

They speak what language to whom?!

Acculturation and language use for communicative domains in bilinguals

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Abstract

This paper investigates the extent of second language (L2) use across four communicative domains in 149 highly educated L2-competent sequential Polish-English bilinguals resident in the UK*. The domains under investigation include: work, household, interest group and peer group. Work and interest group count as public domains, while household, and peer group count as private domains. The independent variables include acculturation level, social network profile, predicted future domicile, and length of residence. The instruments include an online questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The results show that bilinguals who acculturate to a higher level use the L2 more frequently, even in private domains. The findings also suggest that bilinguals who operate in majority L2-speaking social networks, use the L2 more frequently during informal conversations with other L1-speakers at work.

Keywords

Acculturation, communication, bilinguals, domains, L2 use.

1 Introduction

Communicative function of language revolves around information exchange, self-expression, as well as establishing, maintaining and strengthening social relationships with other people

* 12 out of the 149 participants were residing outside the UK (Republic of Ireland, USA, Canada, Australia).

(Scollon, 1995). In the era of international mobility-migration and cultural transition, countless bilinguals find themselves in a position where the L2 replaces the L1 in the majority of professional, social and communicative areas of life (Dewaele, 2015a; Hoffman, 1989). Changes from L1- to L2-speaking contexts cause a significant shift in language use for interactive purposes. Levels of L2 attainment, language dominance, as well as participants and context of interaction, are typically seen as core coordinates in communicative language use (Milroy, 1987; Wei, 1994). Wei points out that ‘language is a social notion; it cannot be defined without reference to its speakers and the context of its use’ (Wei, 2007, p. 12). Research on language preferences show that bilinguals tend to have their favourite language for particular purposes (Dewaele, 2011; Grosjean, 2010). The overall realm of experience can be divided into different domains of life for which bilinguals may use different languages (Schrauf, 2002). According to Grosjean (2016) language use in bilinguals is said to be domain-specific, and some domains might attract higher levels of L2 than others. The mosaic of linguistic complementarity will depend on the individual history and language preferences of the speaker (Dewaele, 2010; Grosjean, 2010).

Communicative domains of language use are characterised by different levels of formality and intimacy, and can be divided into public and private domains (Côté and Clement, 1994). From a social point of view, domains can also be defined as ‘institutionally relevant spheres of social interaction in which certain value clusters are behaviourally implemented’ (Fishman, 1971, p. 17). Professional spheres of interaction often require specific languages and even jargon to be used, not only for pure communicative purposes, but also to show belonging and unity with co-workers. Interaction in the domain of work has been linked to acculturation dynamics and professional progression (Komisarof, 2016). In the era of increased mobility-migration, globalisation, and late modernity, language use is closely linked with processes of sociocultural integration and identity-formation (Blackledge et al., 2008; Preece, 2016a, 2016b;

Regan et al., 2016). Languages used to communicate with others are social manifestations of cultural identity and belonging (Joseph, 2004). The act of communicative language use is inherently connected with the sociocultural context and Fishman's (1965) question of 'who speaks what language, to whom, when, how, and why?' still requires further explorations (Spolsky, 2005, p. 254). Dewaele (2015b) calls for more research into the sociocultural aspects of language use.

The aim of this paper is to undertake a comparative investigation of the extent of L2 use in communicative domains, and analyse it against variables associated with L2 performance and international mobility-migration, including acculturation level, social network profile, predicted future domicile, and length of residence. The communicative domains of language use investigated in this paper include work, interest group, household, and peer group. Domain of work explores the extent of L2 use in a workplace; domain of interest group explores the extent of L2 use during externally organised voluntary educational or leisure group activities; domain of household explores the extent of L2 use at home; and domain of peer group explores the extent of L2 use within informal social gatherings with friends and acquaintances.

2 Literature review

2.1 Communicative language use and acculturation

Large-scale studies showed that bilinguals tend to have linguistic preferences when expressing particular types of content, or when communicating with particular groups of interlocutors, for example work colleagues and friends (Dewaele, 2010). Patterns of language use for communicative purposes are connected with sociolinguistic aspects of mobility-migration, and integration (Debaene and Harris, 2013; Kim, 2000; Regan, 2013). Integration is one of the

outcomes of acculturation, where the latter is defined as ‘those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups’ (Redfield et al., 1936, p. 149). Acculturation is said to be one of the strongest causal variables in SLA (Schumann, 1986). Empirical evidence suggests strong links between acculturation and linguistic performance, for acculturation levels were found to be tightly linked to proficiency levels in sequential bilinguals residing in L2-contexts (Hammer and Dewaele, 2015). Language practices across multiple domains of life, including communication styles, language use, and language preferences, reflect individual choices made with respect to the acquisition of the new culture, and maintenance (or shedding) of the old culture (Zane and Mak, 2003). According to Berry (1997), choices made by the individual result in the adoption of one of the four acculturation strategies, namely assimilation, integration, separation or marginalisation. Assimilation is understood as the outcome characterised by a significant shift towards the new culture, with a minimal level of old culture participation (Berry, 1997). Integration is defined as ‘merging one’s life and being functional in several domains of two cultural worlds’ (Boski, 2008, p. 143) and is understood as integrating the new and the old cultures together (Berry, 1997; van de Vijver and Phalet, 2004). Separation refers to heritage culture maintenance, and rejection of the host culture, the social consequence of which is referred to as segregation (Berry, 1997). Marginalisation refers to the rejection of the heritage culture with a simultaneous failure to adjust to the new culture, which may have psychopathological consequences (Devarenne-Megas, 2003; Tousignant, 1992).

