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Abstract: The final chapter of *Language Learning and Leisure* summarises the contents of the book under 6 headings: language, learning, informality, learner characteristics, activities and engagement, before examining the methodological orientations that emerge from this collection of chapters regarding future research into this area. Finally, it recalls the opportunities and challenges of research into informal additional language development, suggesting not only that such studies should contribute to a comprehensive understanding of these phenomena, but also that informal and leisure-based learning cannot be ignored when studying other aspects of second language acquisition.

Keywords: language learning, learner characteristics, learner activities, informality, future directions

1 A corpus approach to what has been said

In the introduction to this book we identified issues such as what informal learners do, where they do it, the role of the target language, the nature of acquisition and the relationship to classroom learning as being key dimensions of the field of informal second language learning (ISLL) or “language learning and leisure”, as we have called it in the title. These areas can clearly be seen to have not only links to SLA but also to language didactics (teaching and learning of languages) and, more broadly, to the study of human behaviour. We began by suggesting that, in some ways, schooling and leisure have not always been seen as opposites and that indeed some problem solving in the context of leisure pursuits could be an effective form of *σχολή* (*scholē*). How may we now sum up the evidence for this assertion gleaned from the preceding chapters? We will conclude in two parts: first by structuring the main dimensions of language learning and leisure as seen through recurrent keywords in the fifteen chapters and second by looking at the five subsections of the book, specifically regarding methodologies, with a view to making suggestions for the future of the field.

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Table 1: Ranking of keywords in the contributed chapters of the book.

rank	occurrences	keyword
8	1060	language
10	1030	learning
15	715	English
17	592	informal
19	584	activities
25	466	students
27	444	engagement
30	429	learners
38	344	study
43	327	idle

A cursory count of keywords in the fifteen contributed chapters (Table 1) hints at a general overview of the themes encountered.

This table shows the ranking of individual words in the fifteen chapters once functional words (articles, prepositions, conjunctions, etc.) have been removed, leaving only keywords. The second column shows the number of occurrences of each keyword.

1.1 Language

The unsurprisingly high frequency of three of the four words that compose the acronym ISLL and their ranking at the top of the most recurring content words in the texts highlight the main topics of this book: *language* as a focus of study, the personal development which is inherent in *learning* and specifically that which has been qualified as *informal* or leisure-related. Interestingly, the word *leisure* itself does not seem to have caught on, even among the chapters retained. The language referred to in the acronym ISLL is often English, which itself is the third most frequently occurring word in Table 1. Studies of other languages, such as Japanese, which may have a comparable media presence, are therefore helpful in understanding the extent to which some informal second language learning activities (such as reading mangas or watching telenovelas) are themselves tied to a particular language and culture. This matter is most simply illustrated in the range of acronyms used to designate informal learning varieties, several of which focus only on one language (Extramural English, Informal Digital Learning of English and Online Informal Learning of English), while the more general label of Informal Second Language Learning allows for a range of languages to be considered. In this volume, Inaba's study of learning Japanese, Alm's study of learning

German and Cajka et al's work regarding learning of French and German are therefore particularly helpful as starting points to consider which aspects of ISLL are relatively constant, even when the target language changes. Benson (155) refers to such constants as a "broad framework" within which variation is observed. One such constant is the presence of video watching in contexts as different as Japanese learners in Sweden (Inaba), German learners in New Zealand (Alm) and English learners in Kazakhstan (Zadorozhnyy and Yu).

The opening three chapters of the book explore dimensions of language through the lenses of Anthropology, Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL). In considering the nature of Language Learning and Leisure, three relevant adjectives emerge from the chapters by Mark Dressman, Meryl Kusyk and Robert Godwin-Jones: *messy*, *incidental* and *complex*. These interrelated terms in some ways encapsulate recurring ideas from the rest of the book and so we shall first examine how each is presented in this theoretical section, before using them as a lens for the remainder of the book.

