EXPLORING THE ROLE OF STUDENTS' LANGUAGE USER IDENTITIES IN THEIR

L2 USE AND INVESTMENT

A Thesis Presented by

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DEDICATION

To my family, for their love and support during this process.

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ABSTRACT

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USE AND INVESTMENT

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This is an exploratory case study of the language user identities of four undergraduate
foreign language majors and how they invest in learning and using the languages they speak. The
participating students were from different levels of the Translation Studies and Foreign
Language Teacher Education programs from the School of Languages at a public university in
Colombia. Based on Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment, I studied how issues of
identity, ideology, and capital affect students' investment and language use. Data were drawn
from information obtained from a larger study, in-depth interviews with the students, narratives
written by them, and questionnaires to their L2 teachers. Findings revealed that students' L2 user
identities were influenced by their beliefs about themselves, the languages they spoke and their
cultures, as well as the experiences they had with the languages. Their investment was influenced
by their identities and language ideologies, and was incorporated into activities they did routinely
throughout the day. They also were highly invested in their language courses at the university.

Analysis of the findings in light of Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment showed the applicability of this model for studying identity and investment, particularly in regard to the role technology and ideologies played in students' investments and L2 uses, the complexity of their identities and habitus, and the relevance of their capital and perceived benefits as learners. I concluded that students' L2 user identities play a significant role in how they use and invest in languages, entwined with the capital and language ideologies they hold. Considering this, it becomes relevant and important to acknowledge students as more than L2 learners or students, and rather as L2 users, which is what many of them are or will become.

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Introduction

In this study, I explored the language user identities of undergraduate students majoring in foreign languages, and the investments they make in learning and using the languages they speak. Based on Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment, I set out to study how L2 users' identity, ideology, and capital influence their investment and language use. This research is part of a larger quantitative study about students' language use and investment, called *Foreign language use and investment of undergraduate students in Universidad de Antioquia*. While the population in this study was made of students from all of the undergraduate programs in Universidad de Antioquia, I specifically focused on the experiences of students from the two undergraduate programs that the School of Languages offers: Translation Studies and Foreign Language Teacher Education, where foreign languages (French and English) are the focus of study.

Three concepts are central to Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment: identity, ideology, and capital. Considering these three notions, investment can be defined as the way students use their material and symbolic resources (their capital) within their learning process to receive particular perceived benefits. Likewise, their decision to use these resources is mediated by their identity and positioning in the classroom, as well as the ideologies to which they adhere. I will elaborate more on these concepts in the theoretical framework.

After conducting a review of the most prominent Colombian journals in the field (Colombian Applied Linguistics Journal, Ikala, PROFILE, HOW Journal), I found that there are not many studies about language users' investment, identities, and ideologies in Colombia. Only

one study, carried out with seventh graders in a public school in Bogotá, inquired directly about students' investment in relation to their symbolic capital (Collazos Moná & Gómez Rodríguez, 2016, 2019). In it, researchers found that learners' investment was directly related to the cultural or symbolic capital they believed they would gain from learning English, which in their opinion was low, and caused their investment to be low as well. Also, there are three studies about language user or language learner identity. Two of them focused on the language user identity of English students: one on their identity as L1 users and the effect that learning English has on it (Zwisler, 2018); and the other on their identity as speakers of English (Ortiz Medina, 2017). Regarding the first study, researchers found that L2 learners valued more their identity as L1 users (their national language identity) thanks to learning English as a Foreign Language (EFL), contrary to common conceptions that learning EFL would actually weaken their national identities. In regard to the second study, the author found that learners' L2 user identities were influenced by their positioning in spoken interactions in the classroom, which also affected their L2 use, pointing out the importance of understanding power relations in an L2 class environment. The third study (Torres-Rocha, 2017) focused on the language learner identities of language teachers as well as their professional identities, and the results indicated that teachers have dynamic identities, which are multifaceted, constructed over time, and not limited to their subject matter . Lastly, regarding ideology, there are two studies in Colombia related to language users and learners. One studied how ideologies affect language users' perception of themselves (Viafara, 2016), and the other researched students' beliefs about learning languages, as language learners (Bailey, 2017). In the former, due to ideologies they (or others) held, L1 and L2 users felt empowered as Spanish speakers, disadvantaged as non-native speakers of English, but confident in themselves as English users. In the latter, students' beliefs were found to be fluid

and shifting, yet there is a general belief that learning languages is useful and necessary for success.

By contrast, there are more studies about investment reported outside of Colombia. In all of them, investment varied depending on different factors. First, López Armendáriz and Cortez Román (2016) studied Mexican learners' investment in multiple languages, which varied depending on their specific language learning goals, and in relation to how close they felt to the imagined communities with which they saw themselves interacting in the future. They invested by integrating cultural practices from the L2 languages' cultures into their daily lives, by using the internet to explore the language, consume media in that language, or interact in it, or they were limited to the academic setting if they were not very invested. Sarasa (2017) studied Argentinean pre-service teachers' temporal investments, which varied in relation to their student and teacher identities. Participants invested, divested, or reinvested time to studying the language depending on the development of their identities from students to teachers, generally investing or not depending on the importance they attributed to their personal or academic lives, and their desire or need to graduate sooner. Also, Petraki (2019) studied Greek foreign language learners' investment in multiple languages, which varied depending on the symbolic value and linguistic capital they thought they could acquire from the languages, mediated as well by their imagined identities. She found students and students' parents invested time and resources in learning English and a second foreign language, investing in obtaining the certificates for the languages, due to the status they could have and the academic and employment opportunities they would offer. Finally, Quan (2019) studied the investment of Spanish learners' during a study abroad experience in Spain, where their investments varied according to their expectations and ideologies about language learning. In this study, the most invested participants tried using

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Spanish in their daily lives abroad, speaking to Spanish speakers; they also studied for their

university courses in Spanish, or consumed media in the language. In another vein, Barkhuizen

(2016) did not directly study investment, as he focused on language teacher identity in a

longitudinal study. Still, he analyzed this identity through the model of investment, in particular,

referencing imagined identities.

I also found several studies about language user or language learner identities

internationally. Two studies focus on the linguistic identities of language users. One of these

studied the linguistic identities of trilingual speakers from Trinidad and Tobago (García León,

2014), while the other explored the linguistic identity and the language learner identity of

teachers, and the multiple ways they identified beyond Native Speaker or Non-Native Speaker

(Ellis, 2016). In addition, two studies focused on the influence that language learning and

language use have on identity. One of these was about the influence of language learning and

language use on the identity of Mexican transnationals studying a BA in TESOL in Mexico

(Villegas-Torres & Mora-Pablo, 2018). The other was about the influence of language use on the

identity of bilingual speakers and how they express emotions (Bakic & Škifić, 2017). Finally,

one study on L2 teachers in the United States focused both on their language user identity, and

on how their language use impacts their (professional) identities (Heidenfeldt, 2015). Each of

these studies approached identity from a different angle, as well as showing the wide variety of

ways in which people can identify as L2 users or learners, and the factors that may influence

them. This goes with the essential notion of identity being multiple, fluid and shifting over time

that is suggested by Norton Peirce (1995).

In general terms, the literature on L2 user identity and investment in Colombia is scarce.

However, as it is shown by the studies conducted abroad and the one in Colombia, learning about

L2 users' investment has several advantages, such as providing insight into their multiple identities, and exploring the ideologies about language that they adhere to and the status they attribute to different languages. Also, researching L2 investment offers possibilities to examine the different types of capital that students have and bring to the classroom as well as their expectations regarding the capital they can gain. It also makes visible the relations of power that language users experience, and how students may position themselves in the classroom, which is important to know as it may determine students' participation in the dynamics of the class, and affect their learning and willingness to continue investing in it.

In addition to these advantages, this study can benefit the School of Languages academically. Given what the literature and theory show, I found it necessary to focus on understanding the uses that students make of languages as they are learning them (and not just how they will use them in the future) and their beliefs about those languages, recognizing the resources they have or need, and identifying and strengthening the investments that they make in learning different languages. Having understood this, it will be possible to contribute to the development of teaching and learning strategies, as well as methodologies and course plans, that are more cognizant of equitable relations and interactions in the classroom, with a deeper understanding of students' beliefs and life conditions, and leading to more significant learning, and better language skills. Considering that these students are held to higher standards in regard to their language knowledge, it is imperative to offer them the best opportunities and learning conditions possible.

It was valuable to carry out this study in the School of Languages at Universidad de Antioquia because this context offered the possibility to explore the potential differences between pre-service teachers and Translation students, which have not been addressed in

previous studies. Moreover, besides the study that this research is a part of, there had been no other studies, at least in the reviewed literature, about investment in a university setting in Colombia that followed Darvin and Norton's (2015) model. Likewise, there had been few studies in a Colombian university setting that focused on students' language user identity and language use, rather than language learning and teaching. Therefore, I aimed to answer the question:

- What role do undergraduate foreign language majors' language user identities play in their L2 use and investment in L2 learning?

This research stemmed from this research question, and the specific objectives were inspired on the larger project this study was a part of. The general objective was to explore the role undergraduate foreign language majors' language user identities play in their L2 use and in their investment in L2 learning. The specific objectives were to:

- Explore the different ways in which students identify as language users
- Identify how students invest in L2 learning and use
- Find relations between students' L2 user identities, the ideologies they hold, and their capital, in relation to their investment

Considering that in the field of Second language Acquisition (SLA) there has generally been a broader focus on language learning and teaching than on the daily life use of the language, the term of choice in this research was Language User or L2 user. Therefore, instead of focusing on learning strategies or students' linguistic development, I paid attention to their use of languages to communicate with others, to access information, or other uses, and how this is related to their identity.

In the following sections, I will present the model of investment that this study is based on, starting from its conception in 1995, to its revised form in 2015. Then, I will describe the setting and participants of this study in general detail, as well as the methods I used for data collection and analysis. After a more detailed description of the profiles of the participants of the study, I will describe the findings of the study and then discuss them in light of Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment. Finally, I will highlight the significance of this study in the field and in its context, its implications for teaching, and the limitations and challenges faced.

Theoretical Framework

Before explaining Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment, I will briefly describe the concept of investment as it was first developed by Norton Peirce (1995). Afterward, I will move on to Darvin and Norton's (2015) revised model of investment, and finally, I will explain the concepts that compose it.

The concept of investment was first developed by Bonny Norton Peirce in 1995, during a time when the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) was going through a significant change, that has been called "the social shift". In the last years of the 20th century, post-modernist paradigms were gaining importance, along with the inclusion of "the social" in language learning, which complemented (or challenged) the cognitive views of language learning from modernist paradigms that dominated the field of second language teaching (Canagarajah, 2016). As a result, scholars started to focus more on learners' identities, and language learning was considered a process of identity construction (Norton Peirce, 1995). Since then, there have been attempts to reconceptualize SLA within a poststructuralist framework, taking into account its social, cultural, and political contexts, as well as the relations of power that surround it (Pavlenko, 2002).

Among these innovations was Norton's notion of learner investment, which changed the perception of the way students learn (Canagarajah, 2016). In Norton Peirce's 1995 seminal article, she focused on the concepts of identity, investment, and cultural capital. First, based on poststructuralist theories of identity, she defined identity as "multiple, a site of struggle, and changing over time" (p. 14); it is constantly shifting, socially constructed, and may be contradictory at times. Then, regarding the concept of investment, she explained that it complements the notion of motivation, as a more complex and sociological conception of it.

Norton argued that the conception of motivation in earlier work, such as that by Gardner and Lambert (1972) where it had been categorized into integrative and instrumental motivations, did not "capture the complex relationship between relations of power, identity, and language learning" (Norton Peirce, 1995, p. 17), like "investment" does. While motivation was considered a fixed trait of the learner's personality, investment considers the language learner's "socially and historically constructed relation" (p. 17) to the target language, as well as learners' shifting desires to practice it, and it does so by means of Bourdieu's (1977) notion of cultural capital. In this sense, cultural capital refers to the resources that students bring to the classroom, which are tied to their identity and which can be symbolic (past knowledge, social relations) and material (economic resources). When investing in learning a language, students are also investing in their identity, and their cultural capital may be enriched. Thus, students are invested in language learning when their perceived benefits can be considered positive, worthwhile, and when doing so contributes to the construction of their sense of self.

In 2015, Darvin and Norton revised the concept of investment to account for changes that had taken place in society and considering the heightened relevance of notions inspired on critical theories, like identity, capital, issues of power, and ideologies about language. Advances in technology and mobility have impacted the ways we interact, causing L2 learners and users to find new ways to use the languages they learn (Norton, 2017) and allowing them more opportunities to "assert themselves to varying degrees as legitimate speakers" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 41) of a language. Thus, the relationships of power between speakers have changed, as well as the way different languages are valued, in view of new ideologies about languages. In addition, the value of a student's capital is more variable, considering they can inhabit multiple online and offline contexts. For these reasons, it became necessary to propose their new model of

investment, making it more appropriate for the current context and redefining its relevance in the field. They proposed a model that places investment at the intersection of identity, ideology, and capital.

A newer concept in this model is ideology. Darvin and Norton refer to ideologies as a "normative set of ideas," which are "constructed by symbolic or world-making power" (Bourdieu, 1987, as cited in Darvin & Norton, 2015), meaning that these ideas can be established as what is natural in how the world is organized. They are complex, constantly changing, and can be contradictory, which is why Darvin and Norton refer to them as multiple "ideologies" and not one static "ideology". Ideologies are reproduced by legitimated authority (such as governments or media), which construct and maintain ideas and ways of seeing the world until they are considered normal or common. One example is language ideologies, which are reproduced by language policies established by the government (González-Moncada, 2021; Norton, 2017; Usma, 2009a, 2009b). Learners are also positioned by ideologies that determine the inclusion or exclusion of different social identities in terms of race, gender, social class, or ethnicity, in the language classroom or other communicative spaces (Darvin & Norton, 2015).

In Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment, the concept of identity still aligns with Norton's original work. What they seek with this model is to further elaborate on identity as a struggle "of habitus and desire, of competing ideologies and imagined identities" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 45). Habitus is defined as "the system by which people make sense of the world" (p. 45), which creates in learners an idea of what their place is in society, as well as what is expected from them, which tends to correspond with dominant ideologies. This, in turn, affects how they may be perceived and treated by others, but also the way in which learners position those others and give or deny them power (Darvin & Norton, 2015). Habitus may also shape

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learners' desire, which is additionally influenced by ideologies; what learners want may be affected by what they consider reasonable or possible for themselves. However, it is also through desire that they may imagine different possibilities for their future (Darvin & Norton, 2016). Desire is what leads learners to invest in a language to obtain something that they want, which can be anything from belonging in a country or imagined community, to the possibility of having access to certain jobs or financial security.

In this model of investment, the concept of capital is observed more closely. In Norton's (2013) initial work, she established that when learners invest in a language, they expect this investment to enrich their capital and social power. For example, learners may expect investing in a language to give them certain perceived benefits, such as better employment, education opportunities, learning new skills, or more specific desires like connecting to particular groups of people (Darvin & Norton, 2016, p 28). Within Bourdieu's theory, from which Darvin and Norton (2015) draw this concept, there are many forms of capital, "from the material/economic to the cultural and social" (Bourdieu, 1986 as cited in Norton, 2015). Economic capital refers to the material resources students have and that they believe they may gain from investing in a language. Cultural capital refers to their past knowledge and ways of seeing the world that they bring to the classroom. Social capital refers to "connections to networks of power" that may help students when they invest in a language, or that they believe they will gain from investing in a language (and its community), which can range from professional relationships to friendships. Linguistic capital refers to students' language resources, the value they may have in different contexts, and their ability to know how and when to use these resources appropriately (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). The value of a person's capital is determined by ideologies and may shift depending on context. In the same way, people are positioned based on how their capital is

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perceived (Darvin & Norton, 2015). When a person's capital is perceived to be legitimate or valuable, it is called Symbolic Capital. Darvin and Norton (2015) state that symbolic capital is particularly relevant in this model of investment. As learners occupy different spaces, not necessarily L2 classrooms, to learn and use the language, they come equipped with their own symbolic capital (past knowledge, linguistic resources…), and in these spaces, they acquire new capital or symbolic resources. This allows them to then transform their own capital into something that can be considered valuable in new contexts, thus making the investment more meaningful.

After describing the concepts that make up this model of investment, it is evident how they are related and present in learners and the language classroom. Ideologies are present in all contexts, and they have an influence on which languages are taught and with what purposes, as well as in the beliefs students have about languages and language learning. Learners' identities, influenced by ideology, shape how they see themselves in the world and how they see themselves in the future, thus shaping their desire and their actions. Finally, capital is what students are equipped with in the moment of investing in a language, as well as what they hope to gain in order to come closer to their imagined identities, which is at times influenced by others' perceptions of its value. In my study, by exploring and analyzing these factors that make up investment in the undergraduate students of the School of Languages, I gained a clearer understanding of the relationship between learners' identities and their investment and commitment to language learning and use (Early & Norton, 2012). Likewise, with this revised model, I was able to account for the different possibilities students have to communicate in this modern world, as well as the ideological factors that affect their learning and communication.

Research Methodology

This study aimed to answer the following question, based on a poststructuralist view of identity:

- What role do undergraduate foreign language majors' language user identities play in their L2 use and investment in L2 learning?

To answer this question, I carried out an exploratory case study. A case study is an approach to doing qualitative research; as such, it is intended to help the researcher to understand the ways "people interpret their experiences", the meanings they may attribute to these experiences and "how they construct their worlds" (Merriam, 2009, p. 5).

Merriam (2009) defines a case study as "an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" (p. 40), which means that the object of study is delimited; it could be, for instance, a person that exemplifies a particular phenomenon or group. In addition, case studies are particularistic, which means that they focus on a specific phenomenon; and they are descriptive or exploratory, which means that the final product consists of a "thick" description of the phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). Furthermore, according to Yin (2018), case studies are appropriate in situations where the context is difficult to separate from the object of study, and you wish to study real-world conditions. The "case" in this exploratory case study was the L2 user identity of undergraduate students in Translation and Foreign Language Teaching programs, in terms of their language use and investment in language learning. I explored in detail the identities and experiences of four students from these programs, in relation to their language use and learning, within their context, as language majors in the School of Languages.

Setting

I carried out this study in the School of Languages at Universidad de Antioquia, which is a public university located in the city of Medellin, Antioquia. The School of Languages offers several language learning programs for the university community, two master's programs, and two undergraduate programs which this study will focus on: The English-French-Spanish Translation Program and the Foreign Language Teaching Program with emphasis on English and French.

Both programs share some similarities and differences regarding their subject matter, duration, and population. On the one hand, the Translation program prepares translators from French and English to Spanish in written texts, and it lasts eight semesters. According to Data UdeA (http://www.udea.edu.co/wps/portal/udea/web/inicio/institucional/data-udea) there are currently 262 students enrolled in this program, of which 140 are women, and 122 are men. Most of the students in this program (134 students) are from middle income families (3rd socioeconomic strata[1]), followed by 74 students from lower-middle income families (social strata 2 – see Footnote 1). In addition, 244 students are from Antioquia, while 18 students are from other departments in Colombia, mainly from Cesar, Córdoba, Nariño, and Santander. Lastly, 14 students identify as Afro-Colombian[2].

On the other hand, the Foreign Language Teaching program prepares French and English teachers for working in secondary school levels in Colombia and lasts ten semesters. Currently, there are 281 students enrolled in this program on the main campus, according to Data UdeA, counting 130 women and 151 men. Most students in this program are part of social strata 2 (123

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[1] Socioeconomic strata are established in the local context according to a scale that goes from 1 to 6 being 1 the lowest and 6 the highest

[2] Some Afro-Colombian students identify more explicitly with Mulatto and Palenquero ethnicities.

students), closely followed by students in strata 3 (111 students). In this program there are 15 students from other departments in Colombia, mainly from Nariño, Córdoba, Valle del Cauca, and Huila. Also, 16 students identify as Indigenous or Afro-Colombian (see Footnote 2). The age range of undergraduate students in the School of Languages goes from 17 to 60 years old. However, the most common ages are between 19 and 24 years old.

It is important to know the main characteristics of these two programs and their student population. Considering this is a study on identity, it may be valuable to acknowledge these identifying traits of the students of the School of Languages, as they can be related to those of the participants of this study. The participants are representative of this population as they are men and women, from the 2nd and 3rd socioeconomic strata, from different departments in Colombia, and with varying ages between 22 and 28 years old.

Participants and Selection Criteria

I chose two students who were still in the first half of their undergraduate programs (semesters 2 and 4) and two students who had recently completed the fifth semesters from each program, for a total of four participants. I decided to have only four participants in order to be able to study them to a deeper degree than would have been possible with more participants, considering the large amount of information required, and the limited time to conduct this research within the course of this masters' program. I wanted to focus my study on students from these programs to explore the role of their language user identities in their L2 use and investment in learning, as students in undergraduate programs on foreign languages.

In addition, I focused on students who were in different stages of their undergraduate programs to observe the possible differences in their identity development and L2 use and investment. However, I made sure students were at least in their second semester because they

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could provide more information about their language user identity than students in the first semester, as they have had more exposure to the language and have practiced it more, as part of their experience in the program; also, I focused on students who had completed the fifth semester to see how their identity, language use and investment may be different due to having more experience with the language, as they have been in their programs for a longer time. Besides, this stage in their courses of study is important for two reasons: 1) By this semester most students have completed the basic cycle of language learning courses, during which they studied English and French, and are expected to understand the languages and be able to express themselves fluently using them, and 2) They begin courses that are delivered in the languages they have studied, focused on their respective subject matter (language teaching and translation), giving them more opportunities to use what they learned in the basic cycle I mentioned above.

The criteria to choose the participants depended on the information gathered through the larger study that this project is a part of. These data consisted of information gathered from the University's databases, answers from characterization questionnaires filled in by the student population in different parts of their enrollment process, and a questionnaire designed by the researchers about students' L2 uses, learning, and their expected and received benefits. The data provided general information on the background, capital (economic, social, and cultural), language use, language learning purposes, and investments of the students from the School of Languages.

I believe it was important to have a representation of different language user profiles for the study's results to have a meaningful impact on the community. This type of sampling strategy was "purposive" or "purposeful", and it is used when "the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight" which leads to choosing a sample from which there is

much to learn, which is to say, it is an "information-rich" case (Merriam, 2009, p. 77). I carried out "maximum variation sampling", which consisted in selecting individuals that "represent the widest possible range of the characteristics of interest for the study" (Merriam, 2009, p. 78-79) which in this case was varying language user profiles of students from the School of Languages.

To do this, it was necessary to define variables that determined possible student participant profiles. In this research, as I mentioned before, student participants must have completed the second or fifth semesters of their program, and filled in the survey from the larger study, so that I could have previous information about their language use and investment. Also, profiles varied in the sense that there were male and female participants, between the ages of 17 and 28, from varying socio-economic strata and with different educational backgrounds. Finally, it was ideal that participants come from different geographic and ethnic backgrounds. Based on data from the larger study, I chose possible participants who were representative of some common characteristics of students in the two programs from the school of languages, making sure they were of different ages, genders, semesters, social strata, and educational and geographical backgrounds. Originally, participants were meant to be from the second and fifth semesters, and two women and men; yet due to a lack of response from some students to the invitation to participate in the study, the final result was students from the second to fifth semesters, and from the sixth to eighth semesters, and one woman and three men.

Data Collection

Throughout this study, data was drawn from 4 sources: the data obtained from the larger study, three in-depth interviews with the participants (undergraduate students), narratives (linguistic biographies) which the participants wrote, and two questionnaires which their L2 teachers (English and French) filled out. The interviews, narratives and questionnaires were

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developed in participants' L1, or the language they felt more comfortable using. The first source was the quantitative data from the larger study which I described above. Based on these data, I selected the participants of the study and designed the first interview to delve deeper into their identities in relation to their L2 use and L2 learning investment.

The next source of data was the interviews carried out with undergraduate students. According to Merriam (2009), interviewing is particularly useful when it is not possible to observe participants' behaviors and feelings, which was the case in this study. The interviews were semi-structured interviews, which, according to Gubrium et al. (2012) are used when there is previous knowledge of the topic or the phenomenon, but it is not possible to predict or anticipate what the participants may respond. In the case of the interviews with students, I had previous information, first from the data of the larger study, then from the written narratives, and finally from the teachers' questionnaires. In the first interview (Appendix A), I explored students' identities in relation to their L2 use and L2 learning investment. To do this, I asked for further details about their background, how they learned or have learned languages, their beliefs about languages, the uses they give to their languages and what affects them, and how who they are may have an impact on this. The second interview (Appendix B) was after they wrote their linguistic biographies in order to further expand on the ideas that they expressed in them. Finally, the third interview (Appendix C) was after the second questionnaire with the teachers, where I was able to share the possible contrasts or similarities that arose between what students had said in past interviews and their narratives, and what teachers had said in the questionnaires. This third interview concluded the research process.

Another data collection method was questionnaires that were applied to the participants' teachers. Questionnaires consist of a written list of direct questions that respondents answer by

themselves, which is designed to gather information that can then be used as data for analysis (Denscombe, 2007; Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010). In this case, the information that I required was specifically to corroborate what students shared, making questionnaires an appropriate method of data collection. The type of data obtained through questionnaires can be categorized into "facts" and "opinions" (Denscombe, 2007). I focused on collecting opinions, that is, teachers' opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and views concerning the student participants' behaviors in class. Also, according to Denscombe (2007), there are two types of questions in questionnaires: open and closed questions; and according to Dörnyei & Taguchi (2010), there are three types: factual, behavioral and attitudinal questions. For this study, I used open questions, which allowed the respondents freedom to answer, making it more likely for their responses to "reflect the full richness and complexity of [their] views" (Denscombe, 2007, p. 166), as well as attitudinal questions which "are used to find out what people think" (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010, p. 5) about a subject.

The questionnaires (Appendix D) were administered to the students' teachers, both the ones teaching during the academic term when I started my data collection (which ended in February), and the teachers teaching during the following academic term (which started in March). This was due to the irregular academic calendar of the School of Languages during the time of the data collection process. Therefore, the first questionnaire was applied to the teachers they had during the semester ending in February, after the first interview with students, to complement the findings from this interview. The second and final questionnaire was administered after students wrote their narratives and had the second interview, in March. This means it was administered to their new teachers, from the following semester. By this time, I had

more data from students, and these questionnaires with the teachers served to obtain a different perspective in relation to what I had learned from the students so far.

More data was collected through the use of narratives. Narratives are discourses with a chronological order "that connect events in a meaningful way" for a particular audience, allowing researchers to understand them from the perspective of the participant (Elliott, 2005, p. 36). Also, as they are thought for a particular audience (usually researchers), they offer insight into how people perceive the world. Thus, the main characteristics of a narrative are that it is chronological, meaningful, and social in the sense that it has a specific audience (Elliott, 2005; Kohler Riessman, 2008). Moreover, narratives are particularly useful when studying identity. Kohler Riessman (2008) relates narratives to storytelling and states that "individuals and groups construct identities through storytelling" (p.20), adding that narratives also reflect the fluidity of identity, showing how people can change through time and space. About the use of narratives in research with L2 users and learners, Pavlenko (2007) states that narratives portray the complexity of L2 learners' experiences and identities in relation to the languages that they speak.

