WHEN OLDER ADULTS USE MOODLE TO LEARN LANGUAGES…

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Abstract

This thesis deals with the underexplored intersection of digital language learning and older adult learners. It is framed within a sociocultural perspective and considers the three dimensions of learning: cognitive, affective and social.

The central argument of this thesis is that older adult language learners can benefit from using Moodle as a social learning space that gives them the chance to engage in a community of practice. Moodle also provides pedagogical support, enabling learners to develop their knowledge and skills and use the target language to communicate with others. The overarching question is, what are the challenges and/or rewards for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?

Following an interpretive, socio-constructivist paradigm, semi-structured interviews were analysed using inductive methods, and stimulated recall interviews were analysed using deductive analysis methods. These data were supported with extracts from the Moodle platform.

The findings showed that digital language learning can be a liberating activity for older adults when part of a blended format. The online format offers compensatory benefits that enable positive outcomes for all learners. Using technologies such as Moodle is a new experience and learners sometimes feel anxious or unsure of their abilities. Through working with peers and/or family members, learners have proved they can overcome this fear and have come to enjoy participating in Moodle.

As populations in societies around the world age, there will be an increase in the number of older adults studying foreign languages. This thesis demonstrates how the construction of online social learning spaces for older adult language learners can help by giving them the chance to participate in a community of practice, possibilities for language development, and the freedom to exercise agency.
Acknowledgements

“All good things come to those who wait”.

Anonymous

Patience is not and never has been my strong point. I would therefore like to thank my family and friends for supporting me on this journey, in particular my husband Jon, my daughter Milly and my son Max. Thank you for bearing with me and for doing many things I would have been doing instead.

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Thank you to the learners, you showed me the potential of what could be done using Moodle and gave me the evidence to prove such things are possible. I hope this research will go on to help many more.
Table of Contents

ABSTRACT .................................................................................................................. I
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ............................................................................................. III
TABLE OF CONTENTS ............................................................................................... V
LIST OF FIGURES ...................................................................................................... IX
LIST OF EXTRACTS ................................................................................................... XI
LIST OF TABLES .......................................................................................................... XII
ACRONYMS ................................................................................................................ XIII

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION .................................................................................... 1
  1.1 The research focus ............................................................................................... 1
  1.2 The research questions ....................................................................................... 4
  1.3 Thesis structure .................................................................................................. 4

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW ........................................................................ 6
  2.1 Second Language Acquisition and Sociocultural Theory .................................... 6
    2.1.1 Second language acquisition ....................................................................... 7
    2.1.2 Sociocultural theory ..................................................................................... 9
    2.1.3 Situated learning .......................................................................................... 11
    2.1.4 Social learning spaces .................................................................................. 13
  2.2 Older Adult Language Learners and the three dimensions of learning ..................... 14
    2.2.1 Older adults .................................................................................................. 14
    2.2.2 Three dimensions of language learning ....................................................... 17
  2.3 Older adult learners and technology .................................................................... 30
    2.3.1 Digital language learning ............................................................................. 30
    2.3.2 Task-based language teaching using technology ......................................... 36
  Summary of Chapter 2 ............................................................................................. 38

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY ................................................................................... 40
  3.1 Research context .................................................................................................. 40
    3.1.1 Task-Based Language Teaching ................................................................... 40
    3.1.2 Blended learning .......................................................................................... 41
    3.1.3 Learning Management System: Moodle .................................................... 42
  3.2 Research paradigm .............................................................................................. 48
  3.3 Research participants ......................................................................................... 50
  3.4 Research methods ................................................................................................ 52
    3.4.1 Pilot studies ................................................................................................ 53
  3.5 Data collection .................................................................................................... 55
List of Figures

Figure 1: Outline of this study ............................................................................................................. 6
Figure 2: Zone of proximal development .......................................................................................... 10
Figure 3: Three dimensions of learning .......................................................................................... 17
Figure 4: C4P model for Communities of Practice ......................................................................... 35
Figure 5: Moodle interface (source www.Moodle.org) .................................................................. 44
Figure 6: Value Creation Framework (with permission from Etienne Wenger-Trayner) .................. 54
Figure 7: Data collection .................................................................................................................. 55
Figure 8: Data analysis methods ..................................................................................................... 61
Figure 9: NVivo interface ................................................................................................................ 63
Figure 10: Six-step process of Thematic Analysis .......................................................................... 64
Figure 11: Number of coded segments for each dimension of learning ........................................ 77
Figure 12: Distribution of coded segments for each theme ............................................................. 79
Figure 13: Themes in the cognitive dimension for all learners ......................................................... 80
Figure 14: Themes in the cognitive dimension for A1 learners ...................................................... 80
Figure 15: Themes in the cognitive dimension for A2 learners ...................................................... 80
Figure 16: Themes in the cognitive dimension for B2 learners ...................................................... 81
Figure 17: Themes in the affective dimension for all learners ....................................................... 87
Figure 18: Themes in the affective dimension for A1 learners ....................................................... 87
Figure 19: Themes in the affective dimension for A2 learners ....................................................... 88
Figure 20: Themes in the affective dimension for B2 learners ....................................................... 88
Figure 21: Themes in the cognitive dimension for all learners ...................................................... 92
Figure 22: Themes in the cognitive dimension for A1 learners ...................................................... 92
Figure 23: Themes in the cognitive dimension for A2 learners ...................................................... 93
Figure 24: Themes in the cognitive dimension for B2 learners ...................................................... 93
Figure 25: Themes for the 5 learners who took part in stimulated recall interviews ..................... 137
Figure 26: 3DC4P model ................................................................................................................ 138
Figure 27: Themes for Learner 1 .................................................................................................... 207
Figure 28: Three dimensions for Learner 1 ..................................................................................... 217
Figure 29: Themes for Learner 2 .................................................................................................... 217
Figure 30: Three dimensions for Learner 2 ..................................................................................... 217
Figure 31: Themes for Learner 3 .................................................................................................... 218
Figure 32: Three dimensions for Learner 3 ..................................................................................... 218
Figure 33: Themes for Learner 4 .................................................................................................... 218
Figure 34: Three dimensions for Learner 4 ..................................................................................... 218
Figure 35: Themes for Learner 5 .................................................................................................... 219
Figure 36: Three dimensions for Learner 5 ..................................................................................... 219
Figure 37: Themes for Learner 6 .................................................................................................... 219
Figure 38: Three dimensions for Learner 6 ..................................................................................... 219
Figure 39: Themes for Learner 7 .................................................................................................... 220
Figure 40: Three dimensions for Learner 7 ..................................................................................... 220
Figure 41: Themes for Learner 8 .................................................................................................... 220
Figure 42: Three dimensions for Learner 8 ..................................................................................... 220
Figure 43: Themes for Learner 9 .................................................................................................... 221
Figure 44: Three dimensions for Learner 9 ..................................................................................... 221
Figure 45: Themes for Learner 10 ................................................................................................. 221
Figure 46: Three dimensions for Learner 10 .................................................................................. 221
Figure 47: Themes for Learner 11 ................................................................................................. 222
Figure 48: Three dimensions for Learner 11 .................................................................................. 222
Figure 49: Themes for Learner 12 ................................................................................................. 222
Figure 50: Three dimensions for Learner 12 .................................................................................. 222
List of Extracts

Extract 1: Moodle interface, learners’ view ..................................................... 46
Extract 2: Example of corrective feedback in Moodle ........................................... 47
Extract 3: Big Blue Button tool ........................................................................ 57
Extract 4: B2 class activity on Moodle ................................................................. 59
Extract 5: Exert from SR interview transcript ..................................................... 60
Extract 6: Examples of coded segments in the Language skills & knowledge theme .... 68
Extract 7: Example of a segment with a negative code .......................................... 68
Extract 8: Example of Cognitive dimension .......................................................... 70
Extract 9: Example of Affective dimension .......................................................... 70
Extract 10: Example of Social dimension ............................................................. 70
Extract 11: Angela’s connections to Moodle ......................................................... 99
Extract 12: Tell us what your New Year’s Resolutions are ..................................... 101
Extract 13: Link to a website to do a virtual tour of the museums in Derby .......... 101
Extract 14: Write about your typical day. Use adverbs of frequency (always, usually, etc.) and time words (then, after, breakfast, etc.) ........................................ 102
Extract 15: Example of a week’s activities before using the BBB to meet in a video conference during the lockdown ......................................................... 103
Extract 16: Introduce yourselves ........................................................................ 104
Extract 17: Sorry we missed you ........................................................................ 105
Extract 18: What is it? ......................................................................................... 105
Extract 19: Christmas adverts .............................................................................. 106
Extract 20: What would you do if... you had 24 hours to live? .............................. 106
Extract 21: Introduce yourselves ........................................................................ 108
Extract 22: Sorry we missed you ........................................................................ 108
Extract 23: What is it? ......................................................................................... 109
Extract 24: Christmas adverts .............................................................................. 110
Extract 25: What would you do if... you had 24 hours to live? .............................. 111
Extract 26: My Secret talent. Write your entry to the competition ......................... 112
Extract 27: British Designs ................................................................................. 113
Extract 28: Thoughts about the film .................................................................... 114
Extract 29: Writing corrections .......................................................................... 114
Extract 30: Buying/selling items of clothing .......................................................... 115
List of Tables

Table 1: Learners that were invited to participate .......................................................... 50
Table 2: Initial interview participants ............................................................................. 51
Table 3: Learners asked to take part in a follow-up interview ............................................ 51
Table 4: Codes and themes found during inductive analysis ........................................... 67
Table 5: Number of codes and segments per participant .................................................... 68
Table 6: Themes relating to dimensions of learning - used for deductive analysis .......... 69
Table 7: Number of coded segments for each dimension of learning ............................. 77
Table 8: Number of coded segments for each theme ........................................................ 78
Table 9: Three dimensions of learning and corresponding themes ............................... 97
### Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BERA</td>
<td>British Education Research Association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CALL</td>
<td>Computer-Assisted Language Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAQDAS</td>
<td>Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CEFRL</td>
<td>Common European Framework Reference for languages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CF</td>
<td>Corrective Feedback</td>
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<tr>
<td>CLT</td>
<td>Communicative Language Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMS</td>
<td>Content Management System</td>
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<tr>
<td>CoP</td>
<td>Community of Practice</td>
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<td>CPH</td>
<td>Critical Period Hypothesis</td>
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<tr>
<td>DLL</td>
<td>Digital Language Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>EAL</td>
<td>English as an Additional Language</td>
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<tr>
<td>EER</td>
<td>Education Employment Retirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFL</td>
<td>English as a Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F2F</td>
<td>Face to Face</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HREC</td>
<td>Human Research Ethics Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMS</td>
<td>Learning Management System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>First language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>Second language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*1 (2, 3)</td>
<td>Learner 1 (2, 3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMS</td>
<td>Learning Management System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MALL</td>
<td>Mobile Assisted Language Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOOC</td>
<td>Massive Open Online Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOODLE</td>
<td>Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OALL</td>
<td>Older Adult Language Learner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PALL</td>
<td>Pen Assisted Language Learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>RQ</td>
<td>Research Question</td>
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<tr>
<td>SCT</td>
<td>Sociocultural Theory</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLA</td>
<td>Second Language Acquisition</td>
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<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Social Presence</td>
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<tr>
<td>SR</td>
<td>Stimulated Recall</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBLT</td>
<td>Task-Based Language Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TL</td>
<td>Target Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VLE</td>
<td>Virtual Learning Environment</td>
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<tr>
<td>UG</td>
<td>Universal Grammar</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTC</td>
<td>Willingness To Communicate</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZPD</td>
<td>Zone of Proximal Development</td>
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Chapter 1 Introduction

This chapter introduces my thesis. The research focus is defined, leading to the research questions, followed by an outline of the structure of this thesis.

1.1 The research focus

The world is ageing. Over the next three decades, the global number of older adults is projected to more than double, reaching over 1.5 billion in 2050 (United Nations, 2019). France has one of the highest average life expectancies at birth in the European Union, 79 years for men and 85 years for women (Schreiber-Barsch, 2015). As of 1st January 2021, almost 40% of the French population was aged over 50 (www.statista.com). The research presented here occurred at an adult education centre in central France, where over 60% of the learners are aged 50+.

France is a monolingual country, as established in the second article of the French constitution on 4th October 1958. One of the emblems of the French Republic, together with the flag and the national hymn, is the French language. French language use is protected by law under the Toubon law of 14th August 1994, making France one of the few nations where this is the case. The Toubon law is a powerful tool because it dictates the use of French in a variety of settings, such as all government-funded schools, official government publications, advertisements, workplaces, and commercial contracts (Díaz, 2020). Despite measures taken by the Government to ensure the priority of the national language, English is developing as well as in the rest of the EU.