Adopting an anthropological perspective, Dressman reminds us that the study of IDLE (his chosen term) is "messy", in part because it involves the development of students' personal, cultural, and social identities. We might argue that this messiness therefore largely springs from the fact that fledgling users of English are perhaps more in the business of answering questions such as "who would I like to be, what do I value and how would I like to relate to others?" than they are strictly in the business of language learning. Transferring this notion of messiness to Kusyk's analysis of the implicit-explicit continuum we can observe both the wide range of reasons for engaging in informal activities as well as the diversity of levels of awareness of the possible language development in progress. From Kusyk's SLA-focused perspective, this means that while it is possible, although difficult, to pursue the measurement of acquisition from ISLL as one would in a less messy, controlled context, acquisition itself remains only one dimension of the developing language user's engagement in informal activities. Kusyk argues that the language development emerging through ISLL is both complex, involving differing degrees of intention and awareness, and dynamic, in that these variables are likely to change over time and according to the variety of ISLL in question.

Godwin-Jones also emphasises the inherent messiness of ISLL when he reminds us that "the dynamics of that process need to be understood not from the perspective of linear development or cause and effect, but rather as part of a complex web of interactions the L2 user-learner has with both people and non-human actors" (81). Indeed, the identities of the user-learner develop along a unique trajectory of interactions with people, media and devices best understood from a complex dynamic systems (CDS) perspective. The *complexity* and interconnectedness of

all the varied aspects of ISLL are therefore at the heart of our understanding of the field. These insights can also be helpful in our understanding of the other frequently occurring terms in this volume.

1.2 Learning

The authors of this volume characterise learning, development or acquisition in informal contexts within the broader framework of other facets of development which may be taking place. Since ISLL can be seen as a subfield of both SLA and language didactics, it is important to note that some studies are more acquisition focused, seeking to measure what has been learned, and others more pedagogy focused, situating ISLL with regards to classroom practice. Chapters four and five examine acquisition as it manifests in two aspects of language production, discourse marker use and pronunciation. These dimensions of ISLL have been underrepresented in a field which has in the past often focused on comprehension skills, both in terms of specific vocabulary and of more general comprehension. These studies also exemplify the messy, incidental and complex nature of ISLL.

To take an example from listening skills, we might adopt as a hypothesis that ISLL viewing begins with L1 subtitling to support lower levels of oral comprehension, before moving on to viewing with target language captions or no subtitles at all at higher proficiency levels. In this case, Lyriqkou's observations that three key activities (frequent viewing without subtitles, spoken production and spoken interaction) are significantly related to changes in discourse marker use, raises questions about how language level relates to informal acquisition and also brings into focus questions of identity. It is easy to see how the practices of imitating the speech patterns of actors from favourite series reported by Lyriqkou is both a next step in the process of leaving behind a reliance on first language subtitles and moves messily into the kind of cultural and personal identity development suggested by Dressman. The incidental nature of these developments is also prevalent in this study and consideration of how the three key activities identified by Lyriqkou interact with the other twenty activities reported by her sample further underlines the complexity of the ISLL phenomenon.

Yibokou's study of pronunciation also considers the incidental nature of the uptake of specific sounds related to accent, and identifies considerable messiness in terms of inter and intra individual variability, while his comments about cultural affiliation and identity are also very much in line with Dressman. Awareness of contexts of production is also a key notion here, with a clear need for data from naturalistic settings which may show how priming from sources such as

favourite series, as Lyriqkou identifies, leads to productions which reflect and construct cultural and personal identities in informal contexts.

1.3 Informality

As merely the opposite of formal, this label runs the risk of telling the reader more about what informal is *not* than what it *is*. Similarly, “extramural” tells us that activities do not take place in a school, but does not tell us precisely where, how, or why they do take place. This notional fuzziness surrounding the term “informal” and the semantic relationship between informal and formal mean that many studies seek to identify the boundaries of ISLL. This may be in terms of context, including the role of formal learning, or of awareness or intentionality, for example the extent to which the activity fulfils learning objectives.