Rates of acquisition, frequency of L1/L2 use, and linguistic preferences are linked to, and reflect, the acculturation process and its outcome, as well as provide clues to the individual becoming a member of the target culture (Acton and Walker de Felix, 1986). Brown (1986) points out that ‘the process of acculturation runs even deeper when language is brought into

the picture (...) culture is a deeply ingrained part of the very fiber of our being, but language – the means for communication among members of a culture – is the most visible and available expression of that culture’ (Brown, 1986, p. 34). Language use for communicative function is linked with the context of language use, as well as issues of identity, and speech community membership (Cashman 2005; Gumperz 1982a, 1982b; Wei 1994, 2007). Development of new social networks in the host country is linked to the level of sociocultural integration, and may contribute to the acculturation outcome. Individuals either seek to communicate and connect with members of L1-speaking social networks, which results in formation of ethnic minority communities, or they adopt an approach independent of L1-oriented, co-national affiliation (Chiswick and Miller, 2005; Noels, 2014). Regan and Nestor (2010) found that linguistic practices of sequential Polish-French bilinguals in France were indicative of other sociocultural aspects of integration, as well as the extent of L2 socialisation. L1 was found to be mostly used in private settings and when communicating with relatives, but it was not the preferred language choice when addressing other Polish-French bilinguals in public situations (Regan and Nestor, 2010). Processes of acculturation and sociocultural integration, marked by patterns of language use and language choice, are core aspects in the development of linguistic identity.

Group membership in adulthood, referred to as *a posteriori*, is said to depend on individual decisions and attitudes, rather than to be determined organically, referred to as *a priori* (Dittmar, 1989). One’s social network profile can change over time, as length of residence in the host country increases, which does not make it a fixed-value variable, though in some cases it can remain fixed-value. Group membership is a core notion in acculturation research, as it impacts one’s communicative behaviour, in attempt to fulfil the expectations and membership obligations of the group (Noels, 2013; Noels et al., 1996; Noels and Clément, 1996). Behaviours which are not congruent with the group may be detrimental to the individual’s position in the group. Language use within social networks is a recognised marker

of group membership, and language preferences may be used to communicate social proximity or distance in relation to other individuals or groups (Giles, 1977; Noels, 2014, 2013). It is through discourse and language practices that individuals can either alienate or affiliate themselves in relation to other speakers, manifesting their identity which is said to be largely a discursive phenomenon (McAvoy, 2016; Zotzmann and O'Regan, 2016). Language use is also a powerful tool for conveying and establishing sociocultural knowledge, and it is central in the processes of both communication and socialisation (Ochs, 1986). Language is an emotional bond which ensures group recognition, marks group boundaries, and demonstrates group identity. The use of language which is associated with a given group, marks one's belonging to that group, as language is 'the supreme symbol system [that] quintessentially symbolises its users and distinguishes between them and others' (Fishman, 1989, p. 217). Such differentiation, and perceived affiliation, may potentially be a trigger for stereotype formation, where the latter could elicit more or less positive behavioural and affective responses from others (Cuddy et al., 2008). In terms of language use, increased levels of affiliation with the host group are likely to translate into increased frequency of L2 use, which helps neutralise psychological distance, and helps develop positive attitude between the L2 user and speakers of the dominant language.

L2-oriented social networks are seen as a powerful source of communication opportunities in the target language, enabling cultural exchange at the same time. Studies by Kinginger (2008, 2004) and Kinginger and Blattner (2008) provided empirical evidence that extensive communication in the target language can significantly raise levels of sociolinguistic and sociocultural competence in L2 learners. Participation in L2-speaking social groups and active use of L2, accelerated both linguistic and personal development. Frequent use of L2 for communicative purposes is the means by which speakers not only exchange information, but also connect and express their identities and loyalties (Kramsch, 2006). Multiple studies also revealed that bilinguals who use the L2 extensively have higher self-perceived levels of

communicative competence in the L2, with simultaneous low levels of communicative anxiety (Dewaele et al., 2008).

2.2 Communicative domains of language use

According to the Complementarity Principle (CP) proposed by Grosjean (2010, 1997) bilinguals tend to use their languages in domain-specific environments, which can often be reflected in their language choice patterns for communicative purposes. Research shows that some domains of life may be covered by one language, others by the other language, while some domains may be covered by both languages (Schrauf, 2002). Grosjean (2016) maintains that investigating language use in bilinguals, including measuring language dominance, should employ the CP into the operationalisation process. Domain-specific categorisation and highly-modular approach can enable researchers to gain insight into language-use-related phenomena.

Schrauf (2009) studied 60 Spanish-English bilinguals who, as young adults, relocated from Puerto Rico to the mainland US. He investigated language use within social and private domains, and in relation to the levels of biculturalism and L2 proficiency. Social and communicative domains included workmates, family, in-laws, spouse, children, neighbours, and friends. The findings revealed that participants tended to use the L2 more frequently in social domains, compared to private ones. The L2 was used extensively when communicating with workmates, while lower levels of L2 were recorded for communication with friends and acquaintances. The L1 was found to be used primarily in intimate social and family domains, however this pattern was said to be prone to change, especially when bringing up children in the host country (Schrauf, 2009).

Hlavac (2013) studied language use of eight multilingual immigrants to Australia, who arrived between 1950 and 1975, 1970 and 1990, and finally 1990 to 2005. The aim of the study was to investigate domain-specific patterns of L1 and L2 use among the participants, as well

as identify potential differences in patterns of language use between the three migration waves. Domains taken into consideration in the study comprised intimate, close and more distant friendships, neighbourhood, workmates, school and schoolmates, leisure activities and religion-based contacts. Participants' level of proficiency in the L2 was not accounted for, however their general functional ability to use the L2 in a particular situation was accepted as sufficient basis to undertake the analyses. Results indicated that languages used with family members generally reflected the ethnicity of the family members, as well as socio-political circumstances which could influence language use within families. None of the eight participants was found to shift to the L2 as the dominant language when speaking to their children. The domain of friendship would include multilingual networks and multilingual communications as a result. Choice of a partner was said to create further linguistic associations and contacts, either within the L1- or within the L2-speaking community. L2 dominant domains were found to include work, school, and neighbourhood. Extensive L2 use was reported to happen mainly on the basis of friendships and work relationships. Hlavac's (2013) findings coincided with those by Stoessel (2002) who found that domains linked to education and professional activities generally facilitate high frequency of L2 use.