In this study, participants developed linguistic biographies, which are "life histories that focus on the languages of the speaker", as well as on how they were acquired and have been used throughout their lives (Pavlenko, 2007, p. 165). These narratives offer insight into the L2 user's attitude toward the languages they speak, how they are positioned in relation to the "ideologies of language and identity" (p. 168) that are relevant in their contexts, and how they construct "selves" in the different languages they speak. Student participants developed their narratives based on some general guidelines (Appendix F) after the first interviews. Then, after having written them, I carried out the second interviews, where it was possible to expand on what they expressed in the narratives.

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I have defined the three data collection methods which were used during this study, explained why they were appropriate, and detailed what the purpose of each procedure was, as well as the order in which I carried them out. The undergraduate students participated in three interviews related to their identities and L2 use and investment, and they wrote linguistic biographies. This information was complemented by and corroborated with the data obtained from the questionnaires with their L2 teachers. In this sense, each data collection method contributed positively to the development of this study.

Data Analysis Procedures

After collecting and organizing the data, I prepared it to be analyzed. First, I transcribed all of the interviews with each participant. Then, I organized the interview transcriptions, students' narratives, and the answers to the teachers' questionnaires using Nvivo (released in March 2020), in order to begin coding and analyzing it.

All of the data was analyzed through thematic analysis. According to Kohler Riessman (2005), this type of analysis focuses on the content of the text being analyzed. It gives more importance to "what" participants say than the way in which they say it. Additionally, the main analytical step in thematic analysis, as stated by Pavlenko (2007), citing Strauss and Corbin (1990), is the coding according to "emerging themes, trends, patterns, or conceptual categories" (p. 166). Merriam (2009) defines a code as a short name assigned to parts of data, which make it identifiable and easier to return to. Furthermore, Saldaña (2013) states that codes capture the essence of the research data. According to this author, when codes are brought together based on similarity or a pattern, categories are created and connections can be analyzed. Ultimately, themes emerge from coding and categorization as the "core meanings" (Patton, 2002, p. 453) revealed by means of the analysis. Finally, it is relevant to note that, according to this author,

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themes are different from patterns because, while patterns make reference to descriptive findings, themes are expressed in the form of categories or topics.

Considering this explanation of thematic analysis, I coded the data using a combination of deductive and inductive analysis. Deductive analysis refers to the process by which data are analyzed based on an existing framework, while inductive analysis consists in observing the data and finding themes in it, creating or adding to a framework (Patton, 2002, p. 453). My analysis was initially deductive because I began coding the data by drawing on initial categories based on Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment, since this is the theoretical framework within which I was working. These categories were: identity, desire, habitus, ideology, perceived benefits (material and symbolic), investments, and capital. By exploring these themes in the data shared by participants, it was possible to delve deeper into the social character of language users' linguistic identity construction and investment.

However, these were not fixed categories. Considering the deeply personal nature of this study, categories also emerged from each participant's individual experience. In this case, I was also carrying out an inductive analysis of my data, based on observation and interpretation. Finally, it is important to note that I did not only focus on recurrent patterns, but also on the themes and concepts to which the participants attributed value. That is to say, for instance, that it was possible for one participant to emphasize or give special importance to something to which the others did not. In this case, it was not considered a pattern across participants, but it was still a valuable theme for the analysis.

Strategies for Trustworthiness

I carried out several strategies to ensure trustworthiness and validity in my research. Amankwaa (2016), based on Lincoln and Guba (1985), explains that trustworthiness is achieved

by establishing credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of findings. I will now present how I tried to accomplish this.

The primary strategy I used was triangulation. According to Amankwaa (2016), I can attain credibility and confirmability through the use of triangulation. First, I used "method triangulation". According to Carter et al. (2014), this type of triangulation consists of using different types of data collection methods to gather information about the same issue. As mentioned before, I carried out three different methods of data collection: interviews, narratives, and questionnaires. Also, I used information gathered from the larger study. Another type of triangulation I used is "data source triangulation", which refers to collecting data from different actors. In the case of my study, these actors are the student participants and their language teachers.

Moreover, I must ensure transferability and dependability. In order to make transferability possible, I developed a thick description of my data and findings, which meant describing the phenomenon being studied in great detail. This description will allow future readers of my research to determine if the findings are applicable in other settings or with other participants (Amankwaa, 2016). Dependability was attained through being held accountable by my thesis advisor, who examined and inquired about the process and products of my study without being directly involved in the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985 as cited in Amankwaa, 2016). Lastly, I considered it essential and necessary to be transparent with the participants of my study. For this reason, I offered to share with them the transcriptions of interviews, my interpretations of the data, and the final product of my study in order to ensure consistency among their experiences, the data shared with me, and my subsequent analysis and reflections.

In addition to these strategies for transparency with the participants, I must also mention that before the interview process began, they had the opportunity to read and sign consent forms. These forms contained information about the topic of this study, about the interviews they would participate in, and the linguistic biographies that they would write. Participants also had the opportunity to ask questions about any part of the research process from the start. Moreover, on a related note, to ensure the confidentiality promised in the consent forms, participants also chose the pseudonyms that they wanted to be used to speak about them in any text resulting from the study. In a way, the pseudonyms they chose also reflected some aspects of their identities, which is why I decided that they should choose them instead of me, or instead of using a more impersonal approach such as naming them participant A, B, C.

Considering this is a study on identity, it is important to reflect on my own identity as an L2 user, and how it may have had an impact on my approach to this topic, or my treatment with the participants. It is possible that my identity and understanding of what it means to be an L2 user affected the way I designed the data collection protocols. By this, I mean that some questions could be related to how I developed my own identity as an L2 user. Also, for example, the interview conducted to expand on what participants wrote in their linguistic biographies, included questions inspired on aspects that piqued my interest from their narratives based on what I had read about investment and identity, but possibly also based on my own lived experiences. Furthermore, regarding my rapport with participants, I feel that since I wanted to generate trust in them in order for them to feel comfortable sharing aspects of their lives with me, I made an effort to be empathetic and relatable. It is possible that sharing the experience of speaking one or more foreign languages made them feel like I could understand their life experiences more, and thus made them likely to be open with me about them.

Participant Profiles

Before continuing with the description of the findings, I have decided to make a short description of each of the research participants. As this is a study about identity, it is a personal topic, and it is therefore important to introduce the persons that were part of this process. These will be simple descriptions about who they are in general. Further on in the findings, their L2 user identities and other aspects related to the study will be explored.

Juan

Juan is in the sixth semester of the foreign languages teaching program. He is 24 years old, he has a sister, and he has lived in Medellin his whole life. He was not particularly interested in languages as he grew up, despite his family encouraging him by enrolling him in English and Italian classes in his teenage years. He also traveled to Europe, which did pique his interest in learning French. His plan was to pursue a career in aviation and complement it with a university undergraduate degree, which is why he entered the foreign languages teaching program. He studied both programs at the same time, and although foreign language teaching was originally a plan B, it has become his plan A for the moment, as he is teaching English. His interests are riding his bike, reading, and film studies.

Lucas

Lucas is in the second semester of the translation undergraduate program. He is 25 years old, he was born in Bogota and throughout his life has lived in different cities in Colombia. He started learning English when his older brother entered classes in an institute, and has been self-taught since then. Before deciding to enter the translation studies program, he had been in three different engineering undergraduate programs, which he quit due to having issues with calculus. He has had several jobs thanks to speaking English, including one which gave him intensive

English classes to fill any gaps he had before. Currently he works in an American company as a billing specialist. Besides English, he also was in a few levels of Japanese and German classes. In his free time, he plays ultimate Frisbee and computer games, and spends time with his dogs and girlfriend.

Max

Max is in the sixth semester of the translation studies undergraduate program. He is 28 years old, he is an only child and he has lived in Medellin his whole life. He studied chemical engineering and started a master's in chemistry, but before finishing it, he decided that this was not what he wanted to dedicate himself to for the rest of his life. Because of this, he quit that master's program and started to pursue the translation studies undergraduate program, as he wanted to study something related to languages and cultures. He started learning German while he studied the chemical engineering program and won two scholarships to study abroad in Germany for a few months. Also, he volunteered in Brazil for a month, despite not knowing the language. It was thanks to these experiences that he discovered his love for languages and the desire to dedicate his life to them. He has been a math teacher in German, and a German teacher. Besides languages, he has several other interests, like traveling, reading, playing piano, and exercising.

Samantha

Samantha is in the fourth semester of the foreign language teaching program. She is 22 years old and was born in a small town of Antioquia, only moving to Medellin in 2018. She received a technical systems engineering degree and thought she was going to pursue a systems engineering undergraduate, but then decided to study foreign languages. She has always loved technology, and describes herself as not being very social, which is why she learns languages

mostly on her own, through technology. This was also due to the lack of people to learn with in her small town. However, even though now she has more people to practice speaking with, she explained she still does not do it, even with her classmates, and spends most of her time outside of the university working or traveling. She has had the experience of going to Mexico, Spain, France, Peru, Chile, Dominican Republic, and the Bahamas.

Description of Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore the L2 user identities of students from the Foreign Language Teaching and Translation undergraduate programs in the School of Languages at Universidad de Antioquia, and the investments they make in learning and using the languages that they speak. To do this, I carried out an exploratory case study with four students in these programs: two from the Foreign Language Teaching Program and two from the Translation Program. Based on Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment, I studied how issues of identity, ideology, and capital affect their investment and language use. The data and findings presented below were drawn from four sources: the data obtained from the larger study, three in-depth interviews with the participants, narratives written by the participants (linguistic biographies), and two questionnaires filled out by their L2 teachers. The data from the questionnaires were mainly used to confirm and corroborate students' accounts, which is why I refer to this data collection method less frequently.

In this section, I will describe the categories that emerged from the data analysis as I aimed to answer the question "What role do undergraduate foreign language majors' language user identities play in their L2 use and investment in L2 learning?". The final category names emerged from the initial or preliminary categories mentioned in the data analysis section, in combination with what participants had to say about each of these topics. The first category and its subsets are related to participants' language user identities, and the last two categories refer to participants' investments and L2 use. After describing these findings, I will provide a more in-depth explanation about them and my interpretations of them in relation to the theory in the discussion section. As an important note, it is necessary to consider that the findings presented here took place in the context of the global Covid-19 Pandemic (2020-2021). Students' answers

were influenced by this situation, as they lived through experiences that shaped their L2 use and learning processes, which in turn changed the investments they made in learning languages. Also, many were affected both positively or negatively by learning being moved to a virtual setting instead of a physical setting. Because of this, in some excerpts there may be references to this situation.

The data collected provided insight into students' language user identities and their L2 use and investment in learning. Regarding identity, the data show the diverse ways in which L2 user identities are constructed based on students' self-perception, their beliefs about the languages and their associated cultures, and their experiences with those languages. In relation to investment, data show that investments are most often in the form of daily life uses of the language; they are influenced by students' identities and the ideologies they hold about languages. Moreover, the investments they make in speaking the languages are not the same as investments made in and for the university courses. In the following lines I will describe each finding in further detail.

Constructing L2 User identities ("Learning languages made me the way I am")

In this first category, I will describe findings related to students' construction of their L2 user identities. Here, it will be possible to observe the relevance of students' personal histories, the intersection between identity and ideology, and thus, their positioning as language users (Darvin & Norton, 2015), and the impact their experiences (sometimes influenced by their capital) with other languages can have on their L2 user identities. To describe these findings, I will present the three situations that emerged in relation to students' language user identities, which are: "L2 user identities are linked to personal histories", "language ideologies influence L2 user identities", and "identity is constructed based on experiences with the languages".

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L2 User Identities Are Linked to Personal Histories

In order to provide a clearer description of this finding, I will first refer to the participants' L2 user identities as they were reported and explained by themselves. These identities as L2 users were defined by the participants based on personal experiences that they have had with the L2s, as well as on the way they perceive themselves as L2 users. Then, I will provide some examples about how these L2 user identities are tied to students' personal histories. By personal histories I am referring to aspects such as students' lived experiences, life history, the development of their personalities, relationships, and other relevant life experiences.

Participants found several ways to name their L2 user identities. Juan identified as a "language learner, teacher and non-native user", Lucas as a "language enthusiast", Max as a "language user" and Samantha identified as a "polyglot under construction". In the following lines, I will share some excerpts that best explain how they self-identified.

In the case of Juan, he self-identified based on the way he uses the L2s. As he feels he makes different uses of each L2, he proclaims a different identity depending on what he primarily uses the L2 for, like learning or teaching it. Then, to the question of how he identified as an L2 user he replied:

> With French, as a language learner and like a "nerd". On the one hand, as a learner, because I do not really use it to communicate with more people or outside of an academic context […] as a nerd because of that particular taste for the language as such… In English, it goes beyond mainly because of my job, so I feel like my relationship with English […] it is more mutual. Before I only learned it, now I also use it to benefit from it. So now it's not just a learner identity but also a "teacher", non-native "user".
> (Interview 2 Juan)

Juan makes a difference between being a learner of French and a user of English, where he states that his role as a learner is more passive, since he does not use the L2 as actively. This differs from his role as a language user, because in this case, he uses the L2 to communicate, and benefits from it by teaching it as part of his job, hence why he calls it a mutual relationship.