The EU has developed the Common European Frame of Reference for Languages (CEFRL), a guideline for teachers and learners. The 2001 publication of the original CEFRL had the following goals: to encourage and facilitate collaboration between educational institutions in various nations; to provide a solid foundation for the mutual recognition of language credentials; and to guide learners, teachers, course designers, examining bodies, and educational administrators situate and coordinate their efforts (Little, 2006). The 2020 update to the CEFRL presents the language learner as a 'social agent', acting in the social world and exerting agency in the learning process (Council of Europe, 2020). Although it is not a linguistic policy, the CEFRL represents European language teaching and learning trends (Díaz, 2020).
Living longer can mean encountering various cognitive, affective and social challenges. Technology cannot solve these problems, but it can empower older adults and make them more capable, resourceful and independent. Technology helps to connect people and can help to combat some of the challenges older adults face. In this thesis, I combine age, technology and language learning by investigating older adult English language learners in a French setting and using Moodle - a free and open-source learning management system (LMS).

Learning a foreign language can structurally and functionally alter the brain. It develops new neural pathways, makes new connections, and adds flexibility. The mean age of onset of dementia among multilinguals can be delayed by up to five years (Mehmedbegovic & Bak, 2017). The parts of the brain responsible for executive functioning and attention are hypothesised to grow more favourably as a result of learning and utilising multiple languages, which may delay the onset of dementia (Pot et al., 2019).

Although the effectiveness of ‘brain training’ has been contested (Simons et al., 2016), there is some evidence of the cognitive benefits of language learning and bilingualism in later life (Bak et al., 2014; Li et al., 2014). Learning a new language goes beyond learning about the target language; it involves both learners' cognitive and emotional functioning and is always situated in the sociocultural context in which the language activity is embedded. In this thesis, I am interested in the role of Moodle for older adult language learners, the challenges they may face and the rewards that using technology in a social learning environment can bring them.

Since starting my doctorate, the ways in which people learn have continued to develop, and in 2020 when the world experienced a global pandemic, technology became a necessity in many areas of life, including learning. The COVID-19 pandemic dramatically affected education at a worldwide level, leading to an unparalleled move to online and hybrid learning, and to the wide adoption of digital technologies. Such change has meant that the conventional boundaries between in-class and out-of-class learning have become increasingly fluid. The COVID-19 pandemic altered the way we interpret the ‘normal’ as well as the way we live. Normal, by its nature, is a relative term and there are different derivations of it, such as what many refer to as the ‘new normal’.
Bax (2003) is recognised for the term ‘normalisation’ as a means of describing the condition in which the technology used in English language classrooms “becomes invisible, serving the needs of the learners and integrated into every teacher’s everyday practice” (p. 27). In this seminal paper, Bax identified three stages in the normalisation process, “restricted, open and integrated”, urging that as language teachers “our aim should be to attain a state of ‘normalisation’ in which the technology is invisible and truly integrated” (p. 13). Bax used the analogy of the pen, a commonplace tool, to make an important point. noting that “we do not speak of PALL (Pen Assisted Language Learning)” (p. 23) to highlight that the use of pens in teaching is unconscious and so fully normalised, and that this should likewise be the goal in terms of the use of technology. Bax (2011) revisited the issue of the normalisation of technology in language education and he reaffirmed the need for qualitative, ethnographic methods to investigate the social, cultural, and contextual aspects of technology use in educational contexts. This study, though small in scale, aims to bridge the gap in the literature and fulfil the need for empirical studies in this area.

I have used Moodle for over 15 years as a learner and teacher. My experiences have been predominantly positive, and through using it with my older learners, I found that they interacted with Moodle in ways that changed how they used technology to learn and communicate in English. My experience has led me to believe that working in Moodle can help learners develop a community of practice, which Wenger-­Trayner and Wenger (2015) defined as groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they regularly interact. Peachey (2017) also found that platforms like Moodle build a strong sense of community, enable a structured space for shared resources and create more opportunities to learn from others.

The central argument of this thesis is that older adult language learners can benefit from using Moodle as a social learning space which offers them the possibility of participation in a community of practice. Moodle also provides pedagogical support, enabling learners to develop their knowledge and skills and use the target language communicatively.

There are, however, challenges in using technologies such as Moodle to learn languages. In order to use tools and software and to comprehend future applications of technology, learners need to be digitally literate. Digital literacy
includes “the individual and social skills needed to effectively interpret, manage, share and create meaning in the growing range of digital communication channels” (Hockly et al., 2013, p. 2).

As new technologies emerge, older individuals must become more accustomed to them in order to interact with others (Baumgartner et al., 2022). For older adults to benefit from technology, those who teach them must be mindful of older adults’ challenges in using it. A qualitative case study methodology was used to interview older adult learners about using Moodle to learn English. The interviews were reinforced with data from the Moodle platform to obtain a detailed picture of how older adults use Moodle to provide an answer to the following research questions.

1.2 The research questions

1. What are the challenges for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?
   a. What are the cognitive challenges?
   b. What are the affective challenges?
   c. What are the social challenges?

2. What are the rewards for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?
   a. What are the cognitive rewards?
   b. What are the affective rewards?
   c. What are the social rewards?

1.3 Thesis structure

This chapter provides an introduction to, and background information on the study. It explains the context of the study before presenting an outline of the thesis.

In Chapter 2, I present the literature on second language acquisition in a sociocultural context, followed by a discussion of studies and research relating to the cognitive, affective and social aspects of language learning for older adults. The topic of technology in language learning is then discussed before a summary of the literature concludes this chapter.

Chapter 3 presents the qualitative methodological framework of the study. In this chapter, I discuss the background and general principles of qualitative choices made throughout the study and during the data analysis. I also go over the research tools that were employed to collect the data and how each method - both separately and collectively - contributed to the findings.
In Chapter 4, I present the findings from the initial interview data and how these findings were derived from inductive thematic analysis techniques; this is followed by the findings from the stimulated recall interviews analysed using deductive thematic analysis techniques.

In Chapter 5, I discuss my findings in relation to the literature. The findings from each of the research questions are discussed with reference to the issues raised in Chapter 2.

In Chapter 6, I conclude, reflect and make recommendations for the future. Firstly, I present the relevance of my study to the fields of Second Language Acquisition and Digital Language Learning. The implications and recommendations for professional practice follow before the study's strengths and limitations are discussed. Next, I reflect on my research and make suggestions for future research. Final conclusions from the study complete this thesis.
Chapter 2 Literature Review

This chapter discusses the relevant literature relating to the underexplored intersection of digital language learning with older adult learners. It is framed within a sociocultural perspective.

First, I present the literature concerning the theoretical frameworks underpinning my study, Second Language Acquisition and Sociocultural Theory. This is followed by literature on older adult learners focusing on the cognitive, affective and social aspects of language learning. I then turn to the concept of digital language learning for older adults.

2.1 Second Language Acquisition and Sociocultural Theory

In second language acquisition research, sociocultural theories provide a framework that enables scientific examination of human cognition without removing it from social context. Sociocultural theories recognise that the social environment is not the context for, but rather the source of, mental development, which sets them fundamentally apart from other theories of second language acquisition. Sociocultural theories focus on the complex interaction between the individual using mediational means and their social and cultural background, in contrast to other viewpoints that concentrate on an individual and what the individual is doing (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).
2.1.1 Second language acquisition

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) studies how learners construct a new language system despite (sometimes) limited exposure to the second language contexts. A second language (L2) refers to a language that is acquired after the first language (L1) has been established in childhood. In SLA research, the second language may also be called the target language. Target language (TL) describes the language one is attempting to learn. This maybe your second language (L2), or your third language (L3). SLA consists of theories, theoretical views, hypotheses, frameworks and generalisations about how L2 learners create and develop a new language system. Lightbown and Spada (2013) explained three leading SLA theoretical positions: the behaviourist, innatist, and cognitivist approaches.

Behaviourist approach, “Say what I say” (p.10). The conventional method for this strategy involves a stimulus, a reaction, and then a reward. As a result, positive reinforcement and imitation are important elements. Learning materials and teacher preparation place a strong focus on mimicry and rote learning since language development is seen as the creation of habits and automated answers to pre-rehearsed dialogues. However, Skinner began to dispute this theory in 1938 when he downplayed the significance of the stimulus, contending that it was the reinforcers that came after a response that increased the likelihood of recurrence and, hence, the potential for habituation.

Innatist approach, “It's all in your mind” (p. 15). The innatists, who hold the opposite view, think that we are born with the ability to learn languages pre-programmed. Chomsky (1964) hypothesised that all human languages are innate and that the same universal principles underlie them all. This was the basis of his theory of Universal Grammar (UG), a kind of hard disk pre-packed with all the basic properties and procedures of the grammars of the world. Although Chomsky (1964) made no explicit attempt to link his theory of UG with SLA, other linguists have suggested that UG must be available to L2 learners as well since learners know more about the target language than could possibly be gained through exposure alone.

Cognitivist approach, “A little help from my friends” (p. 19). Cognitivists hold that language may be learned simply by being exposed to it, in contrast to behaviourists who think it can be taught and innatists who think humans are born with it. SLA is viewed by cognitivists as the development of knowledge that will
ultimately become automated. At first, even simple actions need a lot of focus and attention, just like with any other skill. However, with practice, these processes become automated, allow multiple tasks to be completed at once, and appear to be spontaneous.

Cognitivist theories, which focused on the mental processes behind the acquisition of the TL, dominated the field of SLA up until the middle of the 1980s. This approach was questioned by SLA researchers like Lantolf (2006) and Firth and Wagner (2007) because they thought it failed to recognise the learner as a context-bound entity who actively engages in social and cultural exchanges, assumes identities, and expresses ideologies and emotions in social interaction. Theorists had to reconsider their ideas and approaches in light of the growing interest in studying the social aspect of L2 learning and how it affects language acquisition and usage. This SLA reconceptualization has been referred to as the ‘Social Turn in SLA’ (Block, 2003). The Social Turn aimed to understand L2 learning through a social perspective (Ortega, 2014), building upon theoretical approaches such as sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978).

Within the broad theoretical field of SLA, the distinction between English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) is related to the function of the language in the larger sociocultural setting where learning occurs. A language that serves crucial institutional and social roles in a nation is considered a second language. However, it may not be the native language of the dominant population, for example, English in India and Singapore (Miao, 2015). In the case of language learning, a second language is one that the learner is naturally exposed to, as is the case with the learning of English by many immigrants in the United Kingdom. On the other hand, a foreign language is not the native language of the majority of the population, nor is it widely used as a medium of communication in the country. It can be used instead for conversing with foreigners or reading printed materials, for instance, and is frequently taught as a subject in schools. A typical example is the learning of English by a French speaker in France, as in this study. English as an Additional Language (EAL) is used when the context of ESL or EFL is not specified.

Sometimes SLA researchers make a distinction between ‘learning’ and ‘acquisition’ which facilitate language development and involve the four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. While learning occurs through formal
instruction and conscious comprehension, acquisition is the unconscious integration of a language that primarily occurs through first-hand exposure. The terms ‘second language acquisition’ and ‘foreign language learning’ are used with distinctions on a similar dimension as the distinction between ‘second’ and ‘foreign’ language, which was addressed above. SLA theory aims to comprehend the universal, individual, and societal processes that affect what is acquired, how quickly, and how effectively by various individuals in various learning scenarios (Ortega, 2014).

Languages can be learned in a variety of settings. Language learners are thought to be unconsciously exposed to the L2 in informal situations, such as at home. Formal settings are the context where the L2 is consciously being taught, for example to a group of second or foreign language learners (Bahrani et al., 2014). The context of the research presented here contains elements of both informal and formal settings. It is described as an ‘instructed setting’, defined as any systematic attempt to facilitate language learning by manipulating the learning mechanisms and/or the conditions under which these occur (Loewen, 2020).

Regarding formal settings, the participants of this study are learning in a classroom environment. Still, they are no longer in a formal education setting such as a school or university and are not required to take any formal assessments or exams. Informal elements include the fact that learning can take place outside the classroom, such as in learners’ homes and at a time chosen by the learners.

2.1.2 Sociocultural theory
Vygotsky (1978) was a seminal Russian psychologist best known for his sociocultural theory. He believed that social interaction plays a critical role in children's learning - a continuous process that is profoundly influenced by culture. It was not until the 1970s that Vygotsky's theories became known outside of Russia, as new concepts and ideas emerged in the fields of educational and developmental psychology. Since then, Vygotsky's works have been translated many times over and have gained international recognition, particularly in the area of education.

There was renewed interest in the ideas of Vygotsky in the latter part of the twentieth century and early twenty first century and Lantolf and Thorne (2006) extended this theory to explain aspects of SLA. From a sociocultural perspective, learning results through the processes of producing meaning in collaborative activities with other people from a certain culture (Vygotsky, 1978).
Sociocultural Theory (SCT) principles apply to SLA in that language learning happens when a person interacts with the people, things, and events in their environment, which is embedded within social events (Lantolf et al., 2015). SCT argues that the development of cognition arises from social interaction; individuals’ participation in social activities therefore trigger cognitive processes. SCT focuses not only on how interaction with others impacts individual learning but also on how cultural beliefs and attitudes influence learning processes. In other words, learners also bring their ‘ontological baggage’ (Gánem-Gutiérrez, 2013) to the learning process.