Studies in this collection which look specifically at the interface between formal and informal learning include Cajka et al.’s approach to risk-taking, Benson’s work on spatial factors, Zadorozhnyy and Yu’s study of preservice teachers and Alm’s work on Netflix as a study aid. Taken with the term “students”, which is the sixth most frequently occurring term in our list, the paradox of the informal learner and student can be observed. Since informal learning takes place outside any educational structure, the learner cannot be considered as a student, and yet, in order to study informal learning, we require respondents who are most often accessible to researchers because they are enrolled in (higher) education. Although most ISLL research takes place in universities, in reality, this particular tip of the iceberg may not be entirely representative of what lies beneath, in the day-to-day lives of Netflix viewers and multiplayer gamers who do not have a language class coming up the following day. While the word “user” does not make it into the top ten, the word “learners”, the eighth most frequent keyword in Table 1, is a helpful counterpoint to “student”. It is also a reminder that many of these issues relate closely to the identity of the developing user/learner/student of the language in question. Indeed, how the person sees themselves or would qualify themselves with respect to their ISLL activity clearly interacts with issues such as whether and how learning is taking place, why activities are taking place and how formal learning is involved in the process.

1.4 Learner characteristics

The relationship between the informal learner and other learner characteristics is clearly a growing area of interest, as witnessed by the chapters relating to

psychological factors, which encourage the reader to consider how feelings such as enjoyment, confidence or anxiety, may interact with ISLL.

The messiness exhibited in the contradicting identities of pre-service teachers, as pointed out by Zadorozhnyy and Yu, indicates that the construction of identities inherent through ISLL practices can lead learners in several different directions at once. For example, the professional identity of a pre-service teacher might believe that teachers play a central role in facilitating informal learning, whilst the learner identity is aware of having developed language skills without such assistance. Toffoli's study using attachment theory introduces dimensions such as fearfulness or dismissiveness, emotions which are often present in formal education but rarely feature in leisure activities. Do fears associated with formal learning carry over into the informal sphere, or do learners conceive of them as two separate experiences? In this case also the connectedness of formal and informal learning is at issue.

Liu and Lee's study of the relationship between grit (an ability to persevere) and enjoyment, again lead the reader to the interfaces between formal and informal, implicit and explicit, cognitive and affective. Their finding that classroom L2 enjoyment did not play a mediating role between IDLE and grit and that different ISLL activities had different associations with a willingness to persevere in English offer a multitude of questions for further study. Indeed, the finding that gaming and social media had a less positive influence on formal learning than text-based activities, for example, allows us to consider ranking ISLL activities by resemblance to classroom activities rather than by opportunity for interaction, since although multiplayer gaming offers opportunities for endless hours of spoken interaction, it bears little resemblance to a language class focusing on listening or reading comprehension.

1.5 Activities

The term "activities" is the fifth most frequent in Table 1. Individual activities are helpful entries into the complex world of ISLL for the researcher, enabling pre-existing methodologies to be brought to bear on language users engaged in listening, reading, viewing, etc. in order to consider outcomes such as fluency or vocabulary acquisition. Studies such as Yibokou's on pronunciation or Schwarz's on vocabulary acquisition strategies are examples of this kind of approach. While this allows the researcher to focus on a single area, the very interconnectedness of ISLL phenomena requires constant and careful consideration of how the individual activity or dimension relates to the greater whole. One may associate with the issue of activities another element of context contained in the final word in

the list, “IDLE”. This acronym, standing for Informal Digital Learning of English, was first suggested by Dressman and Lee (2017), and is to some extent in competition with ISLL as a potential name for the present field of study. In addition to being wedded to English as the language of study, IDLE also contains the key notion of digital practices and emphasises the links between informal learning and the vast fields of gaming and social media in particular. The perception that ISLL activities take place overwhelmingly in virtual spaces, using digital media, is a further indication of how ISLL relates to CALL, moving that field away from a study of tools created by the researcher and towards a study of the affordances of the learners’ chosen tools and practices, as exemplified by Godwin-Jones’ “complex web”.