In Lucas' case, he self-identifies based on the level of commitment he feels to the L2s he speaks and has learned. This is in turn related to his personality in general terms. Regarding how he identifies as an L2 user, he stated:

> I'd like to consider myself multilingual, in the sense that I know many languages, but since I don't speak them I'd say I am more of a language enthusiast. […] When you are an enthusiast, it's like, how nice, how pretty, I should do something about it, but you don't do anything, or at least I do it but in a very low scale. So it's like, I learned how to introduce myself and say thank you, that's enough. (Interview 2 Lucas)

Before this interview, when asked how he would describe himself, he expressed he was someone who tries to make his life easy. That is to say, he tends to look for the simpler way to do everything, and tends to avoid difficult tasks. This is related to his explanation of what it means to be an enthusiast, and how he may not be persistent when it comes to pursuing more complex aspects of the L2s he is interested in. He sees himself as a language enthusiast because he's motivated to learn the language but not as invested. Although this may not be consistent with an official definition of what it means to be an enthusiast, it lines up with Lucas' description of it. Therefore, he shows a clear relation between his personality and L2 user identity: "I pay attention to details, but I am very lazy so I am a simplistic and minimalist guy who tries to do it the easy way, do it well, but the easy way" (Interview 1 Lucas)..

Moreover, Max self-identified based on his beliefs about what it means to be an L2 user. These beliefs came from theories he had read about bilingualism, and from his own perception of his linguistic proficiency. When asked how he identified as a language user, he replied:

> I don't consider myself bilingual, plurilingual, a polyglot, or any of that. Because, I don't know, those are people who from their birth grow up with 2, 3, 4, many languages around them. I'd say I am more a language user, who learned each one for different reasons. Some as an obligation, some for lack of a better option, and some because I wanted to. And one because I had to and ended up liking it. I'd say I am a foreign language user. (Interview 1 Max)

Furthermore, an important characteristic of Max's L2 user identity is his close relationship to German. This has to do with a certain personal affinity that he feels towards aspects of German culture, in relation to his own personal attributes. As he expresses below, he feels identified with this culture:

> The language I was super motivated to learn was German. And several Germans, including a German friend, tell me I am very German. Because I am very structured, so I have a planner, I write everything down, I need to know at what time everything is to plan my week. I think that's why I also identify with the culture. (Interview 1 Max)

Finally, Samantha self-identified based on the language goals she has set for herself in the future, and in relation to her childhood dream. When asked how she identified as an L2 user, she replied:

> I've always had that idea, that dream of being a polyglot. Before, I used to call myself a "polyglot under construction", and it was something I liked. […] It defines me a lot

because it is like my goal. So besides being a student, I think my goal, what I want to be, what is in me and what I want to keep being is a polyglot under construction […] because it doesn't limit you, you aren't bilingual, trilingual, or plurilingual. (Interview 2 Samantha)

So far I have described students' L2 user identities and how they are related to their personalities, beliefs, L2 use, and life goals. These identities were self-proclaimed by each participant, based on what they considered important or relevant in relation to their L2 use and learning. Furthermore, beyond students' personal histories influencing their L2 user identities, there is also a common perception that learning languages has shaped who they are; their personalities and their interests. Similarly, some participants state that they feel they have different personalities based on the languages they are speaking.

In this excerpt from the first interview with Lucas, we can see how his identity as an L2 user is closely linked to the development of who he is as an individual, apart from his history with languages. Also, he refers to the importance of interactions he had with his brother, thanks to whom he started learning English in the first place, and who he sometimes interacted with in English, for fun. When asked if his personality affected the way he learned, he replied:

I think it was the other way around: learning languages made me the way I am, and from there stemmed the interest in learning more languages and polishing the one I had. So let's say English came to me more than me searching it, thanks to my brother and the interactions we had. […] because it was also at a young age. (Interview 1 Lucas)

Likewise, Samantha mentioned during the first interview that learning languages has impacted who she is as a person, thanks to the opportunity to learn about other cultures:

I'm from a small town, a religious, conservative family that… is grossed out by many things, that doesn't like anything, that doesn't leave their land. And languages have allowed me to know many different ways of thinking, with arguments that… most likely wouldn't be accepted in my family, but … that intention that I've always had of knowing cultures and opening myself to other people and what they can say to me. (Interview 1 Samantha)

L2 use is so closely linked to personal histories that it can have an impact on students' behavior when they speak other languages. In some cases, they expressed that they even feel like they have different personalities or roles based on the L2s they are speaking. In the following excerpts, Max and Samantha explain how they feel their personalities change depending on the languages they are speaking. First, Max explains how he speaks different languages for the different roles he takes on in his life:

The traveler version speaks English, the English I've used on trips, mostly as I get to my destination. As a roommate, I speak Portuguese, which is the language I speak with my roommate; or in Portuguese classes, or with people I still have contact with in Brazil. So, those are the friend and roommate versions of me. In German I would also be the friendship Max. And the work and academic Max too. And in French, the student or the academic Max (Interview 2 Max).

In regard to his personality, Max states that he may be "more direct in German, and more loving in Portuguese" (Interview 2 Max). Samantha also gives an example of how her personality may change depending on the language she is speaking:

Personally, I consider that each language lets me be a different person. When I speak English I feel that I am a more open, confident, brave, daring, social and likeable person. Spanish is linked to all my insecurities and restrictions I've had throughout my life. With French it's different too, but not at the same level as with English. With French, I feel like I depersonalize, and although I don't feel like the person I am when I speak Spanish, I also have not defined the feelings or personality I recur to when I speak French. I feel like that personality is something you construct as you feel more comfortable with each language. (Linguistic Biography Samantha)

To offer a contrasting perspective, it can also be the case that students do not feel that the L2s they speak are linked to their personal histories or personality, as it happened with Juan. When asked whether he felt that these aspects affected his interest to learn other L2s, he felt that with English and French it did not, as he originally started learning these L2s for his aviation career. However, regarding the heritage language he wants to learn, Minika, he stated: "With this ancestral [heritage] language it does, because I feel it is more attached to my personality, my tastes, my perception of life, morals, everything that is currently happening in the country… So with this ancestral language, yes" (Interview 1 Juan).

Nonetheless, even in this case, his lack of personal identification with the L2s is also related to Juan's ideals and beliefs about languages, as he considers that since English and French are such globalized languages or cultures, any different ways of viewing the world they offer are already normalized, and as such, do not contribute anything new to his way of being.

In all previous cases, the participants spoke of how their personal histories play an important role in how they identify as language users. Additionally, they explained how their personalities and experiences affect how close they feel to the L2s they speak, which in turn

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influences their uses of each L2. Finally, in some cases, the effect was also reversed and the L2s they speak had an impact on how they have developed their personalities or their perception of themselves.

Language ideologies influence language user identities

Ideologies are present everywhere, and language ideologies are particularly relevant to L2 users. The ideologies that students hold can stem from multiple sources, such as stereotypes related to the cultures associated with certain languages, the media, experiences with speakers of the L2, or the value they may attribute to learning a particular L2. In this case, the data show that the beliefs or ideologies that students had about the L2s they spoke influenced how they identified in relation to each L2. This, in turn, has an effect on their investment in learning the L2s, which I will expand more on in the following category.

To begin, one common ideology is in relation to the importance of speaking English. Several participants grew up with families that encouraged them to learn languages, and instilled in their mind that it is necessary to speak English in modern times in order to have better life opportunities. Because of this, they have had their families' support in pursuing language majors. In the following excerpt, Max shares his family's beliefs about learning English, which was the reason why they encouraged him to learn it before any other language:

> [My dad] said, you have to learn that as a child, it will open many opportunities, to work, to travel, to meet people, to know the world, to be a global citizen. My mom said the same, so it was also them, the ones who encouraged me and paid for all of that, which is important, right, to stand out on the CV. (Interview 1 Max)

For some participants, such as Samantha and Lucas, English represented the opportunity to know about other cultures, to access new information, and ultimately, to have better lives. However, this prevalence of English is not always associated with positive feelings. For Max, it has always been a language that he associated with obligation. This is because his family set learning English first as a condition to learning other languages, like German, which was his true interest. In Juan's case, English represents frustration, as he feels he has been learning it for too long and should speak it better than he does. As he explained in the second interview:

> With English I feel that, since so many people speak it, and I have studied it for so many years, I feel I should speak it better than I do, and that I can be judged by other people who think that, like, how has he studied English and I speak it better than him? (Interview 2 Juan)

Another frequent occurrence is how ideologies or beliefs about some cultures caused students to want to learn that cultures' language. They explained this could be because they felt identified with the culture, and want to get to know it, which was why Lucas partook in Japanese classes at a point in his past; or because they find the status of that language and culture appealing, and want to feel closer to this. A clear example is how Juan explains his feelings about speaking French:

> With French you feel that it's something few people do in this Colombian context, it's not a very spoken language, you feel like admiration when you speak French, like, wow you speak French?! People tell you to speak French, and you do it, and everyone is amazed, which doesn't happen with English, which, quote-unquote, 'anyone can speak'. (Interview 2 Juan)

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However, the same is true the other way around. In some cases, a lack of interest or affinity with the target language's culture could cause L2 users to not be as inclined to learn the languages, or to not feel as identified with it. As is the case with Max and French and English:

These are not my best languages because I don't feel much of a connection with the English, American, British, Australian, New Zealand or South African world… I also don't feel a connection with French, whether it's from France or Africa or Quebec, I don't feel a connection even with the culture. (Interview 1 Max)

Finally, participants also held ideologies about the native languages of Colombia, particularly in comparison to their ideologies about French or English. This example is from Juan, who expresses admiration and respect for indigenous peoples in Colombia and the fights they have had for recognition. He states that the heritage language he intends on learning will offer him new ways to see the world:

With Minika, I do feel it can offer me different ways to see the world, because it's something that is, let's say, English and French are very globalized languages; they may teach you a bit about English and French culture, but I feel that Minika can offer me another way to see the world beyond learning about a culture. (Interview 1 Juan)

As the data show, ideologies and beliefs about the languages and their respective cultures can have an impact in the way students self-identify as L2 users, in their affinity or interest in learning the L2, and in the value that they attribute to the L2. These ideologies come from students' upbringing or from perceptions they have about the L2s' cultures, and they can also cause different emotions in students, ranging from frustration in their process, to a desire to learn more.

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Identity is constructed based on previous experiences with the languages

Finally, regarding students' L2 user identities, I will describe how students construct their identities based on experiences with the L2s in the past. These experiences are one of the most important factors when speaking about students' identity as they shape the relationships students have with the L2s they speak, how they feel when they speak them, and ultimately how invested they are in learning them.

Some experiences can affirm students' identities as language users, when they feel their capital is valued, their language use is legitimate, and that they belong (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p.46). There are several instances of this happening among the participants. In the following excerpt, Max shares how a studying abroad experience affected his relationship with German, after being asked if it had had an impact on his identity as an L2 user. He stated that speaking about identity as such was complicated, but he experienced some changes as an L2 user, that is, he became more confident:

> I did feel more confident, let's say here I thought a lot to speak, I tried very hard, and when I came back I was more fluent, I didn't have to think so much. So that was a change I noticed, I spoke with more ease, expressed myself. Even having to buy bread in German, living in that context, that helps a lot and you just have to let go. (Interview 2 Max)

In this case, Max felt his identity as a language user was affirmed by the opportunity to use it in different contexts. Similarly, Juan had an experience with an immersion activity while in school, which showed him that he was capable of speaking English, of communicating with others, and of feeling more confident speaking the language. Like Max, this experience gave him confidence as an L2 user. Additionally, even more "common" experiences, like those in daily

life interactions, can reaffirm a persons' identity as an L2 user. For example, Lucas shared experiences he had in school, where he had chances to speak with exchange students, or in some occasions, correct his English teachers. These experiences reaffirmed his identity, as he said, he started to think "this is who I am now, I am the one who knows English" (Interview 1 Lucas).

However, negative experiences can also affect relationships with the L2. For example, learning a language as an obligation, or for lack of a better option, as is the case with English and French (respectively) for Max. While he wanted to learn German, he first had to learn English, and when he did not find a German class, he chose to learn French. As he put it: "I think the fact that there wasn't a real motivation – it was a choice made for lack of a better option – this made it so I could never really connect to the French language or culture" (Linguistic Biography Max). With this comment we can observe that, although Max expresses that he is not as attached to French (or English), his identity remains as a language user, as he still uses these languages in his daily life.

Regarding the experiences L2 users have with the languages they speak, capital is especially important as it has a direct impact on the types of experiences users can have with the languages (Darvin & Norton, 2016). This happens in the sense that, for example, through economic capital some people may have the opportunity to travel to countries where that language is used, or through social capital, they may have people to practice the language with.

Samantha shares a clear example of how having the opportunity to travel has opened her eyes to different cultures, different ways of life and different languages. In a similar vein, Max shows a clear example of how the experience of volunteering in Brazil piqued his interest in learning Portuguese, a language which he had not been interested in before. As he stated in the second interview: "Being there, I discovered its sound, and the music I liked and… the culture,

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the kind people. And I had to speak only Portuguese with many people, not many spoke English"
(Interview 2 Max).

Regarding the importance of social capital, the data show how relevant it can be for the
construction of L2 user identity. It can range from having positive experiences with other
speakers of the language, which can make someone want to integrate to that community of
speakers, as was the case with Samantha while she worked at a hotel and met friendly foreigners;
to the opportunity to meet people from other countries, which can motivate students to learn
other languages, as Juan describes in the following excerpt:

> A guy from France came to my school, who also spoke Spanish. When I saw how
> amazed and hypnotized the girls were when he spoke French, I felt like learning the
> language too, since even I was amazed when I heard him. (Linguistic Biography Juan)

The influence from experiences students can have thanks to their social capital can go as
far as changing their life trajectory, which Max explained was his case, when he decided to
pursue a language major after speaking to translators and interpreters during one of his study
abroad trips.