Crezee (2012) conducted a study of language use in 30 Dutch-English bilinguals who migrated to Australia between the ages of 18 and 35. Respondents were indefinite residents in Australia and were interviewed by the researcher after over thirty years following migration. The aim of the interviews and questionnaires was to retrospectively investigate the participants' motivation to either maintain the use of L1, or to shift towards L2 at home. Results showed that 70% of respondents would use Dutch either all, or most of the time when at home, which coincided with Fishman (1971), who found that L1 tends to be used in private domains, such as household, family, and friends. Crezee (2012) concluded, however, that language use at

home could change with time and length of residence, especially when second-generation children went to school, which confirms earlier findings by Schrauf (2009).

Length of residence is a temporal mobility-oriented variable understood to be linked to linguistic achievement and performance (Bialystok, 1997). Greater length of residence is associated with enhanced L2 performance, and could be linked with increased frequency of L2 use for communicative purposes. Bilinguals with greater length of residence in the host country are said to be more ready to use the L2 more extensively than those with shorter length of residence, which can affect their language dominance in the long run (Magiste, 1979). Greater length of residence is also linked to processes of 're-naming the world', namely, cognitive restructuring in bilinguals (Pavlenko, 2011, p. 199). Also the pre-planned future of the L2 user is said to be linked to language performance. According to Schumann (1976) permanent domicile in the host country is associated with higher levels of L2 performance, for the use of L2 is supported by motivation of a more integrative character (Gardner and Lambert, 1972).

3 Methodology

3.1 Research questions

Two research questions have been formulated to investigate L2 use in communicative domains including work, interest group, household, and peer group:

- (1) To what extent do sequential bilinguals use the L2 in different communicative domains following migration?
- (2) What are sources of variation?

3.2 Participants

Participants in this study included 149 well-educated young adult L2-competent sequential Polish-English bilinguals. Over a half of the respondents held a MA qualification (58.4%), over a quarter held a BA qualification (26.2%), ten percent of the participants were Doctors of Philosophy (10.1%), with the remaining respondents being College graduates (5.3%). Participants relocated to the UK in early adulthood, at the average age of 23, with the range stretching from 18 to 41 years old (Mean = 23.6, SD = 3.8); 128 participants had relocated by the age of 26, and the average length of residence was eight years. Current average age was 31, within the range of 23 to 45 (Mean = 31.1, SD = 4.7). Respondents were competent L2 users, and according to Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), 45.6% were proficient, 38.3% native-like, and 16.1% were independent users of English (Council of Europe, 2011). Average age of acquisition (AoA) was 12 years of age, with three years old being the lowest AoA recorded (Mean = 12.3 years, SD = 4.6). More than a half of the respondents began L2 acquisition before 13 years of age. Females accounted for 86% of the participants, with the 14% being male, which confirmed previous gender distribution in applied linguistics questionnaires (Wilson and Dewaele, 2010).

3.3 Procedure

The study applied quantitative and qualitative methods which combined numerical quantification with personal experience (Dewaele, 2015b; Dörnyei, 2007; Wei and Moyer, 2009).

The respondents completed an online questionnaire which included closed- and open-ended questions (Hammer, 2012). Language use data were elicited using a table of language use which employed the Complementarity Principle in the operationalisation process by measuring the frequency of L1/L2 use across different domains of life. The table listed a total

of 20 domains of language use, and the communicative domains analysed in this paper include: workplace/daytime study, interest group (course/regular activity), household and peer group (main group of friends) (Hammer, 2012). Domains of work and interest group are classified as public domains, while household and peer group are classified as private domains. The communicative domains in this paper focus on language use in groups, as opposed to single individuals such as nuclear family members or life partners (Dewaele, 2010; Dewaele and Pavlenko, 2001). As part of the table, information for language use in communicative domains was elicited by means of four drop-down menus attached to each of the four domains, using a 5-point Likert scale; the measures included: (1) Polish, (2) Mainly Polish, (3) Equally Polish and English, (4) Mainly English, (5) English. The participants were asked to think of how they use their two languages and to select one of the available options for each domain. Five-point Likert scale domain-specific self-reporting was previously empirically validated by Schrauf (2014). Internal consistency reliability for language use scores across all domains listed in the table was confirmed by calculating Cronbach alpha score which equalled = .88. A series of one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests revealed that the scores for language use across all domains are not normally distributed (Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z values vary between 1.9 and 6.5, all $p < .0001$); therefore a non-parametric equivalent of a one-way ANOVA was used.

Other closed-ended Likert scale questions in the questionnaire elicited key sociocultural variables including acculturation level, social network profile, and predicted future domicile. Acculturation level scores were validated by means of correlations with other variables, namely, social network profile ($r_s = .454^{**}$; $p < .0001$); predicted future domicile ($r_s = .279^{**}$; $p < .001$); L2 dominance ($r_s = .450^{**}$; $p < .0001$), and length of residence ($r_s = .264^{**}$; $p < .001$). Social network analysis adopted an anthropological approach, in that it investigated participants' personal network (Daming et al., 2009). The open-ended questions collected

biographical information including age at migration, current age, as well as the experience of a linguistic transition.

The semi-structured interviews followed online data collection. Fourteen participants were interviewed in English as part of qualitative data collection. During the interviews, the participants were asked a number of questions about their communicative language use, some of which included: (1) ‘Has the frequency of the use of Polish and English changed since you relocated? Could you describe this process?’; (2) ‘Do you think that the number of English speakers in your social network has an influence on your overall use of English across different areas of life? Could you elaborate on this?’. The interviewees were presented with a visual aid listing the four communicative domains analysed in this paper, and were asked the following question: (3) ‘Do you have any interesting observations on your change in the use of Polish and English in those areas of life?’. The emic data were categorised with respect to the themes they represented. The extracts quoted in this paper illustrate patterns of experience which were particularly resonant and informative (Smith, 2011; Straub, 2006).

4 Results

4.1 Frequency of L2 use in communicative domains

Across all participants, the highest L2 use scores were recorded for the domain of work (4.6), followed by interest group (4.2), household (3.4), and peer group (3.3), respectively. Figure 1 presents frequency of L2 use in communicative domains.

