Military L2 immersion
Language learning motivations among Finnish-speaking conscripts in a Swedish language garrison

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The purpose of the present study was to examine some of the motivations and longitudinal consequences of military service in L2 Swedish for L1 Finnish conscripts in Finland’s only Swedish language garrison. Cross-sectional data (N = 42), analyzed with Bayesian path analysis, indicates that promotional instrumentality enhanced participants’ L2 ideal selves, but integrative orientation did not. The L2 ideal self predicts L2 learning intentions in the army, but only among learners with low L2 proficiency at the beginning of military service. Longitudinal data (N = 17), analyzed with a Bayesian model selection procedure, shows that after six months in the army, participants reported higher levels of L2 proficiency, lower levels of L2 use anxiety and more positive attitudes towards L2 speakers than at the beginning of military service.

Keywords: L2 acquisition, Swedish in Finland, military service, integrative motivation, instrumental motivation

1. Introduction

Finland is a bilingual country with two national languages, Finnish and Swedish. Although the Swedish language group comprises merely 291,000 speakers, constituting only 5.6% of the population, the language enjoys high status and broad institutional support. Finnish and Swedish speakers have separate school systems, but learn each other’s language as a compulsory second language (L2), often beginning in grade 7.

However, Finnish speakers on the whole appear to have a complicated relationship with the Swedish language. Thus, although political and civil initiatives to abolish Swedish as an obligatory L2 in Finnish-speaking schools have been common for decades (e.g. Pöyhönen & Saarinen, 2014; Saari, 2012), many Finnish speakers...
have a positive attitude towards the Swedish language. Some Finnish parents seem to strongly value their children mastering it, and enroll them in Swedish-speaking schools (e.g. Holm, Londen, & Mansikka, 2015); approximately 4% of pupils in Swedish-speaking elementary schools come from monolingual Finnish homes (Utbildningsstyrelsen, 2014). Also, Finnish speakers frequently pursue studies in Swedish-speaking institutions of higher education; for instance, Finnish-speaking students make up 15% of the students at Åbo Akademi, the largest Swedish language university in Finland (Yle, 2013). One particularly strong indicator of positive Finnish attitudes towards Swedish is that some Finnish-speaking young men choose to do their compulsory military service in a Swedish-speaking regiment.

Military service in Finland is compulsory for all males over 18. There is a single Swedish language garrison, Nylands Brigad, situated in Dragsvik on the Southern coast, about 90 km from Helsinki. This unit is part of the Finnish Navy, tasked with the training of conscripts for coastal duties. Nylands Brigad is a natural training unit for Swedish speakers, but statistics indicate that 10–15% of conscripts are usually Finnish speakers from all over Finland (Puolustusvoimat, 2013).

The Swedish language garrison offers an environment for Finnish speakers to develop their competence in Swedish in a natural, untutored way. As such, it provides an excellent laboratory for the examination of the motivations and outcomes of uninstructed L2 acquisition. Motivational research on L2 acquisition has predominantly focused on instructed language learning among school children; we argue that examining natural, untutored L2 acquisition may provide exceptional insights into the relationship between language, interlinguistic contact, and L2 acquisition. Because language learning in this case is voluntary and requires real behavioral commitment from the Finnish-speaking conscripts, it also allows for an ecologically sound examination of the underlying motivations of L2 acquisition.

The purpose of the present paper is twofold, and it includes two distinct but related studies. The first is a cross-sectional study, intended to shed some light on the motivational background of military service in an L2-speaking garrison (hereafter military service in the L2). The second is a longitudinal study, examining some longitudinal effects of this particular form of L2 immersion.

2. Study 1: The cross-sectional study

2.1 Theoretical background

The first part of the study was undertaken to map the motivational background of military service in the L2. The conceptual model we tested (Figure 1) was inspired by Dörnyei’s model, the L2 motivational self system (Dörnyei, 2009). Although the
model is tailored to the educational context of L2 learning, instructed language acquisition and classroom motivation, we aim to test whether the approach, with some modifications, is applicable even in the particular context of the present study.