> My classmates, mostly Latin Americans, were translators and interpreters, and they
> helped a lot to change my perception of the profession. […] They opened my eyes: you
> can live well off of languages; you can have stability. It wasn't as easy as something
> more conventional, but it wasn't impossible. (Linguistic Biography Max)

As described in these examples, every participant has had different capital yet they all
have had significant experiences throughout their lives that shaped their perceptions of
themselves as L2 users. Some experiences strengthened (or limited) this identity, depending on

the interactions that they had. In other cases, after having positive experiences, they had more confidence as L2 users. Finally, for some participants, these experiences motivated them to pursue languages as a life choice, whether it was because of how they felt when speaking the languages, or because they saw that other people were doing it and thriving too.

Capital, desire, motivation and perceived benefits: The different sides of investment

In this second category, I will describe the findings that emerged in relation to students' investments. There are many aspects that influence investment, such as students' capital and the benefits they hope to gain, as well as their intention to invest. Additionally, the types of investments that students make, as well as the reasons they have for investing, also vary. In this category, I will describe three situations of students' investments in language learning and L2 use that emerged from the data. These situations are: "daily life uses of the language as investments", "language ideologies influence investment", and "investment in language learning in daily life situations versus in university courses".

Daily life uses of the language as investment

Something that all of the participants had in common was they most often invested in the L2s by using them in their daily lives for communication, entertainment, academic or work related purposes. In this sense, they had integrated several practices into their daily routines to use and practice the L2s as they did other activities they enjoyed. Some examples of this are the use of certain applications on their phone throughout the day to practice the L2s through games or through listening to podcasts, the habit of consuming media such as movies and series in the original languages, or even interacting in online spaces with speakers of other languages.

It is important to clarify, at this point, that participants made a distinction between these "daily life uses" of the languages and what they consider "learning strategies". The daily life

uses of the language refer to the types of voluntary activities that they carry out on a day to day basis, and are usually considered fun and related to their interests. Meanwhile learning strategies, according to them, refer to activities that they do to reinforce class topics, or which require settling down to study specific topics, such as grammar or vocabulary. For some participants, these daily life activities are explicitly to practice the L2, for others, they are simply parts of their lives that happen to be in other languages. In some cases, they may have started as habits implemented to improve as L2 users, but now they do these activities naturally. Considering that investment refers to how students use the resources at their disposal to gain benefits, such as being better L2 users (Darvin & Norton, 2015, 2016), both of these activities can count for determining how invested they are..

For example, during the first interview, Juan explained that when he found he needed to improve his listening skills, he integrated new hobbies in his daily life: listening to podcasts, going to lectures with international speakers, and going to events about astronomy or other interests he had. He added that, although he does several activities throughout the day to practice languages, he does not use any particular "learning strategy", as he does not relate them to studying for his university courses:

> So it's a lot of reading and many movies in those languages. And analyzing movies in foreign languages. But, something conscious like 'I'm going to use this strategy', not really, I'm not that disciplined to, like, sit down and use a strategy because it will help me with something, and in specific schedules, no. (Interview 1 Juan)

Some similar examples are Lucas and Max, who, according to them, do not follow any particular learning strategies either, but rather decide to immerse themselves in the L2s; for example, using streaming services' settings to watch shows in the L2s they want to learn, with

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the help of subtitles, or looking for YouTube videos in that L2. As Max explains, when speaking about studying the L2s he speaks: "It's not something that comes naturally for me. I watch series, but studying, like sitting down to study vocabulary, grammar structures… that's more forced." (Interview 1 Max)

However, despite not studying specific aspects of the L2, Max does several other activities to use his L2s in daily life, and maintain a linguistic proficiency he feels comfortable with. Not without specifying that his main and most frequent investments are in his preferred L2, German.

French is the same story: series, I like French music, French series, there are several on YouTube… I also read, I try reading the news in various languages, so I read Le Figaro, Le Monde, L'OBS. […] For German, in that language I watch series, listen to podcasts, since I am a teacher I speak it all the time with my colleagues… I have friends I speak to in German too, from Switzerland, so there's more variety there, and I even like reading books, analyzing structures. I'm not sure why I do like it with German. […] Portuguese, I live with a Brazilian, one of my coworkers is Brazilian, so that is the best way to practice, falando com ela. (Interview 2 Max)

A final example of this daily life use of the L2 is Samantha's case: she explained the different ways in which she has integrated L2s into her daily life. The most common one is setting her electronic devices in languages other than Spanish. Also, she expressed that she only watches movies that are not in Spanish, in order to always be practicing other languages, even when watching movies. And finally, she explained that during her down times, like when she is grocery shopping, she tries to be productive by listening to podcasts.

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During interviews, students were asked about ways of investing in L2 learning that they did not implement, but felt that they should; this question was meant to explore their self-awareness regarding their investment. They did not identify particular activities related to their university courses, but they referred to habits or life changes that they felt they should make to integrate these L2s more to their lives. For example, they spoke of joining language courses, of finding more spaces for informal conversations or for speaking to foreigners, or of exposing themselves to more media in the target L2s.

Participants pointed out that they rarely invested in learning languages through the use of learning strategies (as defined by them) or studying, unless it was directly related to a class or a topic. In these cases, participants explained that as they are doing class activities, they may go further than the activity proposes if it interests them or they find it necessary. As Juan explained in the second interview:

> I mean, I do study, but not in a structured manner. And, how do I study? Well, that, books, I like movies and songs for French… Going beyond the class activities… So, say we are learning a topic and the teacher gives homework. I do it, but if I feel something is missing, I look up more information about the topic. (Interview 2 Juan)

These daily uses of the language are also mediated by the capital students have and the benefits they believe they can gain from investing. Participants pointed out how valuable time was to them, and that it is what they most often invest in their L2's. Therefore, the decision to integrate their L2 uses to their daily life activities makes it possible to invest more time in their target languages. The choices to listen to podcasts, to join conversation clubs, to go to events in foreign languages, show an interest to make languages a part of their life, and to dedicate part of their lives to speaking the languages well. Finally, capital has a great influence in their

investment; some forms of capital students showed that they have, and which are also explicitly described in Darvin and Norton (2015, p.44) are time, *cultural capital* (knowledge about what media to consume, what events to go to), *social capital* (having people to speak the language with), and *economic capital* (to buy books in the language, to pay for streaming services, and which does not necessarily refer to socioeconomic strata).

Language ideologies influence investment

As I mentioned above, ideologies influence not only L2 users' identities but also their investment. As language ideologies can determine the value that students attribute to the L2s they speak, this can influence the frequency or the desire they have to invest in said L2s.

In the case of ideologies about English, as is indicated by Norton (2017, p. 17), these are often reproduced by language policies that privilege this language, but also, as I discussed in the category above, in the participants of this study these ideologies are also presented to them by society and their families In this sense, ideologies can affect the purposes with which students invest in L2s, as well as the order. A clear example is Max, who, as I already explained, learned English as a requirement from his family to learn the language he originally wanted to learn, which was German.

In some cases, ideologies could determine the interest that participants felt for learning and speaking languages in the first place. In Samantha's case, she states that being from a small town, she witnessed how other people could idolize foreign countries, and she wanted to know how they really were, whether through learning about them in the languages spoken there, or through eventually visiting them. Because of this, she wanted to learn English, to know more about the world abroad. Further on, she became interested in learning languages from other

countries she associated with economic powers, such as Chinese and Arabic, which she considers are languages that can give her what she desires, such as social status or knowledge.

On another note, ideologies can cause admiration or disdain for the culture of the target language. This is clear in the case of Max, where he feels admiration for German culture, and thus invests a lot in this L2. But, it is also evident in his disdain for the French and English cultures, which he expressed in the following excerpt, and which possibly has an influence in his lack of interest in these two L2s:

> I don't know, Americans, culturally speaking, it may be a cliché or generalization, I haven't met many, but they seem so… with all due respect, so… superficial. I don't know, like they think they are the best and they aren't interested in anything else. And you meet someone from, for example, Germany, and they speak several languages. In the United States it's always this culture of I'm the most powerful, I speak English, learn my language, wherever I go I'm right. Not all of them are like that, but it has been my experience. And France, I don't know, they complain about everything. It's cultural clichés but I've had to live them here because I had contact with French people, even French people who complain about other French people. (Interview 1 Max)

Finally, ideologies also caused some participants to be curious about a culture or want to know more about it. This can often be a motivator to invest in learning the language. An example of this is Juan's interest in learning a heritage language, due to his belief that it will offer him a new way to see the world and understand himself and other people.

Ultimately, it seems ideologies can have a large effect on a person's investment. They can either cause a person to be more interested and thus invested in an L2, or they can make

them feel aversion towards an L2. It is important to know where these ideologies come from, what ideologies language users may hold, and address possible cultural clichés students may believe, in order to better understand students and foster more investment in the languages they learn.

Investment in language learning in daily life situations versus in university courses

For the purpose of this study, it is important to recognize how the way students invest in learning languages is relevant in relation to their university life. As I already explained, students describe how they invest as daily life uses of the language, different from explicitly academic learning strategies, like studying course topics or practicing vocabulary. However, there are certain activities they do to invest in the courses they have in the university. I will describe students' academic investment in relation to the capital they have and the perceived benefits they expect to gain from being invested. It is important to point out here that what participants expressed in relation to their investment, behaviors, and feelings in class, aligned with what their L2 teachers shared in their responses to the questionnaires they filled in about the students.

To begin, some participants explained what they felt that teachers perceived regarding their own capital. In essence, several participants felt that teachers thought they had more capital than they actually did. Lucas expressed that he felt teachers assumed students have more time than they actually do to invest in L2s. Meanwhile, Samantha and Juan explained that they felt teachers expected them to have a higher linguistic level than the one they had. In Juan's case, he explains that he feels he has an adequate L2 proficiency in the classroom and in academic settings, but when it comes to more impromptu uses of the L2, he feels that he should have a higher level than he does. In Samantha's case, it was due to her history with learning English on her own, which caused her to have some gaps in her knowledge. As she explained:

So there were moments like that, where they assumed that because of the fluidity I had when […] speaking, on the day to day, that I also had a lot of understanding of the, like, more academic part of the language, like all the grammar and background. So it has been, like, I feel that maybe new teachers can perceive that I have a higher level than I really do, or that I've been in English [classes] longer than I have been, or that I have more experience than I really do… (Interview 3 Samantha).

This is relevant as there seems to be a mismatch between students' capital and the capital their teachers perceive or expect them to have. In turn, students may feel that they are expected to invest more than they can, which can contribute to feelings of inadequacy such as the ones described by Juan. In the case of both Juan and Samantha, based on their replies to the questionnaires, it is true that their teachers believe they have high linguistic levels. It is important then, considering these two cases, for teachers to recognize what capital their students have, and reflect on how they treat it (Darvin & Norton, 2015, 2016) as it may help set more realistic expectations in the classroom, favoring power dynamics between students and teachers.

Regarding the decision to invest in classes, participants pointed out that although they tend to do what is required of the class, some activities may lead them to invest beyond what is required. If students consider an activity to be a useful, practical, or a realistic use of the L2, it tends to lead them to invest more in it, as (Norton, 2016) explained, learners' hopes for the future and how they imagine themselves using the language, will impact their investment in the practices of a classroom. Also, interactive activities and classes make students less likely to become disinterested. In some cases, the type of activity may cause students to not feel invested, for example if there is no interaction or student participation. In other cases, it can just be related

to students' interest in a particular class. The following excerpts illustrate these two situations, respectively:

> The teacher just gives the conference and that's all, bye. The class barely lasts and there is little interaction with the students. There's no participation or team work. So… the class becomes boring. You think, 'I can miss class, then watch the recording, and it's the same thing', because your participation is the same whether you are in class or watching the recording. (Interview 3 Juan)

> In the classes that motivate me, I'm there one hundred percent, I look to participate more, any doubt I have I ask it right away because I really want to learn. Whereas in the demotivating classes, I have a question and it's like 'Ah, whatever, let's just do what's needed and that's all.' And also, with the boring classes, here at home on virtual classes on my phone, I open a game on my computer or look at my phone. (Interview 3 Juan)

It is valid to point out that investment in language classes has been greatly affected by the pandemic as through virtual classes the possibilities of missing class and watching a recording afterwards, or assisting class but getting distracted, are greater. In these times, students can consider investment as the action of connecting to class, turning on their webcam, participating in class discussions, and turning in classwork on time.

Moreover, a factor that has great influence in class investment is the benefits students believe they can gain. It can range from something as complex as the desire to apply for scholarships and programs abroad, as Juan explained he would be interested in doing in the future; to something as simple as the social gain of going to class and interacting with classmates, as Lucas states is motivating:

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In face to face classes I felt more connected because, well, you make the time investment of going to class, walking to the fourth floor, going inside, all that was motivating too. The social aspect is motivating, the fact of being with friends, people, speaking and going out on the little break, drinking coffee, water, eating a snack, anything. That aspect motivates, it motivates a lot. (Interview 3 Lucas)

Several other perceived benefits affect student investment, such as the grades received for their classwork, the university degree upon finishing their careers, and the L2 uses that students imagine having in the future. In the case of Lucas, he requires seeing clear gains in order to invest. If he knows an activity will not be graded, he does not do it. If he does not see himself using an L2 in the future, he will not invest in it as much, which is the case with French:

Paola: So you don't see yourself using French in the future?