1.6 Engagement

The reader will have observed that the concept of “engagement” (the seventh keyword in Table 1) in ISLL practices receives particular attention in this volume, the final three contributions looking at different ways of characterising the engagement of learners in ISLL. While one may conclude that engagement is just another way of saying what learners do, the notion of differing engagement types is an important step in teasing apart some of the messiness of ISLL by asking what is at stake in the different activities of different learners. Etymologically, the word “engage” has its origins in the French “*un gage*”, which is a stake, pledge or forfeit. Hence the dimensions of behavioural, cognitive, social and affective engagement bring to light the learner’s investment in the process and perhaps their hopes for a return on that investment. The implicit/explicit continuum is again a pertinent concept here, reminding us that while learners are sometimes thinking about language learning as they engage in ISLL activities, they are also thinking about their feelings, their friends, or just their need to fill time. Inter and intra-personal differences in learning outcomes will clearly be exhibited when what learners are focusing on can be so different in a given activity. How learning outcomes are differentially impacted when the stakes change can be seen most clearly in Arndt’s work, focusing on “the nature of learners’ L2 leisure activities, not merely in terms of what they do, but also their thoughts and feelings” (352). Her findings relating to variations in the role of conscious linguistic attention are of relevance to the implicit-explicit axis of ISLL, while her observation that longitudinal analysis of ISLL, including levels as detailed as intra-activity variability, again point to the relevance of emic approaches in future studies. Sockett suggests that there may be a large framework in which four dimensions of engagement, behavioural, cognitive, affective and social, evolve as a function of language level. Such a view also invites the

study of variability within this framework. Alm's study offers an opportunity to observe the interconnectedness of the different dimensions of engagement in individual learners and offers the kind of fine-grained observation needed as the study of engagement types in ISLL develops. The individual pathways of a learner used to encountering foreign languages on Netflix and another for whom this was a new experience illustrate two key aspects of complex and dynamic systems theory: the unique starting points of each learner and the impact of these differences on the evolution of the system.

Finally, the term "study" (item nine in Table 1) offers an opportunity to consider how the field of language learning and leisure may move forward as a result of this volume. The issues of what studies could now be developed and what methodologies may be most effective for each of the sub-themes into which we have chosen to divide the book will bring to a close this concluding chapter.

2 Future methodological orientations from five areas of ISLL

The fifteen chapters of this volume have taught us a great deal about the characteristics of ISLL, and these characteristics are most richly understood when the field is viewed from a number of perspectives. In the editorial process, we have chosen to identify some of these perspectives by dividing the book into five sections: The nature of ISLL, language outcomes, learner activities, psychological dimensions and engagement.

It is apparent in reviewing the book that the inherent issues of messiness, degrees of intentionality and complexity require attention to methodology in order to design innovative and insightful studies that will move the field forward. It is equally apparent that such methodologies will vary according to each focus of study. We have already referred to emic approaches allowing first-hand accounts of ISLL engagement, production data from naturalistic settings and longitudinal data identifying variability within and between activities for a given learner. Considering the fifteen chapters by subsection allows for further suggestions as to which methodological approaches may be most appropriate for different types of study.

2.1 The nature of ISLL

Future directions for research into the theoretical basis of learning through leisure are hinted at in the chapters offered by Dressman, Kusyik and Godwin-Jones. The range of their work, pointing the reader in the directions of anthropology, psycholinguistics and CALL, presents both challenges and opportunities. On the one hand this involves the search for unifying topics of study. On the other, it is also clear that most research into additional language development needs to increasingly consider its prevalence in informal settings, as identities emerge through use of different tools and with differing degrees of awareness.

Dressman's chapter is an appeal to the adoption of ethnographic methodologies in the study of ISLL, on the basis that they need to involve the same four major components as anthropological studies: participant observation, artefact collection and analysis, narrative and thick description and longitudinal case studies. He claims that such tools, along with introspection and "confession" (in the sense of admission of fallibility) should be the privileged instruments of ISLL, allowing researchers to avoid reductionism and foster the emergence of theory.