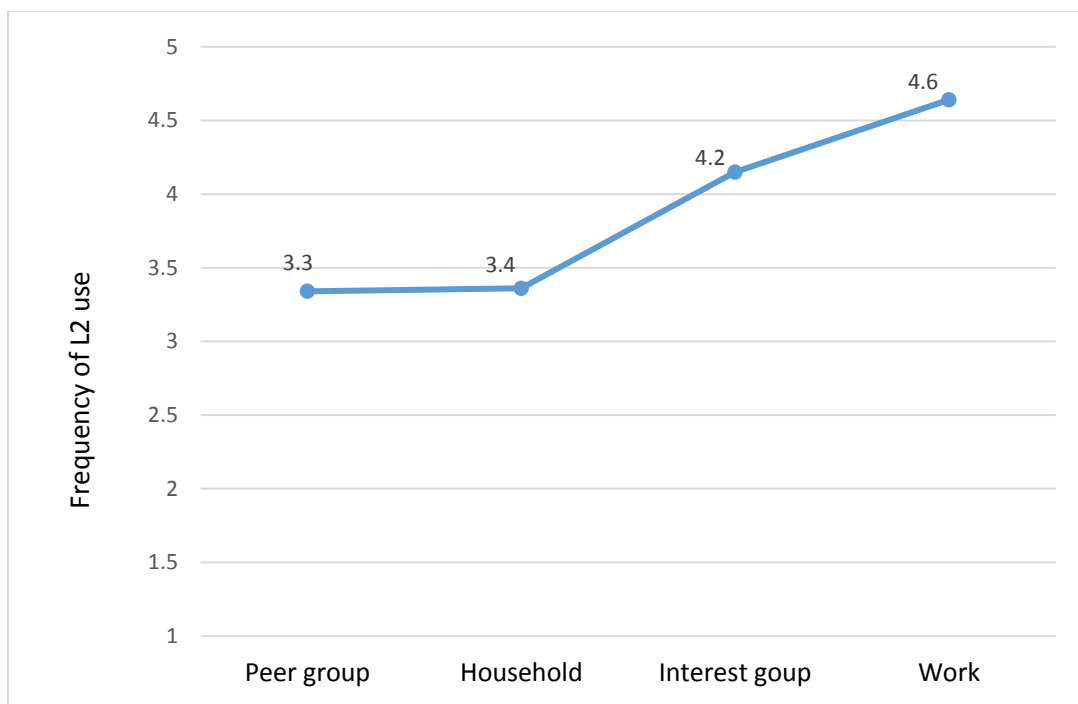


Figure 1. Frequency of L2 use in communicative domains.

4.2 Acculturation level and frequency of L2 use in communicative domains

4.2.1 Domain of work

A series of Kruskal-Wallis tests showed no significant effect of acculturation level on frequency of L2 use in domain of work ($\chi^2 = 2.0$, $p = .570$) with a mean rank of 75.6 for the slightly acculturated group, 75.0 for the moderately acculturated group, 71.4 for the highly acculturated group, and 80.7 for the completely acculturated group.

4.2.2 Domain of interest group

A Kruskal-Wallis test showed that there is a significant effect of acculturation level on frequency of L2 use in domain of interest group ($\chi^2 = 24.0$, $p < .0001$) with a mean rank of 34.4 for the slightly acculturated group, 65.1 for the moderately acculturated group, 70.5 for the highly acculturated group, and 97.4 for the completely acculturated group.

4.2.3 Domain of household

A Kruskal-Wallis test showed that there is a significant effect of acculturation level on frequency of L2 use in domain of household ($\chi^2 = 20.6$, $p < .0001$) with a mean rank of 36.2 for the slightly acculturated group, 58.1 for the moderately acculturated group, 75.7 for the highly acculturated group, and 93.7 for the completely acculturated group.

4.2.4 Domain of peer group

A Kruskal-Wallis test showed that there is a significant effect of acculturation level on frequency of L2 use in domain of peer group ($\chi^2 = 36.7$, $p < .0001$) with a mean rank of 24.3 for the slightly acculturated group, 49.3 for the moderately acculturated group, 78.6 for the highly acculturated group and 97.8 for the completely acculturated group.

4.2.5 Synthesis of acculturation level and frequency of L2 use in communicative domains

The results showed that higher acculturation levels were tightly linked to higher levels of frequency of L2 use in domains of interest group, household and peer group, but not in the domain of work. Figure 2 below presents a comparative illustration of the effect of acculturation level on frequency of L2 use in communicative domains.