When SCT is applied to SLA, language learning is facilitated by social interaction. During interaction, learners engage in collaborative dialogue with teachers and other learners using scaffolding techniques such as modelling, repetition, and linguistic simplification. Collaboration with assistance from others is necessary to breach the gap between what is already known and what is still to be learned (Fayram, 2017). This type of interaction is central to the learning process, as it facilitates the operation of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Figure 2).

![Figure 2: Zone of proximal development](image-url)
The ZPD is:

“the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

A learner can access their ZPD when working alone, but in SCT, collaborative learning increases the potential for exploring a learner’s ZPD. This benefit stems from the fact that the ZPD also occurs among peers, not just with an expert, and that it does not imply an explicit teaching goal or a learning-focused mindset, though it can include both.

The idea of a ZPD and the concept of instructional scaffolding are closely related. A task inside a ZPD can be successfully completed by a learner with the aid of a set of tools or activities known as scaffolding. Typically, scaffolding involves dynamic engagement, in which the learner and the person supplying the scaffold both have an impact on one another and modify their behaviour as they work together. One example of scaffolding in SLA is ‘peer response feedback’ (Liu & Hansen Edwards, 2018), when learners work in pairs or small groups, using prompts provided by the teacher, to respond to each other’s work.

2.1.3 Situated learning

The concept of situated learning comes under the umbrella of SCT as a theoretical perspective where context is believed to affect learning processes. Situated learning suggests that learning occurs as a result of interpersonal connections, informal learning environments, and often unintended contextual learning. The learning process depends on the situation or the environment in which the communication is taking place, but at the same time cannot be separated from previous learning experiences and the broader sociocultural context. Bax’s (2011) theory of normalisation is consistent with a perspective on learning as a process of knowledge acquisition and theory application, emphasising the ‘situated’ and social nature of learning and the fact that learning occurs through participation and interaction in a particular context.

Situated learning was proposed by Lave and Wenger (1991) as a model of learning in a community of practice. Knowledge is co-constructed through the social process of learning, which is located in a particular context and integrated into a specific social and physical environment (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Learning is
seen as social engagement, suggesting that it is a crucial and indispensable component of social practice. Situated learning environments put learners in authentic learning situations that encourage conversation, active participation, evaluation, and reflective thought. Collaboration and groupwork are common in activities and assignments.

The theory of ‘situated language learning’ (Kukulska-Hulme and Viberg, 2018; Abdallah, 2015) views language learners as active knowledge creators who contribute their own demands, tactics, and learning styles to the process. When learners are doing language learning tasks in authentic environments and realistic scenarios, skills and knowledge are most effectively gained. As a result, it emphasises how context and scenario play a role in knowledge creation and language learning. Learning can be considered to be ‘situated’ in various teaching-learning situations, such as:

- A Community of Practice (CoP). A CoP in the context of language learning refers to a group of learners who have similar needs, interests, and ambitions. In order to accomplish their social community's goals and purposes for language learning, learners communicate interactively. (Abdallah, 2015).

- Task-based learning. Task-based learning is an approach to language learning according to which the tasks done by learners become central to the learning process. It requires the teacher to organise activities around those practical tasks that language users will engage in in the real world (Chun, 2016). Tasks are communicative and meaning-focused, requiring learners to comprehend, manipulate, produce, and interact in the target language in order to connect them to language use in the real world. According to Abdallah (2015), when activities are authentic, interactive, situated, and goal-oriented, situated learning is consistent with this task-based learning approach.

Technology mediates online language learning communities, bridging geographical distances with the use of the Internet. In an online setting, language learners share resources, ideas, and experiences related to language learning. By creating an environment where learners can communicate and share ideas via collaborative technologies, technology can facilitate situational and task-based learning. This phenomenon is discussed in section 2.3.
2.1.4 Social learning spaces
Thirty years after Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of Communities of Practice (CoP), one of its proponents and founders proposed a new theory: social learning theory (Etienne and Beverley Wenger-Trayner, 2020). The idea of this new theoretical framework is that the phenomenon of learning should be viewed as considerably broader than the original CoP theory suggested. The benefits of participation and engagement in social activity must still be taken into account. It is the outcome of people's ongoing attempts to create meaning and construct their identities as they engage with their surroundings. However, theorising learning using a CoP's structures is too constrained. A lot of learning takes place in social settings outside of and beyond CoPs.

Although the creation of these learning environments can act as a venue or a focal point for the development of a community of practice, this does not imply that a community of learners will also arise (Murray, 2011). Whereas communities, and in particular, communities of practice, cannot be created per se, they can be cultivated (Wenger et al., 2002).

Murray (2011) found that the development of social learning spaces that give older adult language learners the chance to participate in a community of learners, possibilities for metacognitive development as well as the capacity to exert autonomy and self-direction can be advantageous. The topic of older adult language learners is developed in Section 2.2

Social learning is a process that contextualises language practice within the exchanges of a community of learners, resulting in shared advantages in the language learning process. When learners can use English as their common language to communicate in meaningful ways with other members of an online community, they are effectively utilising social learning. This interaction is discussed further in Section 2.3
2.2 Older Adult Language Learners and the three dimensions of learning

Language learning in later life can bring various cognitive, affective and social challenges. The percentage of older individuals worldwide rises together with human longevity. However, researchers have neglected older language learners as a cohort (Eguz, 2019). This section explains the term ‘older adults’ as used throughout this thesis and then considers the previously mentioned three dimensions of language learning. The topic of technology use by older adults is discussed in section 2.3.

2.2.1 Older adults

Various labels have been applied to older adults. Some scholars state that different stages of life begin and end at given ages. Lawrence-Lightfoot (2010) identified ‘the third chapter’ as lasting from 50 to 75, whereas for Smith and Strong (2009), ‘the third age’ is from 70 to 84. Oxford (2018) considered such approaches as ‘age-grading’, “the concept of a life phase is an interpretation, a construction, a social status and thus tied to an array of sociocultural issues” (p.4). The concept of ‘third age’ emerged from a hypothesised sequence of three stages that the acronym EER can summarise: education (first age), employment (second age) and retirement (third age) (Moen, 2011), but this is now outdated and does not reflect current society. However, despite the fact that any particular age range would encompass a wide range of circumstances, bands that represent several life stages offer helpful frameworks for addressing education and learning among older adults.

For this thesis, I use the framework proposed by Schuller and Watson (2015) that divides adult life into four stages. This framework shows how organised learning opportunities are concentrated heavily in the first phase of adult life, that is between 18 and 25. The second stage, 25-50, is the period of heavy investment in employment and family. The age of 50 is the cut-off point for the second stage, even though most people continue to work after 50. At this point, people may start thinking about what ‘third age’ might mean for them. The fourth stage (not covered in this study) is 76 and over (Schuller & Watson, 2015). The participants of this study are older adults over the age of 50.

There are several theoretical positions on the correlation between age and ultimate attainment in SLA. For example, the Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH)
argues that there is a period during which people display a heightened sensitivity to specific environmental stimuli and, therefore, it is easier for them to acquire a second language (Benati & Angelovska, 2016). According to the CPH, there is a vital period before puberty when people are frequently more capable of learning new languages with native-like ability. SLA research about immigrants has shown that the younger the child, the higher the probability of a native-like accent (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). However, there is already widespread agreement among cognitive scientists that the brain is malleable throughout life and that experience can change the brain at any age (Singleton, 2018). Researchers have found evidence that adults can also achieve high levels of success in SLA (Singleton, 2007; Birdsong, 2006; 2005; Dekeyser, 2000). They have argued that it is difficult to support the view that a critical period exists as there is contradictory evidence, given that adult learners can also reach native-like L2 proficiency (Birdsong, 2006). Other factors, such as the motivation to learn, access to input and opportunities for interaction, are essential determining variables that might affect the rate and success of SLA.

Scientists have long believed that neuroplasticity declines over time, making it anatomically harder for older adults to learn new skills. This factor would support the CPH as described above. Modern studies in brain imaging reject this theory, showing that practice-induced task learning – like learning a second language – changes the brain’s structure in older adults, just like it does in children (Park & Bischof, 2013). Singleton and Pfenninger (2019) believe that the age issue needs to be seen as involving many variables going well beyond the age factor.

Bialystok and Hakuta (1999) challenged the idea that the CPH occurs suddenly and asserted that there is a steady decline over time, frequently in areas like the ability to complete tasks quickly, taking risks, creating long-term memory codes, and recalling specifics. Johnstone (2002) and Tuomainen et al., (2022) added that many older learners experience difficulties in hearing. These challenges are frequently overcome in one's first language by making educated guesses or projections based on words that have only been partially heard. Due to the learner's limited vocabulary and cultural knowledge, this is more challenging when speaking a second language. According to Berndt (2001), education frequently provides older learners with compensatory benefits, making up for missing opportunities, meeting people, and maintaining or establishing social contacts.
Many older adults attend purely for brain stimulation, which appears to be a process through which language learning is effective.

There is no conclusive evidence to support the claim that older beginners cannot master high levels of L2 proficiency. Older learners might be better able to use their more extensive language, strategy, and understanding of the world to achieve their goals more quickly (Johnstone, 2002). In principle, it is never too early to begin, but it is never too late to start. Any learner, regardless of age, has the potential to gain a lot from their endeavours to learn a second language if given the right context and encouragement.

Cox (2019), Pfenninger and Singleton (2019) and Gabryś-Barker (2018) have all called for more research into Older Adult Language Learners (OALLs) in SLA. Age-related language learning by older adults has only recently become the subject of any serious research. Case studies (Swain and Lapkin, 2011; Schulz and Elliott, 2000), qualitative interviews and surveys (Castañeda, 2017); and laboratory studies that take an ‘extreme-groups’ design comparing young adults to older adults (Lenet et al., 2011) are just a few examples of the many different methodologies used. However, few focus on more senior adult learning without comparisons to younger adult learners (Cox, 2017; Ramírez-Gómez, 2016a; Mackey and Sachs, 2012).

It is not possible to fully explain something as complex as L2 learning in older adults and its effects on later life using a single theory or set of principles. This thesis aims to provide an insight into this phenomenon. OALLs can experience positive effects of language learning in their cognitive dimension, such as learning new skills, and in their socio-affective dimension, for example, finding friends and sharing emotions, as well as developing a sense of purpose (Gabryś-Barker, 2018). There is evidence that mentally challenging activities keep older adults' cognitive abilities intact and lessen the likelihood of mental health issues like depression (Singleton, 2018). In addition to the potential cognitive benefits, language learning for older adults may hold important social consequences, such as lowering anxiety and increasing self-esteem, which may impact an individual's cognitive disposition (Pot et al., 2018).
2.2.2 Three dimensions of language learning

Illeris's (2003) three dimensions of learning theory explains how learning takes place in specific social contexts and is driven by stimuli from the social environment. In Lave and Wenger's (1991) theory of 'situated learning', a learner discovers knowledge through interaction with others and with resources. Illeris's (2003) approach also stresses that human beings are social creatures, and all learning must come from interacting with others in different scenarios.

For Loewen and Sato (2018), interaction plays a crucial role in SLA theory and pedagogy. The interaction approach to SLA posits that learners can benefit from taking part in interaction because of a variety of developmentally helpful opportunities, conditions, and processes which interaction can expose them to. Although this study is about language learning, it is based on the fact that all learning happens in interaction with the social world and henceforth the term ‘interaction’ is used according to Illeris's (2009) definition:

“The interaction dimension provides the impulses that initiate the learning process. This may take place as perception, transmission, experience, imitation, activity, participation, etc. It serves the personal integration in communities and society and thereby also builds up the sociality of the learner”. (p. 11)

Illeris (2017, 2015, 2009, 2003) illustrated how social learning, interaction and acquisition are connected in his ‘three dimensions of learning’ model (Figure 3).

![Three dimensions of learning](image)

**Figure 3: Three dimensions of learning**
Ramírez-Gómez (2016a) also considered that the learning process has three dimensions - cognitive, affective, and social - and found that older adult language learners experience relevant changes in each one. Although there is no reference to Illeris's (2003) three dimensions of learning, Nitta (2006) also found that cognitive, affective and social factors influence learning English as a foreign language.

Illeris (2017) also maintained that two fundamental processes must be active in learning: acquisition and interaction. Illeris (2009) used the term ‘acquisition’, which he defined as “a process of integrated interplay between two equal psychological functions involved in any learning. In other words, the function of managing the learning content and the incentive function of providing and directing the necessary mental energy that runs the process” (Illeris, 2009, p. 9). In this thesis, acquisition refers to language learning in general.

Illeris (2003) proposed three interrelated dimensions of learning – cognitive, affective and social. Knowledge, skills, understanding, meaning and functionality are developed through the cognitive dimension (also known as the content dimension). Through the affective dimension (also known as the emotional or incentive dimension), patterns of emotion and motivation, attitudes, sensitivity and mental balance are developed. The social dimension (also known as the interaction dimension) develops potentials for empathy, communication, cooperation and sociality. When applied to language learning contexts, acquisition occurs on a continuum between the cognitive and affective dimensions and within social situations.