**Figure 1.** The proposed model. The moderating effect (i.e. the interaction of L2 ideal self with L2 proficiency) is depicted as an arrow from L2 proficiency to the path from L2 ideal self to L2 learning intentions

The central construct in our model is the *L2 ideal self* – the core component of the system of L2 motivational self. The L2 ideal self reflects an individual’s belief about who they might become through learning a second language. It involves hopes, ambitions, and desires, and so is closely related to an individual’s capacity of vision (e.g. Dörnyei & Chan, 2013). Dörnyei argues that a stronger L2 ideal self promotes L2 learning intentions because L2 learners typically want to reduce the discrepancy between their actual and idealized L2 selves (Dörnyei, 2009; see also Henry, 2012).

The system of L2 motivational self also asserts that the development of the L2 ideal self is supported by promotional instrumentality. That is, individuals who have clear goals to be personally or professionally successful via learning the L2 (e.g. Dörnyei, 2009; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi, 2009) can create more positive L2-speaking self-images. At the same time, we suggest that in the particular context of this study not only promotional instrumentality, but also integrative orientation, i.e. the goal to get psychologically and socially closer to the L2 group by acquiring the L2 (Gardner, 2010), may be an important factor to enhance one’s idealized L2 self. Specifically, given Finland’s two national language groups, it is possible that there are Finnish speakers who seek opportunities to acquire Swedish to access and open doors towards the Swedish language group, and live their lives more comfortably in bilingual environments. That said, we hypothesize that both promotional instrumentality and integrative orientation will increase the L2 ideal self.

Next, drawing on the system of L2 motivational self and the related empirical works (e.g. Busse, 2013; Lamb, 2012; Taguchi et al., 2009), we hypothesize that the
L2 ideal self will predict L2 learning intentions. In other words, we expect that individuals with a clear vision of their future competence in Swedish will be more motivated to put efforts into learning Swedish in the army.

Yet, we also anticipate that L2 proficiency will moderate the relationship between L2 ideal self and L2 learning intentions. Specifically, we argue that L2 learning in the army will be most prevalent among those who perceive a large discrepancy between their actual L2 proficiency and the L2 proficiency their idealized L2 self should possess. Swedish proficiency may vary considerably among Finnish-speaking conscripts, and it is also probable that conscripts with different levels of Swedish chose to serve in the Swedish unit for various reasons. It is likely that soldiers with good command of Swedish at the beginning of their service did not choose the Swedish unit for the purpose of language acquisition but for other reasons (e.g. logistical proximity of the base to their dwelling, or social). It is more probable, however, that soldiers with poor command of Swedish at the beginning of their service may choose the Swedish unit more specifically to improve and strengthen their Swedish proficiency. Consequently, we expect that the L2 ideal self would predict L2 learning intentions more among soldiers with low proficiency at the beginning of their service than among those with good command of Swedish when commencing their service.

2.2 Method

2.2.1 Participants

Paper-and-pencil questionnaire data was collected from all conscripts with registered L1 Finnish at the beginning of their military service in January 2015 (N = 88). Participants from bilingual families (therefore fluent in Swedish) were excluded from the analysis (n = 39); we ended with a final sample of N=42 for the purpose of the study. The average age of the participants was under 20 (M = 19.36, SD = .53), indicating that they typically entered military service right after secondary school. Only 7% came from Swedish-dominated municipalities, while 54% came from majority Finnish bilingual municipalities, and the rest from monolingual Finnish municipalities (e.g. Rauma, Liperi, Lakuaa), often located hundreds of kilometers from the garrison. Some 90% of participants reported their intention to pursue higher education after their service.

2.2.2 Measures

L2 ideal self. Five 5-point items were used to assess L2 ideal self as described in Dörnyei and Chan (2013). The scale included items such as “I can imagine myself being a very competent speaker of Swedish” and “When I think of the future, I can imagine myself using Swedish in a variety of ways”. The scale had a good reliability
(\(\alpha = .77\)) and the mean value indicated a relatively strong L2 ideal self \((M = 3.99, SD = .79)\).

**L2 orientations.** Participants were asked for what purposes they intended to utilize Swedish. Four 5-point items measured promotional instrumentality (e.g. “Because one day it will be useful in getting a good job”, “In order to attain higher social respect”) borrowed from Taguchi et al. (2009). The reliability of the scale was low \((\alpha = .58)\), and could not be improved by removing items. Still, the construct was used in the analysis in its present form by averaging the four items. The mean value indicated a moderate extent of promotional instrumentality \((M = 3.65, SD = .73)\). Integrative orientation was measured with five items (e.g. “Because I will be able to interact more easily with Swedish speakers”) based on the integrative orientation scales described in Gardner (2010) and Clément and Baker (2001). The scale had a good reliability \((\alpha = .86)\), and the mean value indicated a high extent of integrative orientation \((M = 4.06, SD = .75)\).