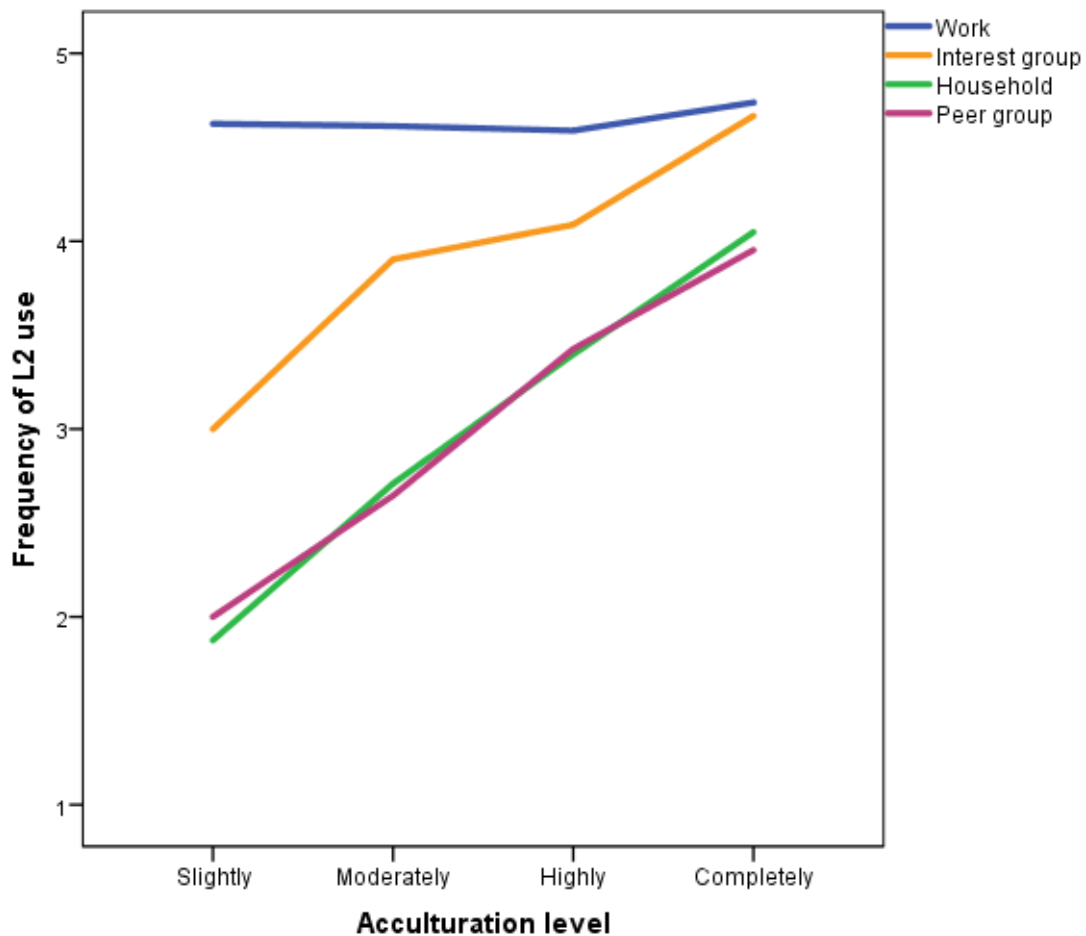


Figure 2. Acculturation level and frequency of L2 use in communicative domains.

4.3 Social network profile and frequency of L2 use in communicative domains

4.3.1 Domain of work

A Kruskal-Wallis test showed a significant effect of social network profile on frequency of L2 use in domain of work ($\chi^2 = 13.0$, $p = .001$) with a mean rank of 54.58 for the majority Polish-speaking social network, 70.04 for the equally Polish and English-speaking social network, and 83.78 for the majority English-speaking social network.

4.3.2 Domain of interest group

A Kruskal-Wallis test showed that there is a significant effect of social network profile on frequency of L2 use in domain of interest group ($\chi^2 = 33.4$, $p < .0001$) with a mean rank of 50.8 for the majority Polish-speaking social network, 58.0 for the equally Polish and English-speaking social network, and 94.0 for the majority English-speaking social network.

4.3.3 Domain of household

A Kruskal-Wallis test showed that there is a significant effect of social network profile on frequency of L2 use in domain of household ($\chi^2 = 30.9$, $p < .0001$) with a mean rank of 42.5 for the majority Polish-speaking social network, 61.7 for the equally Polish and English-speaking social network, and 93.2 for the majority English-speaking social network.

4.3.4 Domain of peer group

A Kruskal-Wallis test showed that there is a significant effect of social network profile on frequency of L2 use in domain of peer group ($\chi^2 = 61.7$, $p < .0001$) with a mean rank of 24.2 for the majority Polish-speaking social network, 58.8 for the equally Polish and English-speaking social network, and 99.9 for the majority English-speaking social network.

4.3.5 Synthesis of social network profile and frequency of L2 use in communicative domains

The results showed that social network profile is tightly linked to higher levels of frequency of L2 use in domains of work, interest group, household, and peer group. Majority L2-speaking social networks were linked to higher levels of frequency of L2 use across all domains. Figure

3 below presents a comparative illustration of the effect of social network profile on frequency of L2 use in communicative domains.