The social/interaction dimension of learning proposed by Illeris (2009, p.11) recognises the advantages of personal interaction in a society that provides “the impulses that initiate the learning process”, which “thereby builds up the sociality of the learner”. This perspective interacts with the two other dimensions of learning: the cognitive/content dimension and the affective/incentive dimension. The cognitive/content dimension concerns “what is learned” (Illeris, 2009, p.10) and establishes the fundamental framework for how learners view the outside world. The motivation, emotion, and volition components of the affective/incentive dimension provide the learning process with the mental energy it needs. People’s learning content may be determined by personal preferences or requirements; conversely, varied content may alter the environment that encourage learning.
Both aspects influence interactions by introducing communication strategies, methods, and experiences.

Huang (2019) found that the three dimensions of learning serve as a guide for creating communicative and contextualised language textbooks. For language learners, a communicative and contextualised textbook includes relevant and useful content (cognitive/content dimension). It stimulates learners' interests and motivation to learn the language (affective/incentive dimension) and makes it possible for them to socialise and engage with other members of the community (interaction/social dimension). The findings demonstrated that in language textbooks, topics, texts, and tasks are decontextualized in terms of authenticity, communication quality, diversity, and cultural representation. Additionally, the communicative functions of the English language are not given as much attention as its grammatical ones. This study considers whether Moodle can provide older adult learners with more authentic, communicative and culturally diverse resources for language learning.

According to Illeris (2015), social-constructionism contends that learning also takes place in communities, which continuously engage in interactions with the interior constructions of the person. As a result, the culture and communicative understandings of the learner’s environment have an impact on how they acquire a foreign language (Mondahl & Razmerita, 2014).

Both cognitive and affective dimensions are activated simultaneously within processes of interaction between the learner and the learning environment. Learning is always ‘situated’ in a sociocultural context. This sociocultural context has two levels: 1) the relative social level in which the learner interacts directly; 2) the general societal level that establishes the premises for the interaction and is more influenced by the norms and structures of the society (Illeris, 2017). The learners in this study interact within the direct social level with others in their class, those who have access to the Moodle platform, and family and friends within the general societal level within which they interact.

2.2.2.1 Cognitive aspects of language learning

Foreign language learning can contribute to active and healthy ageing. It is a cognitively challenging activity that, under some conditions, appears to encourage neuronal development and encourage social connection (Pfenninger and Singleton, 2019; Vseteckova, 2019; Antoniou et al., 2013). Pot, Porkert and
Keijzer (2019) reported that speaking more than one language may boost cognitive performance and slow down age-related cognitive decline as it involves cognitive systems and processes that are believed to decline in old age: inductive reasoning, task management, working memory, declarative memory, sound discrimination, speech segmentation, among others (Antoniou et al., 2013). Other language learning studies that support this include Bialystok and Craik (2010) who found that regularly speaking two languages has broad effects on cognitive ability, improving executive-control abilities throughout the lifespan. Bak et al., (2014) also suggested that bilingualism has a positive impact on cognition in later life, including in people who learned their second language as adults.

The changes that take place during language learning can significantly benefit the brains of older adults (Bubbico et al., 2019). Increased brain plasticity and neural connections can put off the onset of cognitive illnesses for years. Some studies even suggest that cognitive flexibility, which declines as we age, can be improved by learning a second language (Gold et al., 2013). Multilingual brains are under more strain than monolingual ones; they are forced to switch between languages or suppress whichever is not used. Gold et al., (2013) explained that this movement builds executive controls in the brain, improving multi-tasking skills, task-switching ability, control and focus. According to Stein et al., (2012), grey matter is directly associated with intelligence, memory, attention, and language. SLA can increase the amount of grey matter in the brain, especially in the frontal lobes. The white matter in our brain directly controls how fast we process and recall information. Mårtensson et al., (2012) found that learning a new language increases white matter in the brain; results showed increases in hippocampus volume and cortical thickness, showing that hippocampal plasticity may be an essential part of the system's capacity for second language acquisition.

When compared to monolinguals, bilinguals have a higher chance of recovering cognitively from a stroke and develop dementia 4-5 years later (Alladi et al., 2013). Even after controlling for variations in childhood intelligence, they exhibit slower cognitive ageing. Moreover, these results do not only apply to people who learnt their languages well and early in life. Bak et al., (2016) showed that learning a language keeps the brain busy and improves cognition by including the ‘desirable difficulties’ of novelty, challenge, and effort (particularly when compared to less taxing, more familiar activities). The frequent switching between different sounds, unfamiliar words, and abstract ideas is an effective brain workout that develops
higher levels of cognitive reserve and promotes a healthy, active mind. All of this may enhance older adults' capacity for decision-making and multitasking, as well as their ability to concentrate and communicate (Long et al., 2020; Bak et al., 2016). The idea that language learning has beneficial effects across different cognitive domains is also reflected in cognitive neuroscience. That is to say, the result is more than the sum of the ingredients (Mehmedbegovic & Bak, 2017). Despite the foregoing encouraging findings, results have been mixed, with a few studies reporting no improvement for all cognitive skills examined, such as Ware et al., (2017). Other studies that do not link L2 learning to cognitive improvements include Berggren et al., (2020), who argue that the effects of learning a foreign language later in life are likely to be negligible or non-existent.

On the other hand, on average, older adults learn more slowly and sometimes less well than younger adults (Oxford, 2018), but this depends on what they are learning. The ability to learn languages shows no decrease throughout mid- and older adulthood and may not decline until adults are in their 90s (Sigelman & Rider, 2017).

Older adults often experience a decline in the sharpness of the senses, notably hearing and sight (De Bot & Van Der Hoeven, 2011). A reduction in hearing can affect cognitive performance, including language learning (Sigelman & Rider, 2017). In language classes, learning to listen is frequently cited as the most difficult language skill to master (Slowik, 2017a). Additional biological and cognitive characteristics may make it more difficult for older adult learners to improve listening comprehension. It can be more challenging for older learners to process the information they hear, particularly when it comes to learning a new language. They may have hearing loss, have a slower response time and language processing speed, encode information less effectively, retrieve information from long-term memory more slowly, or draw information from working memory less efficiently (Slowik, 2017b). Physical changes, such as hearing loss, may reduce communicative interaction, which in turn may lead to a decline in the accessibility of linguistic elements due to non-use (De Bot & Van Der Hoeven, 2011). Reduced interaction can lead to a decline in life satisfaction as less language is used and less interaction with the environment takes place.

Working memory is a process that manages and preserves pertinent information while performing cognitive tasks like language comprehension (Singleton, 2018).
Operations involved in the transmission of information to long-term memory are linked to working memory. In other words, working memory is at the heart of memory-related processing, implying that adult learners who experience working memory problems need to invest much more effort in transferring new information into their long-term memory for future recall. Grotek (2018) found that repeated exposure to input helps learners not only consolidate certain language patterns but is also a helpful strategy in building language awareness. Each time learners are confronted with the same input, they pay attention to something different (Pot et al., 2018).

It is unknown whether the learners in this study were experiencing any of these cognitive difficulties associated with older adults learning languages, and cognitive benefits were not measured. This study and the research questions in section 1.2 aim to investigate whether using Moodle can help older adults overcome any challenges they experience due to ageing and whether using Moodle can help provide them with cognitive rewards. The following section deals with older adult learners’ feelings and emotions regarding language learning.

**2.2.2.2 Affective aspects of language learning**

The second dimension of Illeris’s (2003) theory of learning is the affective dimension. It might be challenging to distinguish between affect and cognition because affect both influences and is influenced by cognition (Ortega, 2014). Dirkx (2001) argued that significant learning is unimaginable without emotion and feelings since it is by nature an imaginative, emotional act. Deeply personal, meaningful connections are created through emotions, allowing for considerable learning to occur. These connections are of two kinds. Firstly, there is the connection to one’s own inner experiences; “emotions are gateways to the unconscious and our emotional, feeling selves” (p. 69). Secondly “emotions and feelings can connect to the shared ideas within the world as well and are reflected in big words or concepts, such as Truth, Power, Justice, and Love” (p. 69).

Older adult learners often feel disempowered and embarrassed when they cannot express their complex thoughts in the target language (Stickler, 2022). It might be intimidating to learn and use a new language. People may become more susceptible as a result, especially older adults who are used to thriving in their own language. For example, many beginner L2 learners resentfully reported feeling ‘infantilized’ when using the L2 (Spielmann & Radnofsky, 2001). We can see the insecurity caused in older adult learners when their vocabulary in the L2 is
suddenly reduced to that of a child (Stickler, 2022). Similarly, older adults may feel ashamed and frustrated when they realise they cannot fully comprehend interlocutors and cannot answer in a way that makes sense. Through this study, understanding older adults’ feelings may help improve pedagogy for this group of learners.

Anxiety can be defined as apprehension, tension, and even fear, and OALLs may experience such feelings. Because anxiety can have both facilitating and debilitating effects on different people, the effects of anxiety are difficult to predict. According to Ortega (2014), in L2 language classes, high, debilitating anxiety levels might hinder academic success. There are a number of other, subtler impacts that excessively nervous learners suffer in addition to lower achievement. They tend to underestimate their true L2 competency, learn and process L2 materials more slowly, and exhibit risk-averse behaviours like speaking less and attempting fewer complicated communications (Ortega, 2014). Anxiety can also be increased by counterproductive beliefs about language learning, such as the fear of making mistakes, which can result in extreme disappointment and a strong sense of failure. Other misguided beliefs regarding language learning include the notion that one should be able to acquire vocabulary and grammar before speaking or writing without errors or the notion that mastering a second language entails being able to pronounce it like a native speaker (Ortega, 2014). Facilitative anxiety may assist performance by motivating the learner, for example when learners interpret stressors as challenges instead of threats. On the other hand, debilitating anxiety interferes with performance by inducing feelings of threat or emotional exhaustion.

Anxiety has been studied under the wider construct of willingness to communicate (WTC): the intention to take part in L2 communication when given an opportunity. WTC was originally conceptualised for first language acquisition, and seeks to demonstrate the probability that a speaker will choose to participate in a conversation of their own volition. Traditionally, it was seen as a fixed personality trait that did not change according to context, however, Maclntyre et al., (1998) noted that WTC in L1 does not necessarily transfer to the L2. Situational variables may affect an individual's WTC, but additionally, communication apprehension and self-perceived communicative competence also influence it (Piechurska-Kuciel, 2018).
Pawlak, Derenowski and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2018) found that affective concerns play a crucial role in how older adults approach the challenge of language learning and that debilitative anxiety is likely to impede the process. They found that some OALLs appear to lack or use appropriate strategies to combat negative emotions effectively. Although L2 learning can make older adults anxious, they are often determined to persevere and not give up. This resolve is aided by the supportive climate in their groups (Pawlak et al., 2018).

The need for learning to be pleasant and stress-free seems of prime importance for older learners, whose motivation is often related to finding an entertaining hobby and spending time with others (Grotek, 2018). Fear of failure only increases when older adult learners are faced with a stressful, fast-paced learning situation (Derenowski, 2018). Older adults may be insecure about their ability to learn an L2 and focus more on their struggles rather than successes. This could be as a result of their acceptance of the notion that older language learners are less successful language learners or as a result of their prior failures at learning a foreign language, which is what Singleton (2018) refers to as ‘age-related defeatism’.

Dewaele (2022) reports that positive emotions can also help to mitigate the effects of negative emotions. In contrast, learners in a high-anxiety classroom are more likely to feel under threat, which will lead them to clam up, narrow their focus and retain much less information. Repeated negative or positive classroom emotions have longer-term psychological consequences. Negative emotions risk undermining learners’ self-image and self-confidence, dampening their willingness to communicate and pushing them to play it safe and remain isolated. On the other hand, positive emotions can boost social cohesion and learners’ long-term resilience, encouraging them to explore and take linguistic risks without fear of punishment or ridicule.

Matsumoto (2019) found that for older adults, learning a language is rewarding because it increases their sense of purpose in their lives. Foreign language learning may positively contribute to the well-being of older adults who express their joy, their sense of belonging to a community, and their enthusiasm for learning a foreign language (Pikhart & Klimova, 2020). In addition, foreign language learning positively affects older adults’ mental health and expands their social networks (Pikhart & Klimova, 2020). Therefore, learning a foreign language
is a worthwhile pastime that gives older adults a sense of purpose in life and gives them inspiration.

Xiong and Zuo (2019) analysed the content of a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) discussion forum. They found six key motivations for older adults: solving problems, acquiring knowledge, improving cognition, seeking fun, benefiting others, and maintaining social contact. These motivations differed by age group and gender, but ‘improving cognition’ and ‘seeking fun’ were unique to older learners. Matsumoto (2019) relates older learners’ motivation to Bryant and Veroff’s (2017) concept of ‘savouring’. Savouring means noticing and appreciating the positive aspects of life and using activities to generate positive experiences. In contrast, Ramírez-Gómez (2016) stated that older learners often appear to believe that their eventual language learning ability and progress will be negatively impacted by the changes they have undergone as they have aged. Their involvement in learning activities may suffer if they believe that, despite their efforts, their results will be poor.