Lucas: Not much, honestly, not more than in communication terms. I don't see myself wanting to translate things from French to Spanish, or from Spanish to French, I don't see it as something I'd like or be enthusiastic about. (Interview 1 Lucas)

In the case of Max, he invests in French and English in order to receive his degree, which will allow him to work with any L2 he wants. He has many goals that he wants to achieve after getting his degree, which is why this is an important expected benefit for him. As he puts it:

[…] It sounds like I am so self-interested in the degree. A degree in English and French to work in German and Portuguese. Or in Spanish, too, because I think Spanish as a Foreign Language is cool, I took a class in the university, and it has… well, if you look for economic stability, in the future, Spanish is becoming important and can be a good option. Also to travel and know. […] But to do that, first I need my English, French,

Spanish Translator degree, and a postgraduate study in education. But I'm so lost in the

world that I don't know which of the 20 options I have in my head I'm going to go for.

(Interview 3 Max)

Max expresses a desire to be part of an international imagined community. Although he

still has some decisions to make, what is clear to him is that he expects his degree to help him

achieve any of his objectives.

The participants of this study invest in diverse ways in learning languages. Some of these

are personal, related to their own interests and carried out in their daily lives, while others are

particularly for their university courses. How invested they are is mediated by their perceptions

of the courses and activities, as well as by the benefits they hope to receive. There seems to be a

mismatch between students' capital and the capital teachers perceive they have, which can affect

classroom relations. Ultimately, it seems important for there to be communication between

teachers and students regarding the resources students have at their disposal, their interests, and

their purposes for pursuing language majors.

L2 user identities influence investment

In this final category, I will relate the main concepts of the past two categories: L2 user

identity and investment. The way students identify as L2 users, as well as the circumstances that

led them to identify in the ways they do, have a direct relation with their investment. Their

identity is connected to the reasons why they speak languages, the goals they have as L2 users

and their beliefs about what speaking languages can give them in the future.

On the one hand, students' identities directly affect how they invest and how invested

they are. For instance, Juan's identity as a language learner is linked to how he invests in

learning. As he explains in the following excerpt, after being asked if his "language learner" L2 user identity influences how he invests:

> Yes, because I invest in classes precisely to improve my performance in the academic context. To strengthen the learning of the language. Whereas, say, if I identified more as a speaker, or as bilingual, I'd say I'd make investments outside the academic context. (Interview 3 Juan)

On the other hand, Max's case is different. While Juan speaks about how identifying as a language learner means he focuses on a more academic context of the language, Max explains how identifying as a language user means he has no limits, as he will never be done learning the language. As he put it:

> I think the only thing that identifying this way does is that I am aware that there is no limit, in my opinion, like, well, here I am, I know everything, I learned it. No. I have to keep learning, so I think that that has to count when it comes to investments, from a monetary and time perspective, there's always a new course of something I like, be it a language course or something taught in that language, I'd consider taking it. (Interview 3 Max)

Meanwhile, Samantha's investment is mediated more by her personal history and her past experiences with the languages. Due to her life conditions, coming from a small town where few people spoke foreign languages, she has mostly learned languages through technology and not through speaking to other people. Therefore, she currently invests more in these ways; like learning through apps, podcasts, and reading.

Another example of past experiences with the language affecting how students invest in learning languages is Lucas's experience. He expresses that he wants to learn new languages to feel as easy as it did to learn English. Because of this, he has had issues with French, which he has found to be too complicated. As he explains, "I became stubborn with the languages, especially English, and, let's say that is the problem I have with French now, that I'm stubborn because I want it to be as easy as English was, and it's not" (Interview 1 Lucas).

On the other hand, students' identities also impact the benefits they expect to gain from their investments. In Samantha's case, her identity as a Polyglot under construction has been something she has carried since her childhood, and it is directly related to her goal of learning five languages and the personal satisfaction she feels she will gain from this. As she stated in the third interview, when asked what she expected to gain from learning languages:

Firstly, personal achievement. Like the satisfaction that I will be able to do the things I want. And I mean what I mentioned earlier, about interacting. So I don't know, having a good handle of the five languages I want to speak… I'll be able to interact with people, whether they are foreigners or not, people who make me feel good and comfortable. Being able to interact without feeling strange, doing what I like, feeling like I am taking advantage of my time, I feel I'll be able to travel and understand all these cultures I want to understand and get to know, and truly understand, through languages. (Interview 3 Samantha)

This identity and expectation have directly affected her investment. As a child, she used everything at her disposal to learn English. Since she entered the program, she has made efforts to be proficient in French. And she has already signed up for mandarin classes in the university, little by little working up to her goal.

In Juan's case, his interest in Colombian heritage languages, and his desire to learn a language that he feels could change his perception about life, or have an impact on his personality (something he feels that French and English have not done), led him to sign up for Minika classes in the university. There is much he expects to gain from this L2 and culture in relation to his identity, as he explains in the following excerpt:

> Minika, well… I just signed up for it, but, because I want to learn it to know them, to enter that culture, to know it more, know myself more, know the country more, the land, nature, life. The use of Minika in the future, I don't know… It could be to go there, somewhere where it's spoken, and see what I can contribute, to teach other things, or… to see what else I could learn from them, in their language. (Interview 1 Juan)

In Lucas' case, his identity as a language enthusiast also has a direct impact on his goals with the L2s, which are more related to having a practical use of the language. This is true both for a more casual use of the L2s, as he explains in the first excerpt; and for a more professional use of the L2s, as he explains in the second excerpt:

> Let's say what I look for is to be able to, say, buy bread in any country, or something like that. Go to the store and not have to speak in English or use a translator. Like that, like; hello, how are you, I need this, thank you, see you later. (Interview 2 Lucas)

> [A job] where, say, you… at the same as you are watching a fun video, you are making money, and it doesn't have to be in an office, within four walls, bored, the boss doesn't have to be there, like hey you have to do this. […] Sometimes I don't see myself directly translating a book or something scientific, like, sir I will pay you 20 pesos per word and

I'll have it in a month… I don't see myself so closed off. And, maybe that has a lot to do with my way of being a procrastinator and things like that. (Interview 3 Lucas)

Finally, in Max's case, his intimate relation with German and his affinity for its culture clearly affect his goals with the L2, and as an effect of this, his investment. Although he also considers the possibility of using the other L2s he speaks, his dream is with German. As he says:

German will continue being my work, and my dream is, I love interpreting. My dream is to become a German-Spanish interpreter, working for a big organization, United Nations, European Parliament. We'll see, it's in my plans to go to a masters in Germany in conference interpretation. Well, in any case, I also like being a teacher. That's all. In all languages, translation. I think with translation I'd like to focus on German, even though we don't learn it at the School of Languages, I have the basics and the courses I can do online to specialize, or directly at universities there, like the one I already did. (Interview 1 Max)

Identity has a direct relation with how students invest as well as the benefits they expect to gain from these investments. L2 user identities can mediate the ways in which students invest, limiting them or motivating them to go further. Their expected benefits also have an effect on their investment, as they strive to get closer to their dreams. It is important to consider, however, the shifting nature of identity depending on students' life conditions and context, as well as the influence from other factors of investment, such as ideologies and capital.

Discussion of Findings

Studying students' identities, investment and L2 use can provide us with tangible, deep information about them; how they learn and with what purposes they use the L2's they speak. While there are several studies in the field about language learner identities and investment, there are fewer that focus more on language use than learning. Additionally, in the Colombian context, studies about investment, particularly in a university context, are rare. Thus, it was relevant to carry out this study of L2 user identity and investment in foreign language majors of Universidad de Antioquia. Likewise, understanding L2 users' investment in language learning can aid in finding or designing more appropriate methodologies and curricula according to students' reality, comprehending why they learn what languages and with what purposes. Considering these reasons, I decided to carry out this exploratory case study, seeking to answer the question "What role do undergraduate foreign language majors' language user identities play in their L2 use and investment in L2 learning?".

This study was carried out in the School of Languages in Universidad de Antioquia. The decision to focus on this context is relevant because it allowed me to have participants who chose to major in foreign languages, making these an important part of their lives. Additionally, participants were from both the Translation and Foreign Language Teaching programs, at different levels, which offered varying perspectives from the two undergraduate programs of the School of Languages.

In this section I will present the interpretation of the data and findings described above in light of the theory; specifically, I will do so in light of Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment. After collecting the data, I analyzed them through thematic analysis. From rereading and recoding the data several times, three main categories emerged, which were: "Constructing

L2 User identities", "Capital, desire, motivation and perceived benefits: The different sides of investment", and "L2 user identities' influence on L2 investment".

The data revealed that undergraduate foreign language majors' L2 user identities play an important role in their L2 use and in their investment in L2 learning. As L2 users, they have integrated their other languages into their daily lives, both as part of their entertainment and social communication, as well as in an effort to be more linguistically proficient. Therefore, they are consistently investing in their L2's as they use them throughout the day. They have constructed different L2 user identities influenced by their personalities, beliefs and experiences with the languages; these identities also determine the ways in which they most often use their languages and invest in them, the benefits they expect to gain, the affinity they feel with certain languages, and their desire to learn more. As foreign language majors, they also invest separately in their university classes, making a difference between the aforementioned daily life uses of the languages and learning strategies or studying for their courses. In this case, their investment varies depending on how useful or enjoyable they may find the class and not on how motivated they are to learn the language. In the following lines I will explore these results in further detail, first by describing the case of each participant, and finally by interpreting the findings in relation to Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment.

Learners' Identity and L2 Investment: Case Analysis

As a way to recapitulate the findings previously described, in this section I will describe the case of each of my participants, in terms of their identity, capital and ideologies, and how these are related to their L2 investment, L2 use, and perceived or expected benefits. That is, I will refer to these cases as depictions of Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment. These

descriptions are based on what participants shared during interviews and in their linguistic biographies.

Juan

Juan identified as a language learner, teacher, and non-native user, based on the uses he makes of the languages. He reported not feeling particularly close to the languages he speaks, and did not identify a significant impact in the development of his identity, because he believes that French and English cultures are already dominant in society, so they have not contributed anything new to him; these languages are useful but do not affect his identity. Alternatively, he feels that learning an indigenous language would offer him new, more enriching ways to see the world. In this sense, his identity is closely linked to the ideologies he holds about languages. True to his belief that languages' main attribute is being useful, he initially invested in them out of necessity, as he needed these languages for his aviation career, which he pursued simultaneously with the Foreign Language Teaching program. However, he states that he has grown to love the foreign language teaching program, and it has gone from being a plan B to being his current job. That is to say, he is currently teaching English. Thus, this return he has received from investing in learning languages (a job), has motivated him to invest in it further.

It is important to point out that he has always had many opportunities (social and economic capital) to invest in learning languages from having a supportive family that helped him with L2 classes, the possibility of attending a private school, and opportunities to travel to countries where other languages are spoken. It is possibly due to having had this cultural and economic capital throughout his life, that he developed his ideologies about foreign languages like English and French: they were somewhat easily accessible to him. This also can be related to how he invests in learning languages, which is related to his favorite leisure activities, like

watching movies and series in French and English, reading books in English, and using music to practice French. Finally, his expected benefits from learning English and French are to eventually be able to study in a different country, to have the chance to use these languages naturally in his daily life, to continue teaching, and to use them in his aviation career.

Lucas

Lucas identified as a language enthusiast, based on the way he has learned languages since he started learning English. With this L2, he was self-taught, with the help of his brother who was in English classes. He learned mostly through TV shows, movies and videogames. With other L2s, he has found that he learns for fun and mostly focuses on basics of different languages, so as to be able to get around in a country where that language is spoken. His interest in different cultures and the beliefs or ideologies he holds about them is what motivates him to learn languages. Yet, when he feels the rules of a language are too complicated, or that they do not make sense, he is not motivated to learn it, and he stops investing in it, which has happened with French. In this case, as he feels he will not use this language in the future, the perceived benefits he feels he may gain are not worth investing capital (his time) in learning it. In fact, his expected benefits are to work as a freelance translator, travel easily through different countries, and possibly live in other countries too, all with his advanced level of English and basic proficiency in other L2s.

He believes his most valuable capital is his experience learning English and other L2s (which helps him learn new languages) as well as time. However, he does not frequently invest in learning, and with languages besides English, he tends to be invested for short terms. He relates his investment with his leisure activities: watching series, movies and YouTube videos; playing video games; and, on some occasions, talking to his girlfriend and friends, in English. He

also uses English for work and at the university. The main return he has received from learning English is the opportunity to be hired for several jobs, including his current one, as a Billing Specialist in an international company. It is possible that since English has already offered him so many benefits, he does not find it necessary to be as proficient in other languages. However, he continues to learn for the opportunity to know more about other cultures through languages.

Max

Max identified as a language user, emphasizing that he does not consider himself bilingual, trilingual, or a native speaker. He identified this way based on the idea that he uses all the L2s he speaks with different purposes. His identity has evolved through time, as he had studied a different undergraduate program and eventually decided to follow his passion for languages after several years. Additionally, he gives great importance to languages' cultures and the beliefs he holds about them, which influences what L2s he enjoys learning most, or finds valuable. In this sense, the ideologies he holds about L2s have a great influence in the ones he identifies with more, and that he desires to invest more in learning. In particular, he feels identified and connected to German. He also has an interest in L2s he considers difficult.