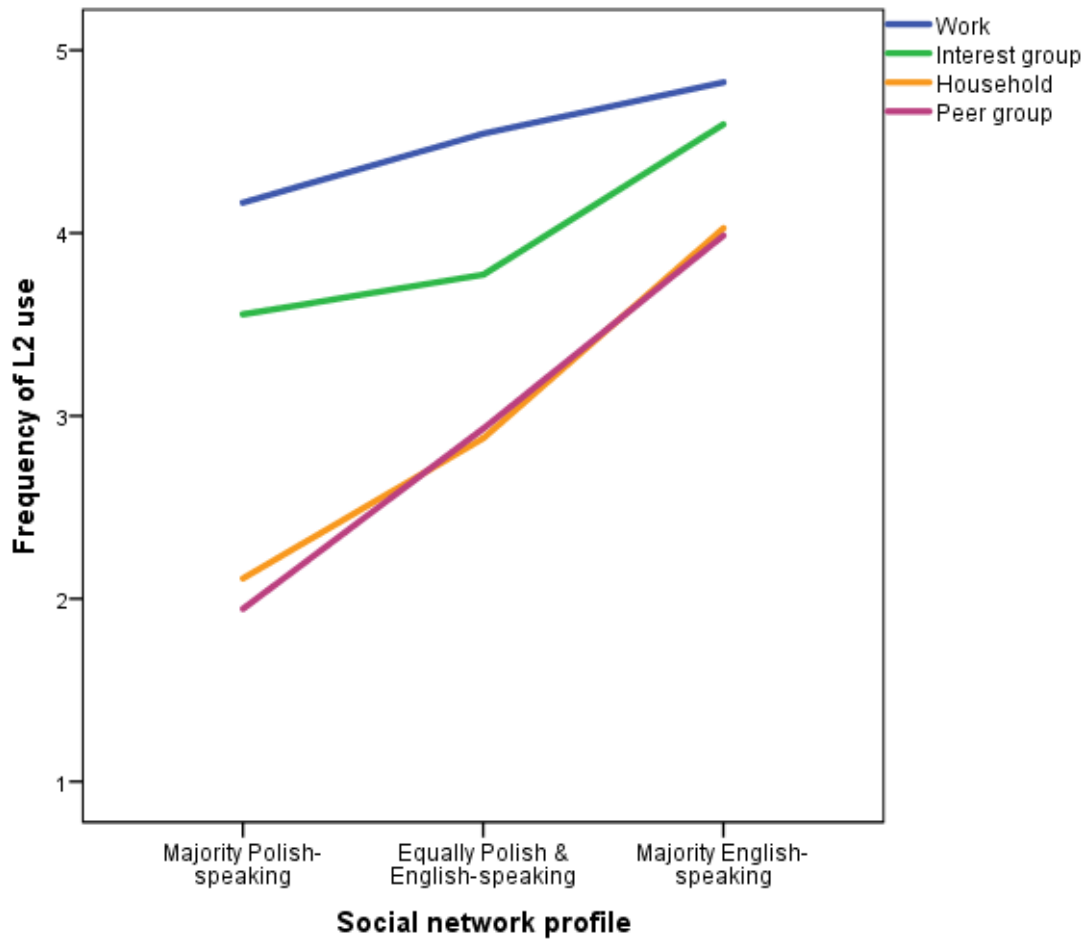


Figure 3. Social network profile and frequency of L2 use in communicative domains.

4.4 Predicted future domicile and L2 use in communicative domains

4.4.1 Domain of work

A series of Kruskal-Wallis tests showed no significant effect of predicted future domicile on frequency of L2 use in domain of work ($\chi^2 = .424$, $p = .809$) with a mean rank of 73.3 for the intention to stay in the L2-speaking country indefinitely, 77.0 for being unsure about predicted

future domicile, and 76.5 for the intention to leave the L2-speaking country at one point in the future.

4.4.2 Domain of interest group

A series of Kruskal-Wallis test showed no significant effect of predicted future domicile on frequency of L2 use in domain of interest group ($\chi^2 = 3.2$, $p = .199$) with a mean rank of 76.4 for the intention to stay in the L2-speaking country indefinitely, 77.2 for being unsure about predicted future domicile, and 55.1 for the intention to leave the L2-speaking country at one point in the future.

4.4.3 Domain of household

A series of Kruskal-Wallis test showed no significant effect of predicted future domicile on frequency of L2 use in domain of household ($\chi^2 = 3.2$, $p = .206$) with a mean rank of 77.4 for the intention to stay in the L2-speaking country indefinitely, 75.9 for being unsure about predicted future domicile, and 54.7 for the intention to leave the L2-speaking country at one point in the future.

4.4.4 Domain of peer group

A series of Kruskal-Wallis test showed no significant effect of predicted future domicile on frequency of L2 use in domain of peer group ($\chi^2 = 5.235$, $p = .073$) with a mean rank of 76.6 for the intention to stay in the L2-speaking country indefinitely, 78.3 for being unsure about predicted future domicile, and 48.8 for the intention to leave the L2-speaking country at one point in the future.

4.4.5 Synthesis of predicted future domicile and frequency of L2 use in communicative domains

A series of Kruskal-Wallis tests, based on three categories of predicted future domicile including (1) residing outside the UK, (2) the undecided group, and (3) remaining in the UK indefinitely, did not yield significant links between predicted future domicile and frequency of L2 use in communicative domains. An observable difference was however noted between participant planning to remain indefinitely, and participants definitely planning to leave, whose levels of L2 use were noticeably different in domains of interest group, household, and peer group, but not in the domain of work, as presented in Figure 4 below.

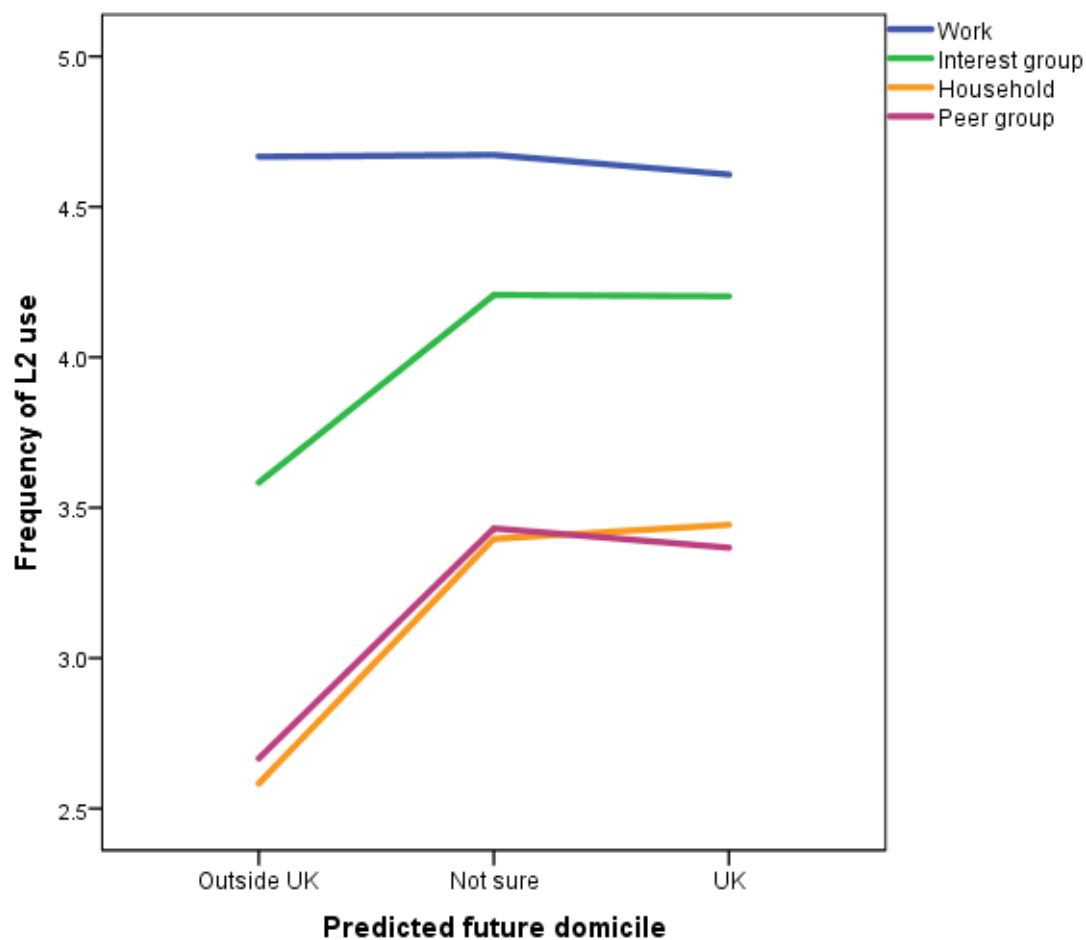


Figure 4. Predicted future domicile and frequency of L2 use in communicative domains.