Godwin-Jones' chapter, through his foray into the technological affordances of Intelligent Personal Assistants (IPAs), claims that investigations into the person/machine relationship for language development can most efficiently be made within the frameworks of ecological SLA, sociomaterialism and complex dynamic systems. The methodologies that he recommends include the examination of both linguistic interactions and the particular dynamics of an interaction with machines (such as the use of voice systems) at varying distances and levels of detail. While recognising that datamining may well be a valuable orientation for future investigations into these areas, he also warns against the ethical questions raised by the indiscriminate collection of various types of online data and suggests that qualitative studies are likely to offer the most enlightening results, by tracing individual learning trajectories, perhaps drawing on retrodictive qualitative modelling (Dornyei 2014). Such an approach would involve identifying prototypical informal learner profiles, selecting an appropriate sampling of each profile, collecting qualitative data (often via interviews) and conducting qualitative analyses of the language learning narratives of these learners, similar to Toffoli's approach herein.

Looking specifically to identify evidence of implicit knowledge when examining the nature of informal learning, Kusyik suggests several methodological approaches. This is relevant due to the absence of classroom contexts in which explicit knowledge may be acquired. Such approaches include focusing on measures of fluency, measuring frequency effects through collocations or formulaic knowledge and employing timed oral grammaticality judgement tests. In order to target implicit learning, Kusyik suggests employing think-aloud protocols and

longitudinal designs, as studies that investigate learning over shorter periods may be inherently biased against implicit learning. Along with other authors in this book, Kusyk too proposes studying the nature of learning in ISLL within a complex and dynamic systems framework, as the constructs examined (awareness, incidental learning, explicit and implicit learning systems, . . .) involve constantly evolving and highly complex variables, sub-systems and systems.

These studies point to opportunities for adopting protocols as yet underrepresented, such as real-time video-recording of ISLL learner activity and think-aloud or stimulated-recall protocols. These would offer insights into not only the nature of ISLL but also individual differences and acquisitional data, which may differ from those available retrospectively through diary studies, interviews and questionnaires.

The matter of the names used to describe ISLL also falls under the remit of theoretical studies. A broad consensus would make ISLL more readily identifiable to other researchers and indicate the maturing of this emerging area. The jingle-jangle phenomenon (Reschly and Christenson 2012) relates to occasions when two terms are used to refer to the same phenomenon (jangle), and those where two phenomena are given the same name (jingle). In the case of ISLL, questions such as whether non-formal learning from purpose-made materials falls within the scope of informal learning, or whether informal, extramural learning and autonomous learning with technology outside the classroom should be taken as synonyms are examples. A key practice in developing and updating research in the informal sphere would be to continue to carry out meta-studies, such as the scoping review produced by Soyoof et al. (2021). A forthcoming series of studies based on a systematic review involving several authors of this book will offer the broadest possible perspectives on this fast-moving field.

2.2 The acquisition studies

While acquisition studies in formal settings seek to obtain data from classroom or even laboratory settings, ISLL acquisition studies aim to measure the process and product of a phenomenon that usually takes place in the L2 user's private sphere. A major challenge in setting up acquisition studies for informal contexts is thus obtaining data from naturalistic settings. This demands creativity from researchers as they are confronted with challenges such as recruiting participants, controlling variables, respecting privacy and facilitating logistics. While convenient sampling has most often been used in ISLL studies, it may be more difficult to recruit participants from under-represented demographics. Control of variables such as activity frequency or content, may change both the relationship to that

activity and possible learning outcomes. Respecting privacy is clearly a key issue since this research involves forays into private habits or relationships that could raise feelings of embarrassment or uneasiness and potentially impact relevant variables. Logistical issues include where, if not in the classroom, data collection should be carried out and how the participants' natural L2 usage timetable can be fully considered.

In the context of studies of pronunciation, many opportunities exist to obtain recordings of learners in naturalistic settings since making and posting video and audio files is a significant aspect of social media use today. Comparing pronunciation characteristics of informal learner productions to those of native speaker corpora would offer such an opportunity in social media contexts. In his contribution on pronunciation in the present volume, Yibokou emphasises the need for both larger-scale studies and for investigating additional segmental (individual sounds) and suprasegmental (intonation, stress) features. In order to grasp a more complete picture of phonological development he also recommends longitudinal studies, which would give a more fine-grained view of participants' informal usage and allow the researcher to more reliably explore associations between variables such as frequency of viewing, pronunciation, engagement or aptitude.