**Perceived L2 proficiency.** Respondents were asked to indicate how they evaluated their proficiency in Swedish with respect to speaking, listening, writing and reading. A response format from 1=poor to 5=excellent was used. The scale had a good reliability \((\alpha = .91)\), and the mean value indicated moderate skills in Swedish \((M = 3.38, SD = .96)\).

**L2 learning intentions.** With respect to the particular context of the study, a special measure was developed to assess L2 learning intentions in the army. The scale consisted of six 5-point items (e.g. “I came to Dragsvik because I wanted to improve my Swedish skills”, “I came to Dragsvik because it is a unique possibility to make progress in Swedish”). The reliability of the scale was good \((\alpha = .88)\), and the mean value indicated relatively high L2 learning intentions in the army \((M = 4.03, SD = 1.01)\).

### 2.2.3 Analysis

The proposed model was examined with Bayesian estimation in Mplus version 7.4. (Muthén & Muthén, 1998–2015) following the guidance provided by Depaoli and van de Schoot (2017). The Bayesian approach was chosen because of the small sample size. Specifically, the Bayesian estimator produces accurate evaluations of a parameter even with small samples (Asparouhov & Muthén, 2010; van de Schoot, 2014), i.e. where the sample size is 2–3 times the number of parameters (Lee & Song, 2004), while in maximum likelihood estimation the sample size should be at least 5 times the number of parameters (Kline, 2011: 11–12). As the model we test includes 19 parameters and 42 cases, we rely more on the Bayesian approach.

The analysis used a seed value of 200 and starting values based on the ML-estimates. Four Markov chains were implemented for each parameter and the Gelman and Rubin convergence diagnostic (Gelman & Rubin, 1992) was applied...
with a convergence criterion of 0.01. A total of 100,000 iterations were used to ensure convergence. Default, non-informative priors provided by Mplus were used. Model fit was assessed using posterior predictive checking (Gelman, Carlin, Stern, & Rubin, 2004), which is based on a $\chi^2$ test comparing the observed data with model estimates. A model can be considered to fit the data well when the posterior predictive $p$-value is between .05 and .95, and the corresponding confidence interval includes zero (Gelman et al., 2004). Bayesian analysis also provides a 95% credibility interval for each estimated parameter; a true effect would likely exist if an interval did not encompass zero.

![Figure 2.](image)

**Figure 2.** Results of the Bayesian path analysis. The figure shows standardized coefficients

![Figure 3.](image)

**Figure 3.** Loop plot depicting the indirect effect as a function of the moderator. The green line shows the indirect effect, while the red lines show the 95% credibility interval. Values for the moderator variable range from −1 to +1 standard deviations from the mean.
2.4 Results

The results of the path analysis are summarized in Figure 2. The model fit the data well, posterior predictive $p$-value = .49, posterior predictive 95% CI [−19.51, 20.61]. Promotional instrumentality predicted L2 ideal self, but integrative orientation did not. L2 ideal self predicted L2 learning intentions but this effect was moderated by L2 proficiency. The moderated indirect effect via the L2 ideal self is graphically depicted with a loop plot in Figure 3. As can be seen, when L2 proficiency is low, the indirect effect via L2 ideal self is true and positive, −1 SD: $β = .32$, 95% CI [.03, .79]. However, when L2 proficiency is higher, the effect is not true anymore: at the mean value of L2 proficiency, $β = .04$, 95% CI [−.14, .28] and at +1 SD: $β = −.22$, 95% CI [−.68, .02]. In other words, L2 ideal self predicted L2 learning intentions in the army only among those who had poor L2 skills.