4.5 Length of residence and frequency of L2 use in communicative domains

A series of Kruskal-Wallis tests showed no significant effects of length of residence on frequency of L2 use in communicative domains including: work, interest group, household, and peer group. The results are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Length of residence and frequency of L2 use in communicative domains.

Variable	Statistic	Domain				
		Work	Interest group	Household	Peer group	
Length of residence	χ^2	.532	1.4	.844	.810	
	p	.767	.494	.656	.667	
	Mean ranks (Kruskal-Wallis)	under 5 years	71.7	71.7	75.6	77.6
		between 5 and 10 years	76.3	74.1	72.9	72.5
10 years +		75.6	83.6	81.7	79.9	

4.6 Qualitative illustrations:

The qualitative feedback obtained by means of interviews and open questions confirmed the statistical patterns. A selection of the most interesting and illustrative examples is presented below:

MI6 (highly acculturated) reported changes in language use across a few communicative domains of her life following relocation:

'All my interest groups and peer groups are in English. And household if we count family that is back home and friends that are here, then it's in Polish. Since relocation the interest group and peer group – that has changed. It used to be all in Polish and now it's almost all in English. Household is the same.'

MI7 (highly acculturated) reported having a higher level of professional competence in L2 which she attributes to her L2-based professional experience in life in general, following university education in Poland:

'I wouldn't be able to use Polish for professional purposes, I wouldn't be able to hold a successful interview in Polish, it's really interesting because even I remember... I left Poland straight after uni anyway, so it's not that I had a massive opportunity to practice that, but I remember having a couple of interviews [in Polish], and I remember one interview in Poland and it was atrocious...'

MI5 (completely acculturated) draws a parallel between professional experience in general and language use which is attached to that experience:

'It's like with work, I can't explain what I do in my work in Polish because I don't even know how to say VAT invoice properly, or at least the professional jargon because I never used it, so I find it hard, it's just based on experience, because I never did that [in Polish], I've never done it in my own language.'

N56 (highly acculturated) shared a similar sentiment by accentuating a strong link between language use and life experience in general, which dictates her language choices:

'I learnt words/expressions/phrases for situations I had not experienced in Polish before moving here, so there are actually areas of public life that I feel more fluent in English rather than Polish!'

MI5 (completely acculturated) reported noticing that her L1 communicative competence in informal settings is compromised by her predominant use of L2:

'When I went out towards the group and there were some colleagues and stuff and I tried to say something clever, and I went [mumbling on purpose-humorous], because switching to Polish and trying to say things fast it's like... I can't, it just comes out funny, or not the right way, or sort of, really words that just don't go together, like, I'm being aware that this is not nice Polish. When you're trying to... you know... [speak fast and clever] it kind of comes out funny. So I probably feel a bit awkward. And sort of get a bit frustrated.'

MI9 (moderately acculturated) recognised that she feels competent in L2 for professional purposes yet she chooses L1 for social purposes:

'Work has been affected first and moving here meant switching to another language and there was no mercy, in my previous job I couldn't speak Polish to my colleagues because there was a very strict policy, English only... I spend most of my day speaking English but then I do have a lot of Polish friends so weekends I think it's 60/70% speaking Polish and then the remaining time is in English; weekdays I'd say that the ratio is opposite. I would say [there is a weekly pattern] because my closest friends are Polish, living in London; and at work I have a colleague with whom whenever possible we speak in Polish... Polish is still a huge part of my communication here... But when it comes to writing official emails, if I receive an email at

work and it's in English and I have to reply - ten minutes and I'm done, because I'm just so used to replying to official emails in English, and then in comes an email from a Polish speaker who recognised my name and felt like emailing me in Polish – I would be just sitting there and thinking what words to use, because it's just so rusty writing official emails, it does require a skill, so I do have this skill in English since I work in English, but in Polish, I know how to do it, of course I do, but it's still a little bit... requires practice.'

N173 (highly acculturated) reported that L1 is used as a private language:

'Polish is my strictly private language - family and close friends from Poland.'

N116 (highly acculturated) shared a similar sentiment:

'Yep, [they] definitely have different roles. I use Polish as a sort of private language. Sometimes I have not got any chance to speak Polish (although I read Polish papers) so when I finally have a chance to speak it is usually with my old friends and is sort of a treat after functioning mainly in English-speaking mode.'

5 Discussion

The results showed that the extent of L2 use across all participants varies between domains. The highest level of L2 use in all participants was recorded, in decreasing order, in domains of work, interest group, household, and peer group. Statistically significant sources of variation

in levels of L2 use between participants, were found in acculturation level, and social network profile.

The findings revealed that acculturation level had a significant effect on frequency of L2 use in domains of interest group, household and peer group, but not in the domain of work. All participants in the study, irrespective of acculturation level, were found to use the L2 at a comparable, high frequency level in the domain of work. This professional domain is one with least degree of linguistic flexibility, as language use is likely to be the language of the host group; however this will also depend on the profession, and team dynamics. An interesting picture of duality was observed when a couple of moderately acculturated interviewees said that they normally think in L1 and that L1 is their dominant language, yet they would find it impossible to function in L1 professionally. This indicates that the two languages were attached to two different competencies in those bilinguals, one professional and attached to L2, and the other one social and attached to L1. Effects of acculturation level were found in cases of the remaining communicative domains. The domain of interest group was found to have the second highest frequency of L2 use across all levels of acculturation. A monotonic increase in frequency of L2 use was observed, proportionally to the increase in acculturation levels. In other words, participants acculturated to a higher level, used more L2 in domain of interest group. A similar scenario was observed for domains of household and peer group, which recorded very similar frequencies of L2 use when compared to each other, but lower in comparison to domain of interest group. A stable, proportional to acculturation level, monotonic increase in frequency of L2 use was noted for the domains of household and peer group. In other words, participants acculturated to a higher level were found to use more L2 in domains of household and peer group.