According to Gabryś-Barker (2018), through social engagement and involvement in the growth of one's knowledge and skills (e.g. language skills), lifelong learning gives older adults new possibilities for escaping a state of isolation, stagnation, and despair. It can more than anything else give life a new purpose. It is possible to see a reciprocal relationship between motivation and L2 learning success. More successful L2 learning is fostered by motivation, but in a mutually reinforcing cycle, successful L2 learning also increases motivation to even higher levels (Ortega, 2014).

Although a decline in functional capacities can affect motivation and learning, it is not a barrier (Derenowski, 2018). Antoniou, Gunasekera and Wong (2013) noted motivation to be a crucial component, which can be enhanced by ensuring that the learning material has immediate practical value and is rewarding.

According to Jaroszewska (2009), older adults’ motives for learning are associated with:

- **Interpersonal contacts and internal needs.** Independence during travels; exchanging opinions with foreigners; contact with other members of the group as well as the educator; acceptance and appreciation; being among other people; making new friendships and impressing other family
members; possibility to exchange opinions among peers; and to help others to learn.

- **Organising free time and realising dreams.** Learning a language as a way to organise free time; ambition to learn a new language that was impossible in the past; course participation as a way to avoid loneliness and everyday problems; language proficiency as a reflection of success.

- **Self-assessment and development of intellectual abilities.** Using a foreign language as a professional necessity; the need for intellectual challenges; comparing language competence with the language competencies of other learners; learning a language as memory training.

- **Association with previous language experience.** Recalling previously learnt language; language learning as a family tradition; finding out more about the native language of a deceased spouse; assessing language competence acquired during war.

- **Interest in other cultures.** Pleasure and satisfaction resulting from discovering new countries, nationalities and the possibility to participate in their culture; understanding and being closer to other parts of the human population; the need to enrich one’s international contacts by extending social relations; partaking in various cultural events connected with a particular language; listening to songs, watching movies and reading books in the language learned.

- **Linguistic interest.** Fascination with a particular language; the need to develop and continue previously ‘rooted’ passion for investigating linguistics; enjoyment resulting from the sounding of a particular language; interest in languages, especially comparing linguistic and etymological aspects.

Understanding older adults’ emotions and feelings is essential to providing a learning environment in which they feel comfortable and that is conducive to learning. The research questions in this study give insight into older adult learners’ feelings and emotions about using Moodle to learn languages. The findings will enable practitioners to design a learning space that is both appropriate and beneficial. The social aspects of language learning are now discussed in the following section.
2.2.2.3 Social aspects of language learning
From the discussion on cognition and affect, it is clear that learning new languages at a later age is still possible. This possibility might be beneficial not only to cognition and affect in general but also to social aspects of ageing. Stickler (2022) points out that the importance of others in the learning environment is immediately apparent. Collaboration and group work are essential features of language learning, and sociocultural theory stresses the importance of learning with others in social contexts. When applied to language learning, meaningful communication, which is relevant to the learner, is a central feature of the language learning process.

As Lantolf reminds us: ‘the source of development resides in the environment rather than in the individual’ (Lantolf, 2006, p. 726). Social L2 learning can therefore be defined as:

“learning through real-life or simulated environments where learners can interact with objects and people, perform actions, receive, use, and integrate perceptual, visuospatial, and other sensorimotor information, which enables learning and communication to become embodied” (Li and Jeong, 2020, p.1).

L2 learning is not only a meaningful activity but also stimulates social participation and interaction and increases independence for older adults (Antoniou et al., 2013). Communicating independently in a foreign language broadens an individual’s horizons and strengthens their self-worth and well-being (Pot et al., 2018). Since a close bond and strong sense of belonging are frequently developed between people sharing the same learning goals within a group of learners, L2 learning can be considered as a means of contrasting depression and loneliness, two factors that raise the risk of developing dementia (Bosisio, 2019).

While Illeris (2017) used the psychological concepts of motivation, emotion and volition in his ‘affect’ dimension as the driving forces behind learning, Norton (1995) used the term ‘investment’ to describe how learners’ social contexts and histories affect the amount of effort they choose to put into learning a second language:

“if learners invest in a second language, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources,
which will, in turn, increase the value of their cultural capital” (Norton, 1995, p. 17).

Illeris (2017) identified the essential component of human identity as being more or less constant over time and in all circumstances. On the other hand, Norton (2010) viewed identity as individuals’ experiences of their interactions with the social world, which is continually evolving over time and space. Despite the disparities in the approaches, both are concerned with human learning and how each learner interacts with their social environment. Both approaches correlate strongly with the findings in this study.

According to Ortega (2014), understanding a learner's investment in learning a second language requires taking into account their identities, goals, and changing social environment because these factors all play a role in building distinct investments at various periods and in various circumstances. The idea that L2 learners' emotive and symbolic attachments to distinct communities of practice are in addition to their investments serves to support this concept.

Lantolf (2014) argued that learners are social agents that continually make decisions regarding their behaviours, which are motivated by the desire to accomplish particular objectives. Therefore, learning an L2 involves agency, which is relational rather than individual and, like other ideas in SLA like identities, is co-constructed and regularly renegotiated in social circumstances (Lantolf, 2014). Learners can modify and have some influence over their circumstances and surrounds, and they have the agency to operate within social institutions. Even if a certain learning situation or activity is unique and occurs at a specific time and location, the action is grounded on shared, explicit and implicit understandings of how the world functions. From the sociocultural perspective, an individual's agency is never their own and is instead the product of a relationship that is continually co-constructed and renegotiated with society and people around them (Yashima & Fukui, 2020). In other words, agency is socially constructed and embedded in social contexts.

Collaboration can lead to possibilities for language practice, the acquisition of new knowledge, and the development of relationships both inside and outside the classroom (Kukulska-Hulme & Viberg, 2018). Collaboration makes the learning process more engaging and meaningful by making the learners rely on one
another in their pursuit of knowledge. When older adults learn in a group, they do not feel alone and isolated.

Drawing from sociocultural theory, language serves as a socially positioned medium for human cognitive development. Studies in SLA support the use of cooperative learning tasks. Research demonstrates that collaborative discourse promotes language learning and that the solutions reached by learners throughout this process are frequently accurate and have a long-lasting impact on their language comprehension (Garcia Mayo, 2021). The foundation of collaborative learning is the notion that individuals may learn more effectively in groups than they do alone when pursuing a common objective. However, collaborative learning is not merely grouping learners to work together; several important elements are involved, such as negotiation and shared meaning. Collaborative learning can have positive implications because it promotes a more active and responsible role for the learner. The learners depend on each other in the pursuit of knowledge and skills, which can make the learning more meaningful and interesting. Because learning occurs socially through group interactions, collaborative learning can provide social support so learners do not feel alone and isolated. Ibrahim et al., (2015) reported that learners' motivation can be heightened due to collaborative learning because they feel empowered in their learning process.

The discussion above suggests that L2 learning should be viewed as a tool to encourage social interaction and integration rather than as a goal in itself. Cognitive effects may be observed through the stimulation of social well-being. In other words, L2 involves all three dimensions. According to Illeris’s (2003) theory, the cognitive and affective dimensions of learning are closely linked. The social dimension motivates the individual to acquire the learning content. In return, useful, relevant, and interesting learning content can stimulate the individual to be more motivated in learning.
2.3 Older adult learners and technology

The use of technology in everyday life has become ubiquitous. Technology has the power to enhance learning, to increase access to educational opportunities, and to enable older adults to obtain digital skills that are essential for thriving in and contributing to today's society. While these changes offer new opportunities for language learning, they also create new challenges for OALLs.

2.3.1 Digital language learning

As early as 2001, the ability of learners to use new technologies was recognised as one of the important heuristic skills by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL), an international standard for describing language ability (Council of Europe, 2020). Digital Learning is the application of technology to the teaching and learning process. Digital Learning is defined by the Alliance for Excellent Education (2016) as ‘any instructional practice that effectively uses technology to strengthen a student’s learning experience’. In order to ensure that every learner reaches their full potential, high-quality instruction is prioritised in digital learning, which also provides access to challenging information, feedback, opportunities for studying whenever and wherever is most convenient for the learners, as well as individualised instruction.

For Piechurska-Kuciel and Szyszka (2018), older adults are a ‘valuable’ group of language learners who could benefit from explicit instruction in the use of technology. Ronda and Belda-Medina (2018) found that instead of isolating learners, technology might be used to promote learner interaction both inside and outside of the classroom, implement a cooperative learning methodology in the classroom, and allows learners to become more independent and self-assured in their language learning progress. Older adults are able to strengthen the friendships of their pre-existing social relationships and develop a sense of togetherness. When individuals effectively transition face-to-face (F2F) interactions online, they may feel empowered (Lind et al., 2021).

According to Li and Lan (2021), Digital Language Learning (DLL) broadly refers to systems or methods for learning languages that are based on digital technology or that are augmented by technology. Although a DLL method incorporates many of the same principles as computer-assisted language learning (CALL), DLL concentrates on more contemporary tools and platforms made possible by the most recent advancements in digital technologies. They make an effort to
investigate the potential of technologies for fostering autonomous, self-directed, and exploratory learning. Computer-assisted approaches are being replaced in both theory and practice by emerging technologies and academic fields including multimedia learning, blended learning, situated/embodied learning, and social learning (Li & Lan, 2021).

The worldwide spread of computers, smartphones, and other technologies today has made learning foreign languages easier than ever before. Many western societies are now more technologically advanced and multilingual. Younger learners, commonly known as ‘digital natives’, who have high levels of digital literacy have generally been the focus of language learning innovations developed by the tech sector and the majority of DLL research. People over 50 who were not raised with digital technology have been ignored in terms of their true needs, aspirations, and capabilities (Puebla & García, 2021). This is troubling because a large and rapidly expanding segment of the population, older adults, is turning more and more to digital technologies to further their learning objectives. When older adults use digital technology, especially for L2 learning, they benefit significantly. DLL may provide opportunities for informal, authentic, contextualised, social, interactive, and collaborative learning (Ji et al., 2019; Ramírez-Gómez, 2016a).

Kukulska-Hulme et al., (2017) stated that language learning can be pursued in a variety of ways based on shifting societal, educational, and professional demands as well as individual interests and requirements. Technology-mediated language learning can reduce learners’ fear of failure, embarrassment, or losing face and increase learners’ drive to take chances and be innovative when using language to convey meaning. Technologies such as Skype and Zoom can enable learners to meet other language speakers in different locations and open up transformative exposure to authentic language environments and cultural enactments, along with additional input sources (González-Lloret & Ortega, 2015).

DLL technology also enables learners to construct their own learning experience by accessing a variety of multimedia resources, interact and participate in collaborative learning research, and complete numerous activities across time and location. Informal learning is made possible anytime, anywhere (Puebla et al., 2022). In a study by Morrison and Mccutheon (2019), respondents noted that engaging with others to learn about their interests or hobbies enhanced both their
sense of self-efficacy and their sense of community, particularly if others saw them as an ‘expert’ in their field of knowledge.

As long as they can use technology to enhance certain elements of their lives or to fulfil particular requirements, such as learning, remaining informed, and staying in touch with friends and family, older adults are prepared to put in the time and effort necessary to learn how to use it (Puebla et al., 2022). Ronda and Belda-Medina (2018) found that some learners use technological resources to practise and play together with their grandchildren at home as an example of intergenerational communication. Amaro et al., (2016) also described the interaction between different generations during the collaborative use of devices between grandparents and grandchildren.

Technology can facilitate social or intergenerational interaction and provide cooperative learning opportunities for older adult learners. Jin et al., (2019) found that by participating in cooperative activities, older adults who use technology can exchange information and feelings, advance their expertise, and widen their social networks. For instance, by participating in forum postings, making friends with other users, and commenting on their video content. It has been suggested that multimodal, interactive, real-world L2 content enhances both L2 learning and cognitive ability by increasing engagement of various brain areas in both hemispheres (Li and Jeong, 2020; Li and Lan, 2021).

Many older adults have a strong desire to develop computer skills. They do not want to fall behind; they want to be ‘modern’. Older learners need to see a relationship between digital abilities and their daily lives in order to learn effectively (Jin et al., 2019). For instance, in order to learn how to send an email, a learner must want to communicate or feel connected to other email users. The more they can relate their digital skills to the real world, the more motivated they become. Although Gonzales (2021) could not complete her Master’s thesis due to the COVID-19 pandemic, she planned to provide practical workshops using ‘how to’ instructions for tasks such as opening a Gmail account, a Facebook account and using Google Meet. The goal of the sessions was to introduce older adults to the potential benefits of technology. They would have provided older adults with the chance to pick up new abilities that will help them now and in the future. These older adults wanted to age successfully and with fresh independence and self-assurance. ‘How to’ worksheets were something the learners in this study had
been introduced to; the findings show that they could be a useful resource for providing additional support for OALLs.

Golonka et al., (2014) believed that through enhanced access to input in the target language, possibilities for interaction, and feedback, technology can boost learner interest and motivation. Technology in language learning has also been linked to autonomous learning, allowing learners to continue their learning beyond the classroom. Learner autonomy is a relational interplay between contextual and personal elements rather than a specific attribute or degree of independence in learning that people possess. Being autonomous helps learners develop the awareness, knowledge and skills they need to be able and willing to take control of their learning. Furthermore, learning how to use technology can increase a sense of achievement for older adults (Lee et al., 2013).