Lyrikkou's chapter on the acquisition of discourse markers (DMs), also underlines the need to expand the number of variables investigated in order to obtain clearer results. She suggests, for example, creating sub-corpora that contain the L2 content that learners use or are exposed to in a leisure context (transcripts of television series, of interactions with friends or voice-recordings from the users themselves). This would allow researchers interested in L2 pragmatics acquired within the informal sphere to better understand DM exposure and usage not only from a quantitative, but also qualitative (functional), perspective.

2.3 Learner activities and strategies

The four chapters relating to learner activities and strategies offer relatively homogenous perspectives on future research methodologies, pointing essentially to the direct observation of learner activities. In a world in which smartphones log our every action, Benson and Cajka et al.'s use of apps to automatically record aspects of informal learning in a study abroad context can be seen as a natural progression from manually logging activities in a diary. Such apps may in return offer learning tips or suggest nearby opportunities for interaction.

It has in the past appeared logical that classroom observation be an essential part of data gathering on learner strategies and activities in a formal context,

however any attempt to spy on the private worlds of informal learners would doubtless result in a significant change in their behaviour. The area of leisure and the guilty pleasures which might fill it seem a difficult context in which to request study participants to allow researchers to log hours spent viewing hair and makeup videos, dating sites or other activities which fall into categories identified by Sundqvist (2019: 101) as “please don’t tell my Dad”. However, as suggested by Schwarz, direct observations of actual practices would offer a useful complement to regular interviews with learners in a longitudinal approach. So Inaba’s view that the activity, as operationalised in activity theory, is a useful unit of informal learning, may lead to a renewed focus on what learners are actually doing in real time.

It is likely that a microscopic approach to informal learning, using technologies such as eye tracking, would, in the past, have required placing learners in laboratory conditions, which again would have hindered access to the activities they may have engaged in naturalistically at home. Perhaps in a world in which the smartphone screen is the predominant mode of access to informal contents and interactions, such a need to know precisely where on the screen the learner is looking is of less importance than logging the more easily accessible swipes and taps which characterise smartphone use.

It is therefore possible that while direct observation of activities may have been rejected as impractical or unwieldy in early ISLL research, learners may be more likely to agree to participate in such studies today. Current projects such as the Lang Track App at Lund University, as well as the work reported on in this volume by Benson and Cajka et al., are valuable steps towards setting up such methodologies and also stress the importance of technological R&D for this type of research. While researchers currently have little experience of such an approach, it is likely that there will be a place for such studies going forward, as part of a range of tools building up the complex picture of learning through leisure.

2.4 Psychological dimensions

The chapters on psychological dimensions study a number of individual differences, including grit and enjoyment (Liu and Lee), teacher beliefs and identity (Zadorozhnyy and Yu) and autonomy, attachment, and L2 competence as aspects of self-determined motivation (Toffoli), yet all evoke similar methodological difficulties and envisage similar methodological perspectives. Investigating perceived contradictions within and among participants and comparing individuals with differing characteristics are all felt to be important avenues of exploration. While

all five of these authors rely on retrodictive protocols, they simultaneously all bemoan the relative (un)reliability of self-report data. Liu and Lee warn that such data, which may be composed of opinions and inaccurate recollections, could affect both the accuracy and reliability of even quantitative studies, such as their own.

Suggestions for offsetting these types of biases involve mixed method data collection and triangulation, such as that attempted by Toffoli in chapter 13, who draws on test scores, grades, questionnaire data from four different instruments targeting different learner variables, learner assertions (in the form of both answers to open questions and logbook entries) and teacher observations. However, while such instruments are useful in approaching individual experiences, all such self-report data, whether verbal or written, are subject to fundamental biases. These are inherent in what Kahneman (2011) refers to as “System 1 thinking”, that which comes to us easily, but is often lacking in precision or logic and can be (un)intentionally manipulated by minute factors, of which the investigators themselves are often unaware. Zadorozhnyy & Yu refer, for example, to Schwarz et al.’s (1991) *availability heuristic*, one of the biases of System 1 thinking.