Due to the varied beliefs he holds about languages, and his trajectory as he developed his identity as a language user, he also has varied perceived benefits for the future based on how invested he has been in learning. However, to sum up, these are mostly in relation to finding a job he loves, most likely as an interpreter in a big organization, exploring the world, and studying abroad, ideally in Germany. These expectations match the capital he has had throughout his life: he has economic capital, now from his German teaching job, and in the past through the support of his parents, who paid for language classes as he grew up, and made it possible for him to attend a private school; lastly, he also has social capital, as thanks to the opportunities he has

had to go to other countries, he has met many people with whom he can both practice speaking the languages he prefers, and network. In accordance with his perceived benefits and capital, he invests in the L2s he speaks frequently and in many ways, which are similar across all languages, even the ones he likes least, though the most prevalent one is German. His investment in language learning is integrated in his daily life, as he does nearly everything in the L2s he speaks: watching series and movies, listening to podcasts, reading the news and books, teaching, participating in conversation clubs, and speaking with his coworkers and roommate.

Samantha

Samantha identified as a polyglot under construction. She came from a small town, from a traditional family, and not many people spoke other languages. Because of this, her only resource to invest in learning English was the technology she had access to and her supportive teachers. Ever since she was a child she was interested in languages, and wanted to learn at least five, which is where this identity stems from. She was self-taught, mostly through the use of technology and the help of dictionaries. All her life, languages and technology have been linked, which is evident in the way she invests in L2 learning, which is mostly using apps to improve her learning. Her identity and investment are closely linked to the ideologies she holds about languages. She has always had an interest in languages that represent, for her, economic power, and in learning more about the countries where they are spoken. She also feels that learning these languages in particular will give her access to some of that power.

Thanks to learning English, she has found a job, she has met new people, and she has learned more about the world and let go of prejudices she was brought up with. She has also had the opportunity to travel and have first-hand experience using the languages she speaks. Because of this, she values learning L2s, and has continued to develop her desire to learn more.

Therefore, her investment in learning is part of her everyday life: she has her computer and cellphone set in an L2, she watches movies and series in their original languages, she tries to read books in the L2s she speaks, and she uses these L2s at work and the university. Her expected benefits are to one day be able to swiftly change between any of the languages she speaks (including Spanish), to teach Spanish in another country, to have many job opportunities, to have her own language center, to possibly work as a translator in a business environment, and to have a general sense of personal satisfaction and joy.

After describing each participant, and making clearer how their identities, investment, and perceived benefits are intertwined, I will now interpret the findings presented above by relating them to the main concepts present in Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment. In the following lines, I will, first, expand on the relevance of technology and ideologies in this study, and in relation to the model of investment; then, I will describe and explain the complex nature of students' identities, influenced by habitus and desire; finally, I will elaborate more on students' capital, the type of capital they have, and what their expected benefits are.

Investment, Identity and L2 Use: The Relevance of Technology and Ideologies

Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment was proposed in response to the changes that took place in society around the time Norton first presented the notion of investment in 1995. These changes included the increased role of technology in society, and the reshaping of language ideologies, among others (Darvin & Norton, 2015). I focus on these two changes because, just as they are important to the model of investment, they are also particularly relevant in the participants of this study; they both have had an influence in their identity and in their investment.

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Ideologies influence learners' identities, as well as their language experiences, the languages they have more affinity with, and the ones they are interested in learning. For instance, all participants' first exposure to foreign languages started with English, which is an obligatory class in Colombian schools due to linguistic policies rooted in the ideology that speaking English is a necessary skill to have a better quality of life and be part of a globalized world (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2006). This ideology is maintained by the government, and is then reinforced in students by their schools, their teachers, their families, and society at large, who encourage them to pursue learning English, thinking it will offer them greater life opportunities.

Besides, there are additional ideologies that students hold which affect the way they value different languages, and can in turn influence their investment. For example, as was described in the findings description section, some students, such as Max or Samantha, find that speaking a foreign language besides English, such as French, German, Mandarin, or others, can give them a higher social status, motivating them to invest in these languages. Likewise, some students find that through speaking a certain country's language, they will become closer to its culture or to its (economic) power. This is true in the case of Lucas, Samantha and Max. For example, they feel that it is different to learn about another culture in its own language, instead of in their own. Also, they can learn more about it by speaking to people from that culture in their language. And in regard to coming closer to a country's power, students feel they can access it by being able to work in those countries thanks to speaking their languages.

Finally, there are also ideologies about what it means to be a language user, a bilingual, or a native speaker. For instance, some students, like Max and Juan, believe that to be a bilingual or native speaker, they must speak the language from a certain age or have lived a long time in a country where that language is spoken. Thus, they prefer to identify as language users, since

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according to these definitions they would never be, for example, bilinguals, yet they do have several opportunities, mainly through technology, to use their L2s. These ideologies may influence how students see themselves, how they construct their identities as L2 users and how they position themselves as "legitimate speakers" of an L2 (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 41).

Technology has also had a large impact on students' investment and L2 use. Some participants, more specifically Lucas and Samantha, have experience working in online spaces, mediated by technology. Most recently, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, all participants have had the experience of studying virtually. Even before this situation, however, as Norton (2017) states, L2 learners have been finding new, flexible ways to engage in language learning and use. Students from this study had used technology to learn and use other languages through digital applications, listening to podcasts, and watching movies and series. Some students, like Juan, interact with an international community through video games, where they speak mostly in English; this has allowed them to further position themselves as language users. Moreover, there are also online conversation clubs where students, like Max, can interact with other language users in multiple languages at a time. In these ways, they have made languages a part of their daily lives outside their classrooms, and a part of who they are.

Identity, Habitus and Desire

In order to better understand how these concepts are present in the participants of my study, it is important to remember what they mean, specifically in the context of investment. In the following lines, I will explain each of these concepts, how they are present in students' lives, and how they can be observed through the model of investment.

Identity, as I have previously explained, refers to how a person positions themselves in the world, and how this may change in time, or depending on the space the person is inhabiting

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(Norton, 2000, p. 5). In Juan's case, for example, his identity changes depending on the language he is speaking, and the purpose with which he is using it. Meanwhile, Samantha has identified as a polyglot under construction her whole life, but this has meant different things for her as she has learned more languages, gotten to know more about other cultures, and set different expectations for herself. In this model of investment, what the authors seek, however, is to elaborate on identity as a struggle "of habitus and desire, of competing ideologies and imagined identities" (Darvin & Norton, 2015, p. 45). Habitus refers to how people understand the world, their place in it, and what is expected of them; meanwhile, desire is what pushes them to exercise their agency in order to obtain their goals. Furthermore, this desire is expressed in the form of students' imagined identities or communities, which in this case takes form in their perceived or expected benefits. All of this is at the same time influenced by dominant and personal ideologies. Thus, students' identities are a result of all of the intersections of these factors. For example, Samantha, who comes from a small town, and whose family did not understand her interest in languages, had the desire to know other parts of the world and other cultures through languages. This led her to invest in learning English, which she had learned was a language that could offer her some social power. Through learning English, she found that she had the opportunity to access imagined communities of foreigners, and be a part of them. Now, although she values her origins and her own country, her habitus shifted and she aspires to be a global citizen as part of her polyglot identity.

Another interesting example is Max, who thought he had already found his place in the world with his first undergraduate degree. However, after interacting with people from a community he aspired to be a part of (translators and interpreters), he found that despite what he originally believed, he could make a living off of languages. Thus, his desire led him to change

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his career path, enter the Translation program, invest in learning other languages he was passionate about, and come closer to his imagined identity. These three concepts are deeply linked, and through these examples, it is visible how they come together to show the complexities of identities, how they are built through time, how they can be multiple and constantly changing.

Students' Capital and Perceived Benefits

Finally, it is also important to discuss the capital that students have and bring with them to the classroom. I will discuss this in terms of linguistic capital, cultural capital, social capital and economic capital, which are relevant in Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment. Also, I will explain the benefits that students expect to gain from their university courses and how this influences their investment.

To start, it is important to analyze what sort of capital students bring to the university. First, something common among all participants is that they brought significant linguistic capital, which refers to their language resources, and their ability to know how and when to use these resources appropriately (Bourdieu & Thompson, 1991). This linguistic capital varied among students, but none of them came to the undergraduate program as blank slates, as was expressed both by the participants themselves, as well as by their L2 teachers in the questionnaires they filled out. Besides their first language (in this case, Spanish), at the very least, they had learned English in school, yet several of them had been self-taught due to their own interest in the language, like Samantha and Lucas, or had been in extracurricular English courses, like Juan and Max. Additionally, some also had knowledge of other languages that are not taught in the School of Languages. According to Darvin and Norton (2015), it is important to understand the capital that students come with to the classroom, treat it as an affordance and not a constraint, and

transform it into something that can be valuable in other spaces. In this case, students' capital allowed them to be more aware of their own learning, of the expectations they had of the program, and of their own learning style. They realized that they still had gaps to fill, and were happy to understand the language and their learning process better.

Secondly, they brought cultural capital, in the form of past experiences and social relations. Besides the past experiences with the languages, some students also had experience studying other undergraduate programs, which could have an impact in how they invested in these programs. In addition, they also had social capital in the form of relationships with speakers of other languages or classmates at different levels in their academic program. The final form of capital they brought to class was time; the time they invested in connecting or going to class, being there, and doing the activities the teachers proposed.

Based on the results from the surveys that the participating teachers carried out, they perceive and acknowledge students' linguistic capital. That is, they are aware that students come with linguistic knowledge from outside of the undergraduate program. What they do not necessarily perceive, however, is the extent of this linguistic knowledge, as was expressed by Samantha in one of the excerpts I presented earlier. The other capital students bring, such as their cultural and social capital, is less likely for their teachers to be aware of unless they specifically ask students about their past or about their relationships, or unless students bring it up on their own accord.

There is much to say about what students expect to receive from investing in learning or in a university class. What students desire can range from certain cultural or social experiences, to the economic or material (Darvin & Norton, 2016). To start, they expect their own capital to be increased or improved. Their linguistic capital will be improved through learning more of the

language; however, they also expect to learn better when to use the linguistic resources they already have, under what circumstances, and in what types of settings, whether they are academic or social. This was true for all participants of the study. Another expectation they held was regarding the social aspect of class, as they determined that interactive activities were more useful and realistic, as was expressed by Juan. This could also contribute to their social capital, as it can bring them closer to their classmates who are other L2 users. Some students value the opportunity to find other L2 users in the program, as they do not always know other people with whom they can practice speaking other languages, or they do not have as many opportunities to speak with them as they would in the university setting, as is Lucas' case. Finally, they also expect to eventually gain another type of capital: economic capital. Currently, most participants do not invest economically in learning languages, or at least not beyond their tuition. But, from the time they are investing in learning, going to class, and practicing their L2's, they all expect to, in the future, be able to access jobs that offer them economic stability, or scholarships to study abroad.

To conclude, Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment is quite applicable in our context. The conception of identity is visible within students' complex, constantly shifting identities, which are influenced by their habitus and desire. Then, the relevance of language ideologies in our context, and the effect these have on students' identity and investment also come to play, as well as the role technology has in how they use languages. Finally, these aspects intersect with the different capital students count on and their expectations, and it is possible to have a clearer understanding of students' investment and the situations that impact them.

Significance of the Study

This study offers insight into the identities, investment and L2 uses of students from the School of Languages. It has similarities to past studies on identity and investment, but also some important differences for which it may stand out. An important similarity with past studies on investment (López Armendáriz & Cortez Román, 2016; Petraki, 2019) was the influence of ideologies on students' investment. In these studies, investment was affected by students' affiliation with an imagined community of speakers as well as the symbolic value they attributed to the L2s. This was also the case with several participants of this study.

Furthermore, as is the case in most studies about investment, it was possible to appreciate Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment beyond the theory, as identity, ideology and capital came together to determine participants' investment. Also, I could identify that it is more realistic and context-sensitive to observe students through the lens of investment rather than motivation, as their conditions are ever changing, as well as their identities. Often, even though students were motivated to learn languages, they did not invest as much if they were dissatisfied with the classroom practices. This also showed how power dynamics are relevant in regard to students' investment, as they care about their role in their classes and how they are positioned. If students feel important, they are more likely to invest than if they do not.

One of the differences with past studies, particularly those I mentioned in my literature review, is the focus on a language user identity or L2 user identity. Most of the studies on identity and investment (Barkhuizen, 2016; Collazos Moná & Gómez Rodríguez, 2016; Heidenfeldt, 2015; Sarasa, 2017; Villegas-Torres & Mora-Pablo, 2018) focused on other types of identity, such as professional identity, teacher identity or learner identity. Meanwhile, a few studies centered on L2 use and L2 user identities (Bakic & Škifić, 2017; Ellis, 2016; Ortiz

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Medina, 2017; Villegas-Torres & Mora-Pablo, 2018), but they were not carried out considering Darvin and Norton's (2015) model of investment. I would argue that this study contributes ideas in favor of recognizing and acknowledging students not just as students or learners, but as L2 users, which is ultimately what they are or will become. Students allow languages to permeate them, their lives, their interests, and their hobbies. This goes beyond learning, which is just the first use they have of their L2s, followed by many others.

Relevance of Results for the School of Languages context

Based on the findings presented above, I will propose some considerations that may be useful for the context of this study, the School of Languages at Universidad de Antioquia. These considerations are regarding the investment and uses that students make of their L2s, and some differences and similarities between students of the two undergraduate programs that the school offers.