2.5 Discussion

The results of the first part of the study provided ample support for our hypotheses. Specifically, in line with existing research (e.g. Lasagabaster, 2016; Papi & Teimouri, 2012; Taguchi et al., 2009), it was shown that promotional instrumentality enhanced L2 ideal self, such that the clearer the objectives of Finnish-speaking conscripts to become individually and professionally successful by learning Swedish, the more positive self-images they built with respect to their future Swedish skills. At the same time, it was also demonstrated that integrative orientation did not contribute to L2 ideal self. This finding is especially remarkable because researchers often argue that L2 ideal self and integrativeness (Gardner, 2010) tap similar constructs, and the former may even substitute or replace the latter in L2 motivation research (e.g. Ryan, 2009; Taguchi et al., 2009). A possible explanation for the missing link between integrative orientation and L2 ideal self may be attributed to the particular context of the study. Military service lasts just a couple of months and reaching language learning outcomes in the army may be most realistic for those who have concrete, short-term goals to learn Swedish. In other words, it is likely that promotional instrumentality presumes a more focused and intensive learning process, which may be a pertinent stimulus even in such a limited time interval. Integrative orientation may imply a long-term language learning process, where individuals must be enduringly exposed to the L2 to be able to adjust linguistically and culturally to the L2 group. In other words, we believe that the dissimilar internal nature of the two types of L2 learning orientations might account for the fact that promotional instrumentality predicted L2 ideal self at time 1 (when intergroup group exposure was more limited) but integrative orientation did not.
In addition, it was also revealed that the L2 ideal self predicted L2 learning intentions, but this effect was true only among those who reported low Swedish proficiency at the beginning of their military service. This finding is novel and significant from a theoretical perspective. Although the system of L2 motivational self is grounded in the idea that the L2 ideal self boosts L2 learning because individuals want to reduce the gap between their actual L2 skills and the L2 skills their desired future self-image possesses, empirical works usually fail to address the combined effect of actual and aspirational L2 skills. Here, supporting our expectations, the findings indicated that the L2 ideal self did not increase L2 learning intentions among all participants but only among those who had poor Swedish skills when entering the army. Even if this finding might occur because of the relatively large variation in L2 skills among our participants, we suggest that researchers should consider addressing the interactive effects between actual L2 proficiency and the L2 ideal self when predicting L2 learning intentions. It appears the closer language learners get to a goal, the less those goals guide them.

3. Study 2: The longitudinal study

3.1 Theoretical background

The purpose of the follow-up study was to examine longitudinal consequences of military service in L2. Even if the military service does not contain ordinary language lessons, military training is given in Swedish, and both native Swedish and Finish speakers cohabitate in the army base for several months. Consequently, Finnish-speaking conscripts are provided with the opportunity to have frequent and close contact with Swedish and Swedish speakers.

Consistent with the propositions of the social context model of L2 acquisition (e.g. Sampasivam & Clément, 2014), it is reasonable to argue that Finnish-speaking conscripts will possess better communicative skills in Swedish after six months in the army than at the beginning of military service. More explicitly, it is likely that training and everyday interactions will contribute to improving Finnish speakers’ proficiency in Swedish and reduce their anxiety to speak Swedish in different communication situations.

Theoretically, these types of interactions may also have the added benefit of improving intergroup attitudes. Integrating members of different social groups within organizations like the military has typically had the effect of reducing prejudice and improving intergroup attitudes (e.g. Brophy, 1946; Kephart, 1957). Intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954) suggests that interactions between different groups is most effective in improving intergroup relations when members of
those different groups have equal status, are cooperating towards common goals, and getting along is institutionally supported. Meta-analytic research has demonstrated that each of these conditions significantly increases the positive effects of intergroup interaction (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Military service traditionally encompasses all of these conditions as well. As a result, Finnish conscripts should develop more positive attitudes towards Swedish speakers over the course of their military service. Intergroup contact has also been shown to decrease anxiety about communicating with the other group (Stephan & Stephan, 1992). While intergroup anxiety is not a direct analogue of language anxiety, they are conceptually linked enough that reducing intergroup anxiety may also contribute to less language-use anxiety. Perhaps as a result, past research has found that increased intergroup interactions can lead to increased L2 confidence (Clément, Baker, & MacIntyre, 2003).

Taking these factors together, we hypothesize that participants will report a higher level of L2 proficiency, a lower level of L2 use anxiety and more positive attitudes towards L2 speakers after six months in the army than at the beginning of military service.

### 3.2 Method

#### 3.2.1 Participants
A follow-up paper-and-pencil survey was conducted among conscripts with Finnish as their registered L1 ($N = 46$). It is important to note that for this part of the study, we were provided with the opportunity to collect data in July 2015, when several participants had already finished their military service and left the unit. Participants from bilingual families were excluded from the analysis ($n = 29$); this resulted in a final sample of $N=17$ for the second part of the study. The questionnaire included three constructs; each was measured with exactly the same items as in the first part of the study.