No differentiation in the frequency of L2 use in domain of work links with previous research which showed that language use for communicative purposes is tightly linked with

the context of language use (Gumperz, 1982a; Wei, 1994). The professional context of language use did not allow for the effects of acculturation to be shown in that particular domain. In particular, the qualitative data showed that professional skills acquired in L2 become automatic, and translating them into L1 proves to be a challenge due to lack of L1-based experience in that domain of life (unless the speaker is a professional interpreter in which case translating content is their professional skill). Hence the L2 would be the dominant language for professional purposes across all acculturation levels, for L2 was the language in which professional skills were learnt and developed, which is particularly relevant for young adults who are the focus in this study.

The situation was however different for all other communicative domains. Participants acculturated to higher degrees were found to use the L2 significantly more frequently in all three remaining domains. The domain of interest group noted a higher level of frequency of L2 use than domains of household and peer group, which can be linked to a more instructed character of an interest group, as opposed to a peer group. Language use in an interest group is a factor likely to be beyond the speaker's control; therefore, the proportional frequency of L2 use to acculturation levels indicates that highly acculturated bilinguals join interest groups where more English L2 is spoken, while less acculturated bilinguals perhaps join more linguistically balanced, or L1-oriented groups, despite being competent L2 users. This links with work by Chiswick and Miller (2005) and Noels (2014), and provides empirical evidence that frequency of L2 use is tightly linked with the preferred *a posteriori* social networks (Dittmar, 1989). The results also confirm work by Fishman (1971), Stoessel (2002), Crezee (2012), Schrauf (2009) and Hlavac (2013) in that the lowest frequencies of L2 use are recorded in social and intimate domains, as opposed to professional or educational contexts. The findings also link directly with Regan and Nestor (2010) in that for highly acculturated bilinguals with extensive L2-speaking social networks, L1 is mostly used in private, and that it is treated almost

like a private language. Such linguistic complementarity could of course be subject to possible changes depending on choices of life partners, departure of L1-speaking relatives, or the arrival of children, which could further impact language use of all speakers in domain of household (Dewaele, 2000; Wei and Hua, 2005).

The findings also revealed that social network profile, the core constituent of the acculturative process, was tightly linked to the extent of L2 use in all communicative domains. A monotonic increase in frequency of L2 use was noted in domains of work and interest group, followed by household and peer group, at a comparable level. Participants with majority L2-speaking social networks used significantly more L2 in all four domains, when compared to those whose social networks were mixed, or predominantly L1-oriented. L2 use in the professional domain of work showed to be linked to social network profile, as opposed to previously discussed acculturation level. While L2 use is prevalent in domain of work regardless of acculturation levels of employees, social network profile is likely to impact perhaps a more social aspect of work, such as the proverbial *water cooler chit-chat*, where language choice for communicative purposes will be guided not only by the interlocutor and their linguistic portfolio, but also the identity and language preferences of the speaker. Interview data also revealed that participants whose social networks were predominantly L2-speaking use their L1 mainly via a medium, such as in emails, internet forums, and when talking to relatives and friends over the telephone. This connects with Hlavac (2013) who concluded that languages used less frequently tend to be used by means of a medium. Some of the participants revealed that for this reason Polish became their private language, rather than the language they use socially.

No links were established between predicted future domicile and frequency of L2 use in communicative domains. No difference was observed between participants who planned to remain in the UK indefinitely, and those who were not yet sure of their future domicile. It

should be noted, however, that despite the lack of significant results for the three categories of domicile, an observable difference in frequency of L2 use was recorded between participants who planned to remain in the UK indefinitely, and those who categorically did not.

No links were established between frequency of L2 use in communicative domains and length of residence. The sample consisted of young adults who relocated and underwent processes of acculturation at an average age of 23, with an average length of residence of eight years, and the character of the sample perhaps did not offer enough variation in this area to yield any significant results. It should be stressed however that a strong positive correlation was found between acculturation level and length of residence during acculturation level validation tests.

The present study adds an acculturation perspective, and shows that acculturation level, as well as social network profile, have an effect on levels of L2 use even in private domains. Participants acculturated to a high degree were found to use the L2 significantly more outside of work and the instructed setting of interest group, which links with previous integration-oriented studies by Debaene and Harris (2013), Kim (2000) and Regan (2013). It also links with research on language and identity in the context of mobility-migration (Preece 2016b; Regan, Diskin, and Martyn 2016). Evidence presented in this paper also confirms the effectiveness and importance of employing the CP while investigating patterns of language use in bilinguals (Grosjean, 2010).

6 Conclusion

This study provides empirical evidence that acculturation level and one of its core constituents, social network profile, are key variables linked to the frequency of L2 use in communicative domains. The highest level of L2 use, across all participants, was recorded for the domain of

work, followed by interest group, household, then peer group, in decreasing order of frequency of use. Completely and highly acculturated bilinguals were found to use significantly more L2 in domains of interest group, household, and peer group. The domain of work was found to be static and not affected by sociocultural effects in general; however, participants with predominantly L2-speaking social networks were found to be using significantly more L2 in the workplace, presumably in their spare time. There was no significant difference between frequency of L2 use in participants who planned to stay in the UK indefinitely and those who were undecided; however, an observable difference was noted between those who planned to remain indefinitely, and those who explicitly did not. The present study confirms that L1 use in bilinguals resident in L2-speaking contexts is (a) associated more with private domains as opposed to public domains, and (b) associated more with lower levels of acculturation and balanced and L1-oriented social networks. High acculturation levels and majority L2-speaking social networks were found to be associated with high frequency of L2 use even in private domains, including household, and peer group. Finally, levels of L2 use across communicative domains were found to be in direct proportion to acculturation and social network profile.

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