Regarding students' investment and L2 use, there are two considerations. Firstly, based on the distinction that students make between daily life uses of the L2 and learning strategies, and examining how most students invest by using the L2 in daily life activities, I feel it may be practical to provide students with more ways to integrate L2s into their daily lives. Often, students are taught learning strategies, which may help them become better learners, by aiding in the completion of class assignments or in studying for tests. However, this integration of the L2s students are learning into their daily lives seems to be more valuable to students for improving as L2 users. In this sense, teachers could recommend the following to students: for simple alterations to their daily life activities, they could explain how to set their electronic devices in other languages, as well as propose that the media they consume be in an L2 (social networks, news, movies, series, etc.); for changes in their daily entertainment, they could recommend

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podcasts, YouTube channels, websites, among others; and for changes to their hobbies or social

aspects of their lives, they could share upcoming events with international speakers, or the

programming of conversation clubs around the city or in online spaces. Nonetheless, it is

possible many L2 learners have already implemented these habits into their daily lives.

Considering this, the recommendation would be for teachers to also be up to date on these types

of activities, to help students further when necessary. Secondly, based on what students

responded that caused them to invest more in a class, it seems important to make sure they

become aware of how what they are learning may be useful to them, or how it is a realistic use of

the language. Likewise, considering that students invest more in classes where their presence is

important (that is, teachers make them an active part of the class), and less in lecture-style

classes, it is also recommendable to promote participation, interaction, and group work.

Regarding the differences and similarities between the students in the Translation and

Foreign Language Teaching programs, there are several interesting aspects to consider.

However, I find it important to note that these ideas are based on the perceptions of only two

students from each program, and are therefore not necessarily generalizable. Firstly, there is a

perception that the teaching program has a more communicative approach. This may cause

students to invest more, as they feel the benefits are more tangible, since they can use the

languages in day to day activities, and not just for the purposes of their undergraduate programs.

The Translation students expressed their desire for courses to have more useful and realistic uses

of the languages. Secondly, the perception of French also seems to be different between the two

programs. The Translation students seem to find the obligation to learn French outdated or

unnecessary, while the Foreign Language Teaching students find it useful and interesting, or as

an advantage above others who only speak English.

Finally, something that is similar in students from both programs are their motivations for being in the programs. In all of the cases of this study, students joined these programs due to an interest in languages and other cultures. Their interest in translating or teaching as such was often secondary or something they hoped to gain as they progressed in their undergraduate program. Ultimately, their original interest was to learn other languages and improve the ones they already knew, in order to eventually be able to find occupations where they could use these languages. Many have developed a taste for translation and teaching, yet some are still open to explore other possibilities they may find as foreign language majors. It is therefore important for teachers to guide students in their search, and address a variety of potential job options related to language use.

Challenges

There were several challenges while carrying out this study. The first was difficulty finding diverse participants that fit the criteria I had originally intended. Because of this, participants were from different semesters than the ones I had proposed, and they were also generally older. However, they did have different educational backgrounds, some came from small towns while some others were from the city, and they also had different socio-economic strata. Most importantly, they all had different levels of experience with the languages they spoke. It was important that they be different to be able to explore how investment is socioculturally shaped and influenced by the personal histories of L2 users.

Another aspect that made the study more challenging to carry out was the social irregularity that was taking place at the time of the study. First, the global Covid-19 pandemic, which completely changed the way everyone was studying by transferring from face-to-face to virtual classes. This had an impact on the development of my study, by causing all encounters

with participants to be online. It also had an impact on the participants' learning experiences, and thus how they would invest. This was because they now had virtual classes, which some students preferred while others were demotivated by it, and which in general terms were a new experience for students, who had always studied face-to-face. Also, during the time of the study there was social unrest in the country for several reasons, and this generated protests in the city and a student strike in the university. This delayed some aspects of the data collection process and also had an impact on some participants' investment.

Finally, this is not so much a challenge as it is something that may have affected how I carried out this study and that could impact the results: my personal bias. This is particularly relevant because of the profoundly personal nature of a study on identity. Like my participants, I have a long and complex relationship with the languages that I speak. Also, as a foreign language teacher, I have developed my own beliefs about languages and language learning and use. I consider that L2 users' relationships with languages are deeply intimate and personal, as are their L2 user identities, and the way in which I interpret them may be mediated by my own identity and relationship with languages. Also, since these concepts are so deep, I may not have explored them to their full extent, despite trying to understand them as best as I could. Ultimately, these are all attributes that may have influenced the decisions I made throughout the study, the questions I decided to ask, and the interpretations I made of the data.

Limitations

It is important to point out some limitations that this study presented, as these can also be taken as opportunities for future studies. The major source of limitations for this study is the size of the study and the specific, personal nature of what was studied. Firstly, the sample of participants was somewhat limited, as it was a small amount of participants, focused exclusively

on language major students. This was due to the need to study each participant quite extensively, as the study was very personal, and the fact that there were some time constraints, so it was not possible to carry out a larger or longer study. Because of this it was necessary to focus on a particular population. Other studies could be about people with different majors or people who are not students.

Secondly, it was a very subjective study, as it focused on the experiences and perceptions of the participants, slightly complemented by the perceptions of their L2 teachers. It could have been valuable to further explore the perceptions of other people near to the participants, such as interviewing some teachers, or perhaps observing students' behaviors in class. Besides time restraints, this would also have been difficult considering the irregularity caused by university strikes that I mentioned before.

Since these limitations may make it difficult to generalize this study to a larger population it is important to recognize them. There are still some aspects of this study which can be related to other situations or contexts, and this is why I have been descriptive in my presentation of the cases and analysis of the findings. Finally, these limitations show possibilities for other studies, which could be carried out in other contexts, with different populations, larger samples or even smaller ones, and with greater details or different emphases.

Conclusion

Carrying out this study helped me not only understand students from the School of Languages from a deeper and richer perspective, but it also helped me understand myself better. Through learning about others' experiences as L2 users, their histories and experiences with the languages, the ideologies they held, the ways they use their L2's, and how they were invested in being better language users, I was able to explore my own history and beliefs about languages, and reflect about my practices and investment, both as a learner and a teacher. I feel the personal nature of this study made it impossible to not see myself in some of my participants, which only helped me understand them better, and learn even more through them.

Then, through the analysis of their words and the stories they shared with me, I could observe that the findings reveal the relationship between identity, ideology and capital, as proposed by Darvin and Norton (2015), and how relevant these concepts were to understanding participants' investment. Their investment was related to how they identified as language users, their ideologies determined what they gave importance to in the moment of investing, and their capital eventually determined either what they had gained from having invested or how much they were willing or able to invest in becoming better language users. Ultimately, it could be ascertained that students' L2 user identities play a significant role in their L2 use and investment. Their identities define how they use languages, as much as their language uses define their identities. Also, their identities reflect their desires and perceived benefits, which, consequently, affects how they invest and how invested they are. Meanwhile, all of these aspects are entwined with their language ideologies and their capital, which completely determine how they can use the languages and invest in learning them.

This study, however, although valuable, is not enough. There is still more to learn about identity, investment and L2 use. Although my case study paints a detailed picture of these particular students, in this particular time, each L2 user can be completely different. It would be interesting to carry out a similar study in a completely different context, with students of different ages, students with different L1's and L2. Similarly, it would be interesting to perform more focused studies in this very same context, focusing on one specific program, one specific semester, or one specific L2. There are many possible studies and routes to follow. I truly believe that with studies about these topics, the possibilities are endless, and the benefits immeasurable.

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APPENDIX A

Guía Entrevista 1 - Estudiantes

1. ¿Qué me puedes decir de ti?

2. Cuéntame tu historia de aprendizaje de lenguas.

3. ¿Qué crees que te motivó a estudiar una carrera en idiomas?

   a. ¿Durante tu infancia o adolescencia te interesaba aprender lenguas extranjeras? ¿Alguien de tu familia (o cercano) hablaba otras lenguas?

4. ¿Qué tipo de estrategias o actividades usas para mejorar tus habilidades en las lenguas que hablas?

5. ¿Cómo usas las lenguas en tu vida cotidiana? ¿Con qué propósitos? ¿Puedes darme algunos ejemplos?

6. ¿Consideras que tu forma de ser o cualquier otro aspecto de tu historia personal (¿identidad?) tiene alguna influencia en tu interés por aprender ciertas lenguas?

   a. ¿En tu forma de aprender y usar estas lenguas?

7. ¿Crees que aprender/saber estas lenguas ha tenido algún efecto en quién eres/tu forma de ser?

8. ¿Por qué te parece importante/valioso aprender lenguas extranjeras?

9. ¿Cómo te imaginas usando estas lenguas en el futuro?

10. Teniendo en cuenta el tema de esta investigación, ¿hay algo más que quisieras compartir sobre tu trayectoria profesional o personal como aprendiz y usuario de lenguas extranjeras?

APPENDIX B

Guía Entrevista 2 – Estudiantes

The following questions were asked to every participant:

1. ¿Qué imagen crees que proyectas cuando hablas cada lengua?

2. ¿Cómo te identificas con relación a las lenguas que hablas? (Opciones que se han usado en la literatura: Language learner, language user, language lover, native speaker, non-native, bilingual, multilingual?)

   a. ¿En qué te basas para identificarte así?

3. ¿Qué sientes que te aportan las lenguas que hablas? ¿En lo profesional, personal, académico? ¿Por cada lengua?

These interviews were based on each participants' linguistic biography, because of this all of the other questions were different and specific to each participant.

APPENDIX C

Guía Entrevista 3 – Estudiantes

Sobre encuesta de los profesores:

- ¿Cómo evalúas tu actitud en las diferentes clases?
- ¿Cómo evalúas tu participación? ¿Tu compromiso?
- ¿Percibes diferencias en tu actitud/participación/compromiso entre los cursos/entre las lenguas?
- ¿Consideras que estar en una carrera en idiomas afecta la forma en la que usas las lenguas? ¿De qué manera?

Después de explicar el modelo de investment:

(Teniendo en cuenta esta definición de inversiones…)

- ¿Qué inversiones haces en tu aprendizaje? ¿Qué inversiones no haces, pero crees que deberías hacer?
- *¿Cómo consideras que los profesores perciben las inversiones que haces en las clases? /En tu aprendizaje del idioma?*

(Hablando de retornos…)

- ¿Qué beneficios consideras que has recibido por realizar estas inversiones?
- ¿Qué beneficios esperas obtener al sentir que has mastered the language? /Terminado el programa / Dentro de unos años?

(Hablando de identidad…)

- ¿Qué aspectos de tu historia de vida te han llevado a que te identifiques así?
- ¿De qué manera incide tu identidad en tus inversiones (experiencia como aprendiz de lenguas) y las expectativas que tienes para el futuro como usuario de lenguas?

*Some questions varied for some participants, some participants had additional questions.

APPENDIX D

Cuestionario Profesores – Estudiante XXXX

Este cuestionario hace parte del proyecto de investigación de maestría "Exploring The Role of Students' Language User Identities in Their L2 Use and Investment". Consta de 6 preguntas abiertas y 2 preguntas cerradas, relacionadas con la actitud, participación, desempeño y compromiso de la estudiante XXXX en su clase. La información que usted nos proporcione será confidencial y solo tendrán acceso a ella las investigadoras.
Al aceptar llenar esta encuesta, usted está otorgando el consentimiento para utilizar la información proporcionada.

1. Nombre de quien diligencia la encuesta:

2. Nombre de la asignatura que enseñó:

3. En términos generales, ¿qué impresión tiene de XXXX como aprendiz de la lengua que usted enseña?
4. ¿Cómo considera que es su actitud en clase?
5. Durante la clase, XXXX… (marque todas las que apliquen)
    1. Enciende la cámara en clase
    2. Participa encendiendo el micrófono
    3. Participa por medio del chat
    4. Interactúa con los compañeros por iniciativa propia
    5. Participa activamente en discusiones grupales
    6. Participa solo cuando usted la llama
    7. No participa
6. Durante la clase, XXXX participa:
    1. Hablando en la lengua de la clase
    2. Hablando en español
    3. Usando una combinación de los dos
7. ¿Qué comentarios tiene sobre la participación de XXXX?
8. ¿Qué podría decir del desempeño de XXXX como aprendiz de la lengua?
9. ¿En general, cómo evalúa el compromiso de XXXX con la clase? ¿Cómo reconoce ese compromiso?
10. ¿Hay algo más que quiera agregar?

Indicaciones Narrativa

Escribir una biografía lingüística.

Esto consiste en escribir en forma de historia sobre tu relación con las lenguas que hablas, y cómo esta relación ha sido a través de tu vida. Puedes hablar de experiencia de aprendizaje con las lenguas, recuerdos de aprendizaje inicial, situaciones particulares que te marcaron, y sentimientos asociados a las lenguas.

Puedes usar las siguientes preguntas como inspiración o para complementar tu escrito. No es necesario responder pregunta por pregunta, pero las puedes tener en cuenta al momento de hacer tu escrito.

Preguntas:

- ¿Qué lenguas hablas con tu familia? ¿Con amigos? ¿Con profesores?

- ¿En qué momentos de tu vida aprendiste estas lenguas?

- ¿En qué momentos de tu vida has usado estas lenguas?

  - o Por ejemplo: en el colegio, en la universidad, en casa, en internet, en espacios sociales, en un hobby…

- ¿Qué lenguas hablas en tu mente? ¿En sueños?

- ¿Dónde hablas cada lengua? ¿En qué situaciones hablas cada lengua actualmente?

- ¿Identificas cada lengua con alguna emoción o sentimiento en particular?

- ¿Qué puedes hacer en cada lengua?

- ¿Qué crees que es necesario hacer para aprender una lengua? ¿Qué haces para aprender una lengua? Y, ¿Para mantener un buen nivel en la lengua?

- Sobre las lenguas que aprendes, ¿Por qué quieres saber estas lenguas? ¿Cómo imaginas tu futuro con estas lenguas?

- ¿Hay otras lenguas que quisieras conocer? ¿Qué harías con esas lenguas?