Klimova (2020) reviewed studies on the use of mobile applications by older adults to learn foreign languages. The findings show that older adults can benefit greatly from studying a foreign language. They include enhancing cognitive function, having a beneficial psychological influence, lowering anxiety, boosting confidence, forming new social connections and experiencing self-realization, and learning a foreign language. She also discovered a lack of studies on the use of technology, such as mobile apps, in EFL learning among older people.

Other research suggests that technology may be an effective tool for learning a foreign language. Learning to operate a computer can improve one’s sense of competence and have positive effects on an older person’s wellbeing, sense of independence, and social interactions. In their study of French learners, Ware et al., (2017) discovered DLL to be possible for this age range but quite challenging for participants without prior English language expertise. However, the majority of participants thought the programme was interesting and fun.

The adoption of technology presents some difficulties that older adults may find difficult to overcome (Derenowski, 2018). When it comes to using digital technology, many older adults encounter a number of obstacles, including a lack of knowledge and confidence, feelings of inadequacy, and scepticism regarding technological innovation (Puebla et al., 2022). In spite of the fact that many older adults in the Jin et al., (2019) study indicated a positive attitude toward using technology, they were nevertheless hesitant due to technology anxiety, privacy protection, and a lack of adequate emotional and technological assistance.
According to Chaffin and Harlow (2005), fear of breaking the computer, feeling too old to learn, or worrying that the computer would blow up if they press the wrong key are the most common causes of computer anxiety in older adults. Jin et al., (2019) also found that when using technology, older adults require both emotional and technical support from friends and family. As a result, educators or instructors should think about providing the appropriate content to lessen older adults’ mental load in DLL (Zheng, 2012), such as spending more time explaining the basic concept of the technology itself.

DLL gives learners access to a variety of web-based tools that enable them to publish their work and interact with real audiences in authentic settings, which can empower them (Motteram, 2013). It is also one way to reduce the disconnection between the inside and the outside of the classroom (Barrs, 2012), a common problem in EFL contexts due to the lack of opportunities to use the target language. Cox (2019) also argued that older adults might be willing to communicate in the target language but lack the opportunity to do so. The use of technology can help older adult learners to overcome these issues. DLL gives learners the chance to communicate with one another outside the classroom in a collaborative environment. Blake (2005) described this communication as the essential ‘glue’ that holds learners together while they are learning a language online, contending that it keeps them engaged, enables them to utilise the language they have been learning, and helps them stay motivated.

Stickler (2022) recommends using DLL, with affordances such as ubiquitous access to resources and opportunities for communication and learning in social spaces. With DLL, the availability of information, tools, and opportunities for practise in the target language outside of the classroom has increased for learners. Benson (2017) recommended moving away from the dichotomy of ‘in-class and ‘out-of-class learning. Instead, he proposed the more holistic concept of an individual’s ‘language learning environment’, made up of a variety of settings, only one of which is the classroom. Different settings offer diverse affordances and constraints for language learning, which can connect with and complement each other. According to Kern (2006), a metaphor of technology as a medium or technology has been established by social theories of L2 learning that creates “sites for interpersonal communication, multimedia publication, distance learning, community participation, and identity formation” (p. 192). When it comes to language learning, these websites offer chances for learners to interact with
speakers of the target language in monolingual societies like France, where there are few opportunities for them to do so.

Technology gives learners additional chances to establish online communities of practice and interact with others. Online communities of practice take advantage of the internet to participate in collaborative learning and activities centred on the shared goal of language learning. As mentioned in section 2.1.3, technology mediates online language learning communities using the Internet to overcome physical boundaries. Technology can facilitate communities of practice in education, providing an online space to connect a diverse community of learners. Technology allows learners to engage in mutual learning without time and place constraints.

Hoadley and Kilner's (2005) C4P model identified four ways in which technology can support a CoP:

- ‘Connections’ to link people with others who have similar practices;
- ‘Content’ to provide a shared repository of information resources;
- ‘Conversation’ to provide tools for discussing with others;
- ‘Context’ to provide awareness of the information context of various resources.

Figure 4: C4P model for Communities of Practice
The C4P model suggests that “knowledge is generated and shared when there is purposeful conversation around content in context” (Hoadley and Kilner, 2005, p. 33). These elements make up a non-linear system that exists in a CoP. Although the relationships between the elements are not one-to-one, a rise in one of the elements tends to increase all of the others. Hoadley and Kilner (2005) proposed that the likelihood and effectiveness of knowledge development and transfer will increase with the degree to which these factors are present in any community.

2.3.2 Task-based language teaching using technology
In this thesis, the application of SCT to language teaching and learning can be found in the form of Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT). The introduction of communicative competence and communicative language teaching (CLT) in the 1970s emphasized the shift to base language teaching on communication in social contexts. TBLT is an extension of CLT in that its theory of language is similar to CLT but provides much more attention to the theory of learning. TBLT is a language teaching approach in which the focus of instruction is using language to do meaningful tasks that resemble the type of activities learners need to do in their real life.

The foundation of TBLT is an interactional, usage-based approach to language learning (Ziegler, 2016). The interaction approach to SLA claims that conversational changes made during communication help L2 development by offering learners the ability to acquire modified interactional feedback and understandable input, recognise distinctions between their interlanguage and L2 features, and produce output (Ziegler, 2016). Traditional approaches break language down into decontextualized pieces that learners must comprehend before they can correctly apply them in realistic, practical circumstances (Ziegler, 2016). TBLT, in contrast, is a process-based method that emphasises interaction, meaning, and what language learners can do with it. It centres on the task as the unit of focus. TBLT emphasises the importance of social and collaborative aspects of language acquisition and how the interaction between learners can scaffold and assist the L2 acquisition process. In TBLT, learners engage actively in communication to fulfil a meaningful task or goal and language is used as a tool to accomplish the task.

The CEFRL (Council of Europe, 2020) describes what learners ‘can do’ using the language they are learning at different stages of their language learning process (Appendix A). These ‘can do’ statements describe language use across five
language skills: reading, writing, listening, spoken interaction and spoken production. Even though the CEFRL does not advocate any particular teaching method, its principles and action-oriented approach lend themselves to a TBLT approach (Whyte, 2017; Little, 2006).

TBLT is a type of teaching that emphasises learning through experiencing the use of the L2. It is an approach to engage learners “in natural language use and promote acquisition by having them perform a series of communicative tasks” (Ellis, 2017, p. 111). González-Lloret and Ortega (2015) suggested that tasks must be created to encourage learners to communicate knowledge, opening up a variety of opportunities for interaction and, eventually, L2 development, in order to realise the full potential of technology-mediated TBLT. They added that tasks must take into account learners' technological and digital literacy and skill in order to achieve successful task orientation and completion. This acknowledges these areas as resources and skills that must also be developed.

Technology can be used in the learning process in a variety of ways, both inside and outside the classroom. Language learners can practise their language skills at their own speed and have flexibility in when and how they use technology. When used properly to support learning, technology can offer an enjoyable and effective approach to learning foreign languages.
Summary of Chapter 2

SCT and SLA

In section 2.1, the application of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory to second language acquisition showed how the social environment is not the context for, but rather the source of, language development. The zone of proximal development is the distance between what a learner can do unsupported and what they can do when the right support is in place. This thesis applies these theories to language learning within an online social learning space, Moodle.

Social learning spaces are environments that encourage collaboration and support formal and informal learning. Etienne and Beverley Wenger-Trayner's (2020) concept of social learning spaces is a development of Lave and Wenger's (1991) concepts of 'situated learning' and 'communities of practice' and considers a social learning space as an experience of engagement that takes place among learners in their pursuit of learning. The learners in this study are older adults, and their pursuit is learning a foreign language within a social learning space in both the classroom and Moodle.

OALLs and three dimensions of learning

Section 2.2 defined the term 'older adults' as those over 50 and established that, the 'earlier the better' belief does not stand up to scrutiny in instructed language learning. Singleton (2018) demonstrated that while we know some things about the L2 learning processes in older adults, we do not know enough, and, as he said, “we are in need of more research on third-age learning in general and of more research which specifically focuses on older adults’ capacity for and benefits from additional language learning” (p.27).

Illeris (2003) proposed three interrelated dimensions of learning: cognitive, affective and social. These dimensions can structure the study of older adult language learners in greater depth, helping to improve our understanding of language learning for this group of learners. While the literature shows that language learning can offer numerous benefits to older adults, there appears to be little research that discusses the specific cognitive, affective and social dimensions of language learning for older adults using technology, such as Moodle.
OALLs and technology

In section 2.3, the literature has shown that Digital Language Learning may be beneficial to older adults. Acquiring digital skills can be rewarding and empowering, providing easy access to the target language and more opportunities to interact. However, because of negative attitudes or a lack of confidence in their own abilities, many older adults are still reluctant to embrace these learning tools.

Although there is growing evidence that the adage “you can’t teach an old dog new tricks” is a myth and an example of ageism, there is still a lack of research on older adults’ adoption and use of technologies for supporting language learning (Puebla et al., 2022).

Chapter 2 has given an insight into the literature relevant to this thesis but indicates there is a gap that I hope to fill. The literature points to a number of questions relating to older adults’ use of technology to learn languages, so in order to remain as open as possible to potential findings, this study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the challenges for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?
   a. What are the cognitive challenges?
   b. What are the affective challenges?
   c. What are the social challenges?

2. What are the rewards for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?
   a. What are the cognitive rewards?
   b. What are the affective rewards?
   c. What are the social rewards?
Chapter 3 Methodology

Chapter 1 introduced the general background and explained the aim of the study. Chapter 2 reviewed the literature that led to the research questions. Chapter 3 describes the research context, paradigm and participants before explaining the methods used to collect the data. Details about the data analysis methods are then presented in preparation for the findings that follow in Chapter 4. The ethical considerations and possible issues of validity and reliability are addressed before a chapter summary is provided.

3.1 Research context

My study took place at an adult education centre in central France, where over 60% of the learners are aged 50+. The centre offers courses in various areas including computer skills, accounting and several languages. The learners come from various backgrounds and have a wealth of experience. The participants in this study are English language learners who attend weekly lessons of 90 minutes each.

From a sociocultural perspective on language, meanings created through communication are not solely based on language use but also involve situated meaning-making. In sociocultural theory a task is viewed as an artefact for mediating learning through interaction (Ellis et al., 2019). If learning occurs through social interaction, then tasks must optimise opportunities for scaffolded social interactions through which learning may occur. Task-based language teaching (section 3.1.1), used in the context of this study, emphasises interactive social tasks in a learner-centred environment.

In addition to the weekly lessons, learners at the centre have access to online learning via Moodle, making the learning environment a blended model as described in section 3.1.2. Not all teachers use Moodle at the centre, but it is strongly encouraged. Some learners have been attending lessons for up to ten years at the centre and using Moodle for up to seven years. More information about the participants is given in section 3.3.

3.1.1 Task-Based Language Teaching

In this study a Task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) methodology was used as it offers an ideal setting for negotiation, feedback, and output, thereby providing opportunities for L2 development. From a sociocultural perspective, tasks involve
interaction and emphasise the importance of the collaborative nature of the interaction for learning and development. Tasks are created to encourage the sharing of information amongst learners, providing numerous possibilities for engagement and L2 improvement. Tasks are also created to improve learners' digital and technological literacy (González-Lloret & Ortega, 2015).

The concept of zones of proximal development (ZPD) can be used to explain how learners participating in task-based interaction are able to complete tasks that they would not be able to complete on their own. As Peterson (2010) explained, this idea is related to how collaborative interaction, also known as scaffolding, plays a part in task completion in the sociocultural perspective of learning. Through scaffolding, which is collaborative communication in which a more experienced interlocutor assists a learner in completing a task they are unable to perform on their own, learners construct zones of proximal development. One example is responding to another learner in a written activity using what has previously been written as help or inspiration. This procedure sets up the environment for L2 development to take place.

Van den Branden (2006, p. 4) defined a task as ‘an activity in which a person engages in order to attain an objective, and which necessitates the use of language.’ Ellis (2017) suggested six ‘criterial features’ for TBLT:

- tasks involve a plan for learner activity;
- they have a primary focus on making meaning;
- they engage with real-world, authentic language use;
- they focus on any or all of the four language skills;
- they engage learners in cognitive skills to accomplish them;
- they have a defined communication-based learning outcome.

The participants in this study were taught using a combination of open and closed tasks, where open tasks have no predetermined end, such in a debate or general discussion, while closed tasks call for learners to choose a solution from a limited number of options (Ellis, 2017).

3.1.2 Blended learning
A blended learning model is used at the centre as the F2F classes are accompanied by access to Moodle (section 3.1.3). Participation in Moodle is not
obligatory but is strongly advised as it provides additional opportunities to practise the TL. Most learners access Moodle at least once a week, and others multiple times. Blended learning settings that use platforms, like Moodle, may offer unique advantages and affordances in a task-based learning environment.

