic Schools Tasmania. (2021). *Curriculum*. <https://www.catholic.tas.edu.au/learning-and-teaching>
- Clyne, M. (2005). *Australia's language potential*. University of New South Wales Press.
- Clyne, M., Pauwels, A., & Sussex, R. (2007). The state of languages education in Australia: A national tragedy and an international embarrassment. *Curriculum Leadership Journal*, 5(19). http://www.curriculum.edu.au/leader/the_state_of_languages_education_in_australia,19754.html?issueID=10810
- Coffey, S. (2018). Choosing to study modern foreign languages: Discourses of value as forms of cultural capital. *Applied Linguistics*, 39(4), 462–480. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amw019>
- Cole, P. (2007). *School curriculum for the 21st century: A rough guide to a national curriculum*. http://www.acsa.edu.au/pages/images/paper%20-%20peter%20cole%20_nc.pdf
- Collen, I. (2020). Language trends 2020: Language teaching in primary and secondary schools in England. British Council. https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/language_trends_2020_0.pdf
- Copland, F., & McPake, J. (2021). Building a new public idea about language?: Multilingualism and language learning in the post-Brexit UK. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 1–20. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14664208.2021.1939976>

- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W. (2015). *A concise introduction to mixed methods research*. SAGE.
- Csízér, K. (2019). The L2 motivational self system. In M. Lamb, K. Csízér, A. Henry, & S. Ryan (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of motivation for language learning* (pp. 71–93). <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-28380-3>
- Csízér, K., & Kálmán, C. (2019). Editorial. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 9(1), 13–17. <https://doi.org/10.14746/ssl.2019.9.1.1>
- de Kretser, A., & Spence-Brown, R. (2010). *The current state of Japanese language education in Australian schools*. Education Services Australia.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *The psychology of the language learner: Individual differences in second language acquisition*. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2009). The L2 motivational self system. In Z. Dörnyei, & E. Ushioda (Eds.), *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self* (pp. 9–42). Multilingual Matters.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2019). Towards a better understanding of the L2 Learning Experience, the Cinderella of the L2 Motivational Self System. *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching*, 9(1), 19–30.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Al-Hoorie, A. H. (2017). The motivational foundation of learning languages other than Global English: Theoretical issues and research directions. *The Modern Language Journal*, 101(3), 455–468. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12408>
- Dörnyei, Z., & Taguchi, T. (2010). *Questionnaires in second language research: Construction, administration, and processing* (2nd ed.). Routledge.
- East, M. (2021). Language learning in New Zealand's schools: Enticing opportunities and enduring constraints. In U. Lanvers, A. S. Thompson, & M. East (Eds.), *Language learning in Anglophone countries: Challenges, practices, ways forward* (pp. 19–36). Palgrave Macmillan. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-56654-8_2
- Graddol, D. (2006). *English next: Why global English may mean the end of 'English as a foreign language'*. British Council.
- Hennebry-Leung, M. (2021). *Is your kid studying a second language at school? How much they learn will depend on where you live*. <https://theconversation.com/is-your-kid-studying-a-second-language-at-school-how-much-they-learn-will-depend-on-where-you-live-155219>
- Independent Schools Tasmania. (2021). *About us*. <https://independentschools.tas.edu.au/about-us>
- Kleinsasser, R. (2001). Primary to secondary LOTE articulation: A local case in Australia. *Foreign Language Annals*, 32(3), 193–205. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2001.tb02401.x>
- Kohler, M., & Curnow, T. J. (2007). Languages are important—But that's not why I am studying one. *Babel*, 42(2), 20–24.
- Lanvers, U., Thompson, A. S., & East, M. (2021). Introduction: Is language learning in Anglophone countries in crisis? In U. Lanvers, A. S. Thompson, & M. East (Eds.), *Language learning in Anglophone countries: Challenges, practices, ways forward* (pp. 1–15) Palgrave MacMillan. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-56654-8>
- Liddicoat, A. J. (2002). Some future challenges for languages in Australia. *Babel*, 30(2), 29–31, 37–38.
- Lo Bianco, J. (2005). *Asian languages in Australian schools: Policy options*. Melbourne Asia Policy Articles.
- Lo Bianco, J. (2009). *Second languages and Australian schooling*. ACER Press.
- Lo Bianco, J., & Aliani, R. (2013). *Language planning and student experiences: Intention, rhetoric and implementation*. Multilingual Matters.
- Martin, L., & Jansen, M. (2012). *Identifying possible causes for high and low retention rates in language and culture programs at the Australian National University: A characterization of three groups of students crucial for understanding student attrition*. Languages & Cultures Network for Australian Universities Colloquium (LCNAU 2011).
- Mason, S., & Hajek, J. (2020). Language education and language ideologies in Australian print media. *Applied Linguistics*, 41(2), 215–233. <https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/amy052>
- Mendoza, A., & Phung, H. (2019). Motivation to learn languages other than English: A critical research synthesis. *Foreign Language Annals*, 52(1), 121–140. <https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12380>