#### 3.2.2 Measures

$L2$ proficiency was measured with four 5-point items as described in the first part of the study. The reliability of the scale was $\alpha = .93$ in both January and July.

$L2$ use anxiety was measured with eight 5-point items (e.g. “When I make a telephone call, I get mixed up if I have to speak Swedish”, “I feel uneasy whenever I speak”) adapted from Clément and Baker (2001) and Gardner (2010). The reliability of the scale was $\alpha = .91$ in January, and $\alpha = .88$ in July.

Attitude towards $L2$ speakers. This scale was measured with three 5-point items (e.g. “Swedish speakers are usually very social and friendly”, “The more I get to know Swedish speakers, the more I like them”). The reliability of the scale was $\alpha = .78$ in January and $\alpha = .75$ in July.
3.2.3 Analysis

We converted our expectations into informative hypotheses, that is, hypotheses that are constructed using equality and inequality constraints among the parameters of interest (Hoijtink, 2011). We put constraints on the mean values. For instance, with respect to L2 proficiency, we compared the hypothesis as $M_{July} > M_{January}$ and the competing null hypothesis $M_{July} = M_{January}$. The hypotheses were evaluated with a Bayesian model selection procedure by means of BIEMS (Mulder, Hoijtink, & Klugkist, 2010; Mulder, Hoijtink, & de Leeuw, 2012). BIEMS provides Bayes factors ($BF$; Kass & Raftery, 1995) to demonstrate the degree of support for a hypothesis compared to the alternative given the observed data. The resulting $BF$s show the relative support for one hypothesis over another. Comparing two hypotheses, a $BF>1$ indicates that there is more support for the first hypothesis than for the second, while $BF<1$ means that the second hypothesis outperforms the first. The Bayesian way of hypothesis testing is often preferred because it allows evaluating expectations more directly than the traditional way of null hypothesis testing (e.g. van de Schoot, Verhoeven, & Hoijtink, 2013). In addition, we chose the Bayesian method so that our analytical approach will be consistent with the one in the cross-sectional study.

3.3 Results

Descriptive statistics are summarized in (Section 2.4). As can be seen, participants reported higher level of L2 proficiency, lower level of L2 anxiety and more positive attitudes in July than in January.

With respect to L2 proficiency, the Bayesian model selection demonstrated approximately 10 times more support for the inequality constrained hypothesis ($BF = 1.99$) than for the competing null hypothesis ($BF = 0.21$). In other words, L2 proficiency is about ten times more likely to increase during six months’ military service than to remain the same as at the beginning of military service.

Results for L2 use anxiety indicated that there was about 40 times more support for the inequality constrained hypothesis ($BF = 2.0$) than for the competing null hypothesis ($BF = 0.05$). That is, L2 use anxiety is roughly 40 times more likely to decrease during six months of military service than to remain the same as at the beginning of service.

Analysis of attitude towards L2 speakers demonstrated that there was also about 33 times more support for the inequality constrained hypothesis ($BF = 2.00$) than for the competing null hypothesis ($BF = 0.06$). To put it differently, attitude towards L2 speakers is 33 times more likely to improve during six months of military service than to remain the same as at the beginning of service.
3.4 Discussion

The results of the second part of the study supported our hypotheses regarding the possible longitudinal effects of military service in the L2 (Figure 4). Indeed, our participants reported higher levels of L2 proficiency, lower levels of L2 use anxiety, and more positive attitudes towards L2 speakers after six months in the army. Without a doubt, this specific form of Swedish immersion our participants volunteered for proved to be an effective way to improve their Swedish skills and reduce their prejudice towards the Swedish language group. Language is often one of the most salient divides in intergroup conflict (Giles, Taylor, & Bourhis, 1977; Rakić, Steffens, & Mummendey, 2011). An experience that improves attitudes about not only the outgroup, but the use of the language as well, can be seen as “catching two birds with one stone”.

![Figure 4. Results of the longitudinal analysis. The figure shows posterior sample means (N = 17)](image)

4. General discussion

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the motivational background and some longitudinal consequences of military service in L2 Swedish among Finnish-speaking conscripts. Taken together, our findings indicate that promotional instrumentality predicted L2 ideal self but integrative orientation did not, whereas L2 ideal self, in turn, predicted L2 learning intentions, but only among those conscripts who reported low levels of Swedish language skills at the beginning of their service. In addition, it was also revealed that the conscripts reported higher levels of L2 proficiency, lower levels of L2 use anxiety, and more positive attitudes towards L2 speakers after six months in the army than initially.