The term ‘blended learning’ started to appear in the literature across disciplines around 2000 (Grgurovic, 2017). As early as 1988, The Open University, for example, offered a course that included an online discussion component (Bates, 2015). Because it describes the context of this study well, I use the definition of Blended Learning by Schwartzbeck and Wolf (2012):

“Blended learning is any time a student learns, at least in part, at a supervised brick-and-mortar location away from home and, at least in part, through online delivery with some element of student control over time, place, path, and/or pace”. (p. 1)

Blended learning technologies typically involve a Learning Management System (LMS), also known as a Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) or a Content Management System (CMS) such as ‘Blackboard’ or ‘Moodle’ (Sharma, 2017). The benefits of using an LMS for teachers as part of a blended learning model are that they can expand classroom study time. Nevertheless, teachers still need to develop the competencies in order to take advantage of what technology can provide (Carrier and Nye, 2017). For some teachers, this will be an excellent opportunity for professional growth; for others, it might seem like an extra burden to add to an already heavy workload (Rubadeau, 2017). Many teachers feel they do not have the knowledge, time, and support they need (Kenney, Banerjee and Newcombe, 2010). The use of technology for teaching and learning raises vital issues about the professional development of teachers. Much research has been carried out in this area, for example, Kessler and Hubbard (2017), Stickler and Hampel (2015), Whyte (2015) and Guichon (2013), although teacher development is beyond the scope of this study.

3.1.3 Learning Management System: Moodle
Learning Management Systems (LMS) are software platforms designed to plan, implement and assess learning. There are many different LMS platforms available, such as Blackboard, Canvas and Edmodo. The modular object-oriented dynamic learning environment (Moodle) is a free, open-source LMS and was used as part of the blended model in this study. Commercial LMS platforms charge licence
fees for each user, whereas open-source LMS platforms do not. This is the primary distinction between open-source and commercial platforms. Open-source is a term that originally referred to open-source software. Open-source software is code that is designed to be publicly accessible - anyone can see, modify, and distribute the code as they see fit. Moodle.org reported that, as of 5th August 2021, there were 187,000 instances of Moodle running on websites across 246 countries; these offered 37 million courses, with 277 million users and well over 1.5 billion enrolments.

Moodle was created in 2002, based on the notion that learning occurs best when individuals have the chance to create, share, interact, and learn with others. Moodle was first created as part of a PhD dissertation: “An exploration of the use of open-source software called Moodle to support a social constructivist epistemology of teaching and learning within Web-based communities of reflective inquiry” (Dougiamas & Taylor, 2003). Although the PhD remained unfinished, a global community of developers, partners and educators now supports Moodle.

The syllabus, content, interactive opportunities, and feedback for language learners are all connected and integrated on Moodle in both synchronous and asynchronous modes. By exchanging ideas, working in small groups, conversing, and commenting on experiences, Moodle's tools foster interpersonal communication and social networking. This communication enables learners to co-construct knowledge, which is at the core of sociocultural theory. Moodle also provides functions to scaffold learning; the course structure outlines the learners’ journey and provides spaces for discussing and sharing media and documents.

Stickler, Emke, and the MoreDOTS Project Team (2015) provided a Moodle-based workspace in their project for training language teachers, based on the understanding that learning takes place when the learners can explore a new environment and actively engage with it. They supported this active engagement by scaffolding the desired knowledge in the form of a) carefully designed materials, b) timely, constructive feedback, and c) available continuous peer support (p. 2). The peer support enabled through Moodle and similar platforms makes LMS platforms particularly useful for blended learning because the learning and co-construction can happen outside the allocated formal teacher time.

Through private and public online dialogues, the Moodle language learning environment provides possibilities for peer support and reflection on learning
experiences. This environment opens up new possibilities for learning outside the traditional classroom setting through conversation and involvement in collaborative settings. Since learners can connect with one another and develop a sense of affiliation and community, isolation outside of class is no longer a barrier. With Moodle, learners can take an active role in their learning by asking questions and taking part in more collaborative, open-ended learning opportunities to supplement face-to-face instruction.

Because it is interactive, presents multimedia content, and offers numerous chances for collaboration, following instructions, providing and receiving feedback, and reinforcing past knowledge, the Moodle platform can be a useful learning tool. Moodle is organised into sections that are broken down into smaller blocks and organised around topics or weekly schedules. Lessons, tests, assignments, and forums are just a few of the resources that each section offers. These resources can be connected to a built-in grade book. Moodle is available in many different languages, but it is possible to set the default language of Moodle so learners interact with and in the TL. Figure 5 shows the basic layout of the Moodle interface.

Figure 5: Moodle interface (source www.Moodle.org)
The basic layout of Moodle is organised around sections where teachers can display their learning resources and activities for learners. Despite the fact that their layouts might vary, they frequently consist of number of centre sections where materials are displayed and side blocks where additional features or information are provided. Depending on their role and whatever access that the administrator has allowed them, a learner’s view of these blocks will vary. The basic layout of the interface has four main blocks:

1. Navigation block: Normally visible on all pages, this block helps you find your way around the course and site.

2. Administration block: Again, ordinarily visible on all pages, this block gives different levels of access to teachers and learners.

3. Course sections: This is where the learning materials are displayed. This element may be arranged in one or multiple weeks, topics, forums or other (non-standard) layouts.

4. Side blocks: The blocks you see depend on what the administrator has selected and what a teacher chooses to add.

Numerous resources can be incorporated into Moodle. These consist of written text-based or HTML-formatted materials as well as multimedia resources including images, audio, and video. Moodle allows teachers (and learners) to add materials that might otherwise be more of a challenge to share in F2F contexts, including pictures, songs and links to other multimedia. When learners search the Internet and share artefacts with each other, the sharing of ‘knowledge’ is no longer limited to just the teacher but is now a collective experience (Siharath, 2013). The extracts in this thesis are taken from the Moodle platform used by the learners in this study. Extract 1 shows an example of an A1 learner’s view of the Moodle interface.
Extract 1 shows a video embedded into Moodle and the learners' view. Learning tasks or projects can be designed to allow for cooperation between the teacher and learners or among learners by using different formats of social interaction. Extract 1 shows access to a document ‘Do you like mornings?’ and the audio files that accompany it. Communication can be synchronous in chat rooms or asynchronous in forums and extract 1 shows the tasks ‘Complete your entry for the forum New Year’s Resolutions’ and ‘A typical day’, which are examples of asynchronous forums. Social networking studies have demonstrated the power of forums and other social spaces to strengthen bonds between people. There seem to be psychological advantages in the form of improved self-worth and general well-being (Stanley, 2013).

Interactive tools on Moodle allow learners to collaborate in different formats (text, audio, and video). These tools provide variety and novelty and can be used to support the development of a Community of Practice (CoP), as explained in section 2.1.3. The mutual engagement of learners in online activities can create a CoP (Wenger, 1998), which extends beyond the classroom's physical space and connects them to other learners in the co-construction of meaningful texts.
In the context of this study, the learners were able to communicate with a group of adults learning French in an educational setting in Derby, UK. Through the exchange of videos, posted on the respective Moodle for each group, the learners were able to listen to messages sent to them and to record themselves in return messages.

Moodle provides opportunities for corrective feedback (CF). No single or predetermined type of CF is the most effective for learning from the perspective of SCT. Instead, for CF to be effective, it needs to consider the learner’s current and potential level of performance, i.e., ZPD. Providing such carefully attuned feedback can be challenging to implement in a classroom. Extract 2 shows an example of how Moodle can be used to provide CF.

Extract 2: Example of corrective feedback in Moodle

Forums can provide spaces for differentiated learning where both learners and teachers can exchange ideas by asking questions or making comments. Before posting or replying, a learner might think about previous posts and prepare their responses. When using a forum in a language classroom, a user (a teacher or a learner) can start a subject thread by posing a query, outlining a problem, or outlining a task; other users can respond to the first forum post as well as any other posts in the forum. Additionally, users can attach files to posts, including images, videos, and documents. The forum tool in Moodle allows learners to start discussion threads and reply to others. It provides the potential for learner agency, given that learners have space to own the threads they start. They can express themselves through their choices as they structure their posts. Furthermore, they can participate in and reply to threads from others that they find the most interesting or stimulating. Teachers can also easily add topics or reply directly to learner threads on the forum and provide opportunities for CF.
3.2 Research paradigm

Sociocultural learning theory is a collective description of several approaches that emphasise the social elements of learning. SCT contends that the individual develops through social interaction and is founded on a viewpoint that does not separate the individual from the social environment (Lantolf et al., 2015). Constructivist learning theories can be seen as forms of sociocultural theory focusing on mental processes (Stickler, 2022). Vygotsky’s (1978) socio-constructivist learning theory represents the stages of development reached by children as formed in an exchange between the inner workings of the mind and the stimuli received from outside, which have to be internalised before they can be processed.

This study employs an interpretive socio-constructivist paradigm. Socio-constructivism views social reality as being collaboratively constructed by human beings as they make sense of the world through social action (Stanfield, 2015). According to social constructivists, learning is the process of constructing knowledge alongside peers in a social learning environment to produce group meaning and understanding. A socio-constructivist paradigm for language learning would be, according to Stanfield (2015), that:

“the consciousness of the language learner and indeed the researcher is not only formed by being in the world with others but also contributes to the formation of social relations and reorders our understanding of the world through the social action of language acquisition and research ” (p. 70).

From a methodological perspective, the naturalistic orientation of qualitative research means that researchers are interested in human participants in natural settings and prefer data sources that will generate insights into participants' lived worlds, avoiding data collected under artificial conditions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). In contrast to Action Research, the learners in this study used Moodle without any intervention that changed their usual practice. Data were collected at the end of the academic year, and interviews took place near the end of their course.

For constructivists, assimilating information, connecting it to prior knowledge, and cognitively processing it are the three steps that lead to meaning or understanding. According to Bates (2015), constructivists consider that learning is a social process requiring communication between learners, teachers and others. Technology cannot replace the social process, although it might facilitate it (Bates,
2015). Social constructivists believe that the learning process works best through discussion and social interaction, allowing us to test and challenge our own understandings with others. A social constructivist epistemology prioritises active, exploratory learning based on social and collaborative principles and is reflected in learner-centred methodologies.

A socio-constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011), implying multiple interpretations of reality exist. In contrast to relativism, realism takes the view that there is an underlying reality that can be uncovered through research. Relativist ontology is the belief that reality is a subjective experience and that there is no one external reality. In this way of thinking, reality is human experience, and human experience is reality. This point of view goes beyond two people having different experiences of the same external world; rather, it asserts that their worlds are distinct. Multiple realities come with numerous interpretations of experience—there are as many other realities as there are people. My research, from a relativist ontology, is to understand the subjective experience of reality and multiple truths. This study analyses data from learners’ perceptions in order to create learners’ stories that bring individual quotes together to portray how the world is experienced and constructed by those living in it.
3.3 Research participants

This study used a non-probability sampling technique - purposive sampling, which involved selecting participants based on specific criteria. The aim of purposive sampling is to examine particular features of a group of people of specific interest. Learners within the age category 50-75 were invited to participate in this study.

Sixty learners were contacted by email and invited to participate in the study. The Participant Information Sheet (Appendix B) was also included in the email. Learners were invited from five classes with two different teachers, myself and a colleague, to collect data representing different language levels and uses of Moodle. The objective was to obtain a variety of perspectives that could be examined during the data analysis. Although twenty-six learners agreed to participate, due to their availability, only twenty-two were interviewed.

Table 1 presents the learners that were invited to participate and those who accepted. The Common European Framework Reference for Languages (CEFRL) level of the class and the number of learners within that class are also shown. A complete list of learners’ details, age, CEFRL level, time at the centre, time using Moodle can be found in Appendix D.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLASS</th>
<th>CEFRL LEVEL</th>
<th>N° LEARNERS IN CLASS</th>
<th>N° INVITED</th>
<th>N° ACCEPTED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2A</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2B</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2A</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2B</td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>74</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Learners that were invited to participate

An international benchmark for describing language proficiency is the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFRL). It describes language ability on a six-point scale, from A1 for beginners to C2 for those who have mastered a language (Council of Europe, 2020). A summary of the levels with their corresponding descriptors can be found in Appendix A.
Table 2 details the twenty-two learners who participated in the initial interviews, their CEFRL level, mean age, age range and gender.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CEFRL LEVEL</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M_AGE</th>
<th>AGE_RANGE</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>65.66</td>
<td>60-71</td>
<td>F: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>64.22</td>
<td>56-74</td>
<td>F: 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>65.85</td>
<td>64-69</td>
<td>F: 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>M: 3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Initial interview participants

From the twenty-two learners who participated in the initial interviews, six were asked to take part in a follow-up interview. Table 3 shows their details. L*1 refers to learner 1, and each learner was given a pseudonym.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEARNER</th>
<th>PSEUDONYM</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L*15</td>
<td>ANGELA</td>
<td>A1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*4</td>
<td>BRENDA</td>
<td>A1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*5</td>
<td>CAROL</td>
<td>A2A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*8</td>
<td>DOROTHY</td>
<td>A2A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*19</td>
<td>EVELYNE</td>
<td>B2A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*1</td>
<td>FRANK</td>
<td>B2A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Learners asked to take part in a follow-up interview

Frank (L*1) requested to be left out of the follow-up interviews because he worried about contact during the pandemic.
3.4 Research methods

The goal of qualitative research is to extract as much information as possible from a relatively small sample size. Since it enables participants to express themselves while generating rich data, it can be a more flexible approach than quantitative research. The data are used to understand complex concepts, experiences, and opinions. There may be limitations to collecting qualitative data, such as that findings can be more difficult to generalise, and it is often time-consuming. There are, however, many benefits; qualitative data can give more detailed accounts of individual experiences and perceptions, which was what I aimed to collect. Case studies, in particular, describe a specific group in fine detail to explain certain phenomena (Schofield, 2007). With this in mind, and the overall number of potential participants at the centre, a quantitative approach was not really a viable option for this study.