Another means to offset these biases is to diversify participant demographics, in terms of age or linguistic and cultural backgrounds. In reference to de Mooij and Hofstede (2010), Zadorozhnyy & Yu recommend comparing data collected from societies with different cultural biases. For example, when studying teacher beliefs or beliefs about teachers, this would involve investigating both individualist and collectivist societies, as they suspect that the differently experienced role of teachers as figures of authority in these contexts would significantly influence the other factors examined.

2.5 Engagement studies

The three studies in the subsection entitled *Engagement* offer complementary views of the path ahead for this type of research. Indeed, the presence of a number of studies in this collection taking up engagement as a way of analysing learner practices is in itself an indication of a developing orientation of ISLL research. Arndt’s distinction between cognitive engagement, relating to meaning in informal contents, and linguistic engagement, relating to the form of the language, makes the framework suggested by Philp and Duchesne (2016) easier to apply to informal contexts. Indeed, informal learners are facing the competing demands of both these aspects without explicit external guidance on which dimensions of engagement to prioritise at any given time.

Arndt's conclusion that engagement is highly complex and dynamic is a reminder that, as research methodologies seek to take a more longitudinal view of learner engagement in informal activities, there are many fractal timescales to observe. These include variation within the timeframe of a single activity, variation over a few days and long-term shifts such as those from cognitive, linguistic and behavioural engagement towards affective and social engagement suggested by Sockett. In the shorter timescales, it may be particularly useful to design protocols able to identify under what circumstances linguistic engagement comes in and out of focus as learners either become aware of or choose to put into practice a greater focus on form. The role of focus on form is central to Alm's work on engagement, as the key issue of how to create interfaces between formal and informal is considered. Identifying the promotion of autonomy, competence and relatedness as key aspects of such an interface, Alm also observes that the relationship between engagement types is dynamic, reflecting personal growth rather than merely language acquisition. As such, it is inevitably important to observe the ways in which identities are tied up with engagement in thoughts, feelings and relationships mediated through informal activities.

Methodologically speaking, dynamic engagement studies will therefore require a range of longitudinal approaches which may include real time think-aloud protocols to identify the relationship between linguistic and cognitive engagement, as well as retrodictive studies looking at how contrasting profiles such as those in Alm's study impact present and future engagement in informal practices. How such think-aloud protocols may be put into practice in informal settings is again a difficult question. Possible solutions may include the use of smartphone technologies of the kind suggested in Section 2. They may also be approached from the perspective of looking for examples of form-focused utterances in informal contexts. These may include requests for correction in exchanges between gamers on multiplayer platforms, or longitudinal interviews with those concerned, to review their examples of linguistic engagement.

3 Final words

This book is a testimony to the health of ISLL as an emerging field of research. The inaugural ISLL conference in Oxford in 2018 was followed by a successful symposium at AILA 2021, the contributions to which make up the majority of the chapters of this collection. At the time of writing, a further symposium at AILA 2023 is in preparation, focussing on methodology.

It is worth recalling, in closing, the opportunities and challenges of our area of study. It is a field in which acquisition, technology and anthropology pursue differing if complementary aims. As such it is important for researchers adopting each of these perspectives to see the value of the others for the field as a whole. All avenues of the study of second language learning and teaching now need to include an ISLL focus; indeed, it is difficult to make sense of a learner's limited hours of the formal study of a language without factoring in the limitless varieties of informal exposure.

In many ways, all of the studies included in this volume express the necessity of a comprehensive view of ISLL, while at the same time recognising the difficulty of such a view, given the complex nature of human beings and the fact that their actions and discourses vary in a natural and social world which is itself infinitely complex. We look forward to the next episode in this popular series as creative and enthusiastic researchers continue to expand our understanding of language learning and leisure.

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