Taken at face value, these results have several implications. From a theoretical perspective, our findings suggest implications for the applicability of the system of
L2 motivational self in natural L2 acquisition (as opposed to structured instruction). Specifically, we demonstrated that the system of L2 motivational self may be a pertinent tool to approach L2 learning motivation in untutored, natural L2 learning settings. This is of importance, because research in the field has so far focused primarily on instructed L2 learning among school children, rather than on natural, self-motivated, and uninstructed L2 acquisition, overlooking the significance of “out of school” L2 acquisition. Furthermore, our results extend Dörnyei’s model by introducing the moderating effect of perceived L2 proficiency between L2 ideal self and L2 learning intentions. Indeed, our findings suggest that given a noticeable variation in L2 skills among language learners, a stronger L2 ideal self will increase L2 learning intentions only among those who had poor skills in the L2 in question.

Our findings have also made an important methodological contribution, namely, the innovative use of Bayesian statistics – in the form of both path analysis and hypothesis selection procedure – in applied language research. Applied language research is often filled with important and interesting circumstances that should be studied, but affect a comparatively smaller population. Having a quantitative way to approach this is good for variety but is sometimes hampered by limitations in standard statistical analysis. Bayesian analysis provides an avenue forward that allows for these smaller scale contexts to be directly compared with others (which a qualitative analysis would not allow).

Finally, the study at hand has two important practical implications. First, some young people leaving school are still interested in learning an L2, and seek special methods to acquire it. Future research should pay more attention to these language learners, since the process of L2 acquisition does not necessarily end just because formal schooling has. Second, our results clearly indicate that a natural way of L2 acquisition based on, and coupled with, contact and interaction with native L2 speakers has a positive outcome not only on language skills but also on attitudes towards the L2 group. In other words, extending L2 learning experiences in this way may have an important contribution to positive intergroup relations.

Both parts of this study have significant limitations. Although the cross-sectional data collected in January was a complete sample (i.e. the whole population was included), the small sample size did not allow us to develop a more extended conceptual model (because of the requirement for a minimum case-to-parameter ratio, see van de Schoot et al., 2014). The cross-sectional data was also handicapped by the low reliability of the promotional instrumentality measure. While we are aware of that instrumentality measures often have low reliabilities (Gardner, 2010), and that promotional instrumentality measures are typically designed for school contexts, where more diverse ways of promotion (e.g. good marks, a good school report or certificate) are conceivable, it is necessary to bear
in mind that a more reliable measure would increase the validity of our findings. Even if the sample size did not have negative consequences on the statistical inference, the sample used in the longitudinal analysis was smaller than we would have preferred. Importantly though, the setting of the present research was especially interesting and worth studying, and a small sample size was inevitable.

Nevertheless, despite these limitations, we believe that the research at hand offers some important insights into a unique way of L2 learning. We recommend that future studies should further test the applicability of the L2 motivational self system in other natural, uninstructed L2 learning contexts. We also hope that other researchers in the field will be motivated to use Bayesian statistics so that it will reach a greater popularity in applied language studies.

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References


Résumé

L’objet de cet article est d’analyser certaines des motivations qui conduisent à effectuer son service militaire en suédois L2 dans l’unique garnison de langue suédoise en Finlande parmi des conscrits locuteurs du Finnois L1, et les conséquences de ce choix sur le plan longitudinal. Les données transversales (N = 42), analysées suivant une démarche bayésienne, montrent que l’instrumentalité promotionnelle renforce le moi idéal en L2 des participants alors que la motivation intégrative ne produit pas un tel effet. Le moi idéal en L2 permet de prévoir des efforts d’apprentissage de la L2 à l’armée, mais cela exclusivement pour ceux dont les compétences étaient faibles en L2 au début de leur service militaire. Les données longitudinales (N = 17), analysées à l’aide d’une procédure de sélection bayésienne, montrent qu’après six mois à l’armée, les participants ont déclaré des niveaux supérieurs de compétence en L2, des niveaux plus faibles d’anxiété dans l’emploi des L2, et des attitudes plus positives à l’égard des locuteurs de L2, par rapport au début de leur service militaire.