- Munro, K. (2016). *Why students are turning away from learning foreign languages*. *The Sydney Morning Herald*. <http://www.smh.com.au/national/education/why-students-are-turning-away-from-learning-foreign-languages-20160610-gpg6ek.html>
- Office of TASC. (2020). *19-20 annual report*. <https://www.tasc.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/TASC-Annual-Report-2019-2020.pdf>
- Parrish, A., & Lanvers, U. (2019). Student motivation, school policy choices and modern language study in England. *The Language Learning Journal*, 47(3), 281–298. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09571736.2018.1508305>
- Ren, G. (2009). Why do or don't boys choose Chinese as an elective in secondary school? *Babel*, 43(3), 20–26.
- Rothman, S., Zhao, Y., & Lonsdale, A. (2014). *Report on the analysis of student, parent and principal surveys (Attachment 2 of the Senior Secondary Languages Education Research Project by the Asia Education Foundation)*. https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/attachment_2_report_on_the_analysis_of_student_parent_and_principal_surveys.pdf
- Schmidt, G. (2014). "There's more to it": A qualitative study into the motivation of Australian university students to learn German. *German as a Foreign Language*, 1, 21–44. <http://hdl.handle.net/1885/63156>
- Spence-Brown, R. (2014). *Attachment 3: Factors related to student continuation and discontinuation of Japanese in senior secondary school*. https://docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/attachment_3_factors_related_to_student_continuation_and_discontinuation.pdf
- Steigler-Peters, S., Moran, W., Piccioli, M. T., & Chesterton, P. (2003). Addressing transition issues in languages education. *Babel*, 38(1), 31–34, 36–38.
- Tan, L. (2015). *Fewer pupils learning languages*. *New Zealand Herald*. http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=11438943
- Tasmanian Government Department of Education. (n.d.). *Curriculum*. <https://www.education.tas.gov.au/students/school-and-colleges/curriculum/>
- Ushioda, E. (2017). The impact of global English on motivation to learn other languages: Toward an ideal multilingual self. *The Modern Language Journal*, 101(3), 469–482. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12413>
- Ushioda, E., & Dörnyei, Z. (2017). Beyond global English: Motivation to learn languages in a multicultural world: Introduction to the special issue. *The Modern Language Journal*, 101(3), 451–454. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12407>
- Worne, J. (2015). *Language learning in the UK: Can't, won't, don't*. *The Telegraph*. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/education/educationopinion/11369703/Language-learning-in-the-UK-cant-wont-dont.html>
- Zammit, S. (1992). *The challenge: Choosing to study a language other than English through high school: Project no. 2.2/102*. ACER.

How to cite this article: Clayton, S. (2022). Systemic and personal factors that affect students' elective language other than English enrollment decisions. *Foreign Language Annals*, 55, 361–382. <https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12605>