In order to obtain the rich, detailed information needed to answer my research questions, this study uses a case study methodology. For decades, case study research has been used productively in L2 teaching and learning research (Duff & Anderson, 2015). Case study research is carried out when a topic needs to be understood in-depth, particularly if this has not been done before. Such research aims to explore a specific situation and not to derive a single conclusion but multiple conclusions.

Case study research often focuses on ‘how’ or ‘why’ questions (Yin, 2009) and when “the investigator has little control over events, and the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context” (Yin, 2009 p. 2). Yin (2009) claimed that the researcher can gain insight when participants recount their experiences. They are then able to explain real-life causal links within a particular context. Regarding generalisability, the goal of this study is not to produce a set of results that can be duplicated but to create a coherent and illuminating description of a particular context (Schofield, 2007). The findings may then be used to improve the understanding of other groups of learners in similar contexts.

Research using case studies enables in-depth, multifaceted examinations of complicated problems in practical contexts. Case study research is inherently multimodal because it uses more than one form of data within a research paradigm or more than one form from different paradigms. Case studies frequently focus on qualitative data by using observations, interviews, and secondary and
primary source analyses (e.g. newspaper articles, photographs, official records). Because case studies are based on qualitative data analysis, a lot depends on a researcher’s interpretation of the information they have acquired.

In order to mitigate against subjectivity and/or bias, data were collected from multiple sources, initial interviews, follow-up stimulated recall interviews and screenshots from Moodle to enable triangulation. The data collection and analysis techniques are detailed in section 3.5 and 3.6 respectively. The next section describes the pilot studies I undertook and the changes I made to my research design following them.

3.4.1 Pilot studies

Two pilot studies were carried out prior to the main research reported in this thesis. The first pilot was primarily to test the interview questions I wanted to use with participants. After considering the results, published in Wainwright (2019), the methods and tools were modified accordingly. Subsequently, I was more aware of closed versus open questioning techniques, having backup questions and giving the participants more time to reflect before replying. Having developed my interview skills, questions and protocol for subsequent interviews, I felt more at ease, and participants were able to respond in greater detail, providing more in-depth and rich data to be analysed.

For the second pilot, I tried using Wenger, Trayner and de Laat's (2011) value creation framework (Figure 6). The concept of 'value' relates to participation in social learning spaces and is defined as what is important, worthy and valuable to the individuals involved in the community (Wenger-Trayner et al., 2019). The value creation framework is grounded in social learning theory (Wenger et al., 2011). It incorporates both a rigorous method for evaluating learning in a community and a philosophy of change regarding how social learning might affect the world. Instead of information, skills, or curriculum, the emphasis is on the experience and identity of learners as well as on connections and interactions (Etienne and Beverley Wenger-Trayner, 2020).

Applying the different ‘values’ to the data was problematic. For example, in language learning a task may provide:

- Immediate value (satisfaction from completing a task).
- Potential value (may be used for a future task).
- Applied value (the process of completing a task).
• Realised value (the fact of finishing a task).
• Transformative value (the task may affect future use of what has been learned).

Language learning can be fluid and trying to capture the value that learners experience using Moodle was not possible. Therefore, I decided not to use this framework.

A second key element of the value creation framework is ‘Value Creation Stories’. The members of a community tell value creation stories as they are “both the carriers and witnesses of the process of value creation” (Wenger, Trayner and De Laat, 2011, p. 34). Value creation can be explained in the context of narratives. As learners’ experiences evolve, they each have stories about the CoP to which they belong. In the context of their narratives, one can appreciate what learning is taking place (or not) and what value is created (or not). The idea was to use the narrative genre of value-creation stories to show how Moodle can create value for members of a CoP. I used the framework to write my interview questions, and decided to continue with the stories, but I found the value creation framework unsuitable for this study.
3.5 Data collection

Learners attended classes during the academic year from October 2019 to June 2020. Initial interviews took place near the end of this time, and follow-up interviews took place in July 2020. Learners participated in activities on Moodle throughout the academic year. Data were collected from three different sources, outlined in Figure 7:

![Figure 7: Data collection](image)

3.5.1 Initial Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are used as a method of data collection to gather information from participants with personal experiences, attitudes, perceptions, and beliefs connected to the topic of interest, i.e., stories to share (Minocha et al., 2013). Semi-structured interviews can be used by researchers to triangulate various data sources and gather new, exploratory data about the subject of their study. When a researcher wishes to collect qualitative data to examine participants’ thoughts, feelings, and beliefs about a certain topic, semi-structured interviews are a useful strategy for data collecting (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019).

The justification for semi-structured interviews came from Minocha et al., (2013) and Castañeda (2017), who also used semi-structured interviews with older adults. Minocha et al., (2013) found that older people are anxious about the value of their contributions. My participants expressed their worries about whether they could contribute anything useful to my study. I wanted to avoid using a rigid interview protocol with older adults, opting for a more informal style, which would put the interviewee at ease and avoid anxieties as much as possible. I also wanted to adopt a flexible interview strategy and adapt my approach according to what seemed important to the participants. Older adults often prefer conversations where they can relate incidents and stories (Minocha et al., 2013). I did this by having an outline of my main questions but then encouraged participants to expand on their answers. Therefore, the structured part of the interview provided
comparable and consistent data. In contrast, the unstructured element allowed for individual differences adding richness to the data and enabling a more in-depth narrative to emerge. Interviews carried out in the participants’ mother tongue enabled them to explain on a deeper level their experiences, thoughts and feelings, uninhibited by the shortcomings of the L2.

Just before data collection was due to begin, the world experienced an unprecedented challenge: on 11th March 2020 COVID-19 was declared a global pandemic (World Health Organisation, 2020). The outbreak forced millions of people worldwide to stay at home and respect social distancing measures. This meant that F2F in-person interviews became practically and ethically impossible. I had to make urgent decisions about data collection, considering the appropriateness of methods for my participants, including their commitments and circumstances. I considered emailing my interview questions but was afraid of receiving closed responses with no immediate chance to extend or expand them. I felt this method was too impersonal and drawn out, with the risk of losing momentum. Telephone calls were another option, but previous studies with older adult learners suggest that the telephone may not be a good option for people with moderate to severe hearing loss. When background noise is present, it is advisable to listen with both ears, rather than just one (Weil, 2015; Minocha et al., 2013; ERA-AGE, 2009). I did not know if any of my participants had experienced hearing loss and did not want to ask them directly, so I felt it would be best to avoid using the telephone to avoid any potential negative impact on the interviews.

Initially, I had concerns about moving F2F interviews online as I thought the learners would be less willing to participate; they may have had limited experience of using video conferencing tools, and I might not obtain as much rich data as I could F2F. However, like Weil (2015, p. 725), I also believe “there is a real need to move beyond a focus on supposed barriers to research with older people”, so I embraced the challenge and decided on a video call with each learner. I heard from my older adult learners that many had increased their online presence by using digital methods to communicate with friends and family due to the global pandemic. Therefore, I felt video calls would be possible and appropriate and the closest to the F2F interviews I had previously planned.

My initial idea was to use the Big Blue Button (BBB), a tool embedded in Moodle that the learners had been using to continue their F2F lessons throughout the
lockdown period of 2020. However, once I tried to set up and record a session, it became apparent that the facility to record was not enabled in the version of the BBB the centre was using. Extract 3 shows the BBB tool from the learners’ interface. Another popular video conferencing tool used in 2020 was Zoom, but the Open University regulations did not allow this due to concerns over data protection. As a result, I decided to use Skype as it was possible to record and download recordings, and the recordings were automatically deleted from the site after 30 days. Once the participants agreed to participate, I contacted them again via email to arrange a date and time. Once this was approved, I sent them my Skype details and the Participant Consent Form (Appendix C).

![Extract 3: Big Blue Button tool](image)

The protocol for the initial interviews began with confirmation that the learner had received the information sheet and consent form; this was followed by verbal confirmation of their willingness to participate in the interview. Next, learners were given a brief explanation of the study and asked if they had any questions. After that, learners were asked for their age and how long they had been studying at the centre as well as how long they had been using Moodle. There were four main questions with five or six follow-up questions for each; the full list of questions can be found in Appendices E and F, and an example of the first question follows:

1. In what ways, if any, is using Moodle changing you as an English language learner?
   - Tell me about any new skills, vocabulary, grammar or knowledge you have acquired through using Moodle.
• How has your understanding of English language learning or your perspective as an English language learner changed through using Moodle?

• Describe how your use of English has changed through using Moodle. Think about when you started and now.

• What does Moodle enable you to do as an English language learner that you wouldn’t be able to do otherwise?

• Give an example of how your confidence as an English language learner has changed by using Moodle.

3.5.2 Stimulated Recall Interviews
In order to find out more and probe further, purposive sampling was again used to select members to be interviewed a second time. The criteria for these follow-up stimulated recall (SR) interviews were that these participants had been identified as having interesting stories to tell from the initial interview analysis, and were willing and available. These interviews took place F2F as, by this time, the situation in France allowed close contact with other people again. The recall was carried out in the L1 in order to dispel concerns about language proficiency, given that if the memory is in the language being learned (L2), some learners can be limited in their ability to express themselves in the target language and to understand the questions being asked of them (Gass & Mackey, 2017).

The process of stimulated recall involves asking people to recollect ideas they had while carrying out a previous task or taking part in a previous event. It is believed that a physical (visual or auditory) reminder will prompt memories of the event and, in turn, help the participant cognitively re-engage with the initial event. The SR interviews were carried out whilst looking back at Moodle activities, and learners were asked to talk openly about the activities in which they took part. During the recall, I asked the learners to discuss their participation in the tasks on Moodle or sometimes why they had not participated. I encouraged the learners to give reasons or explain what they had gained from doing a task or collaborating with other group members.

One of the disadvantages of stimulated recall may be that recall is unreliable if the timing is too far after the event. When the recall is close enough to the actual event, participants’ memories are more detailed. Although Henderson and Tallman
(2006) argued that gathering data beyond 48 hours following an event calls into question the reliability of the data, due to constraints such as logistics, class schedules, participant availability and the COVID-19 pandemic, data for this study were collected beyond this ‘ideal’ time frame. The time frame presented at the beginning of this section is thus reported accurately so that the research community can fully understand the results and the context surrounding the data collected for this study.

The advantage of stimulated recall is that it prompts the memory of activity through a stimulus of an event or activity. I chose to use SR in order to elicit more detailed information on the particular activities in which learners had participated. Two learners were selected to participate from the A1 class, two learners from the A2 class and two learners from the B2 class; however one of the B2 learners did not continue with the SR interview. Both learners from each class had the potential to participate in the same activities. Extract 4 shows an example of an activity on Moodle for the B2 class.

Extract 4: B2 class activity on Moodle

The SR interviews took place either at the learners’ home or at my home. I took my laptop with me and together we looked back at Moodle and the different activities. To begin we looked at the activities from the academic year 2019-2020 and discussed each activity; I then encouraged the learners to talk through their participation and give as much detail as possible. As the learners described the activities and how they had felt about their participation (or not) and also what other learners had (or had not) taken part in, I probed them for more information. Extract 5 shows an example of how the interview took place and how I asked the learner to give more details.
After reviewing the year 2019-2020 we looked back at any previous years and I asked if any activity stood out to them or that they remembered well. If the learners remembered something well, we continued to discuss the activity. The final question asked if the learner had anything extra to add that maybe had not been covered during the recall. After the SR interviews took place they were transcribed and translated; this is detailed in section 3.5.3.

Using the SR interview transcripts, I created a ‘Learner Story’ for each of the five participants that embodies what the learner said during the interviews as well as adding contextual information and extracts from Moodle. The stories provide a more complex picture of the learners’ experiences of using Moodle and enable more in-depth description. Although descriptive in nature, as many quotations as possible from the SR interviews were used in order to represent each learners’ voice throughout their story. The stories can be found in section 4.2.

Extract 5: Exert from SR interview transcript

Jodi [00:35:15] I asked what was happening in the world to share news. Yes, you talked about elections. Do you know why you chose this story?

Evelyne [00:35:42] Because I had just heard it on the radio, I think we were talking about something of the moment. So, it seemed to me an interesting element, especially since I think I had to answer after the others and some had already looked for other stories. So, some had already discussed other things, then, and it seemed to me like an interesting piece of information.

Jodi [00:36:15] You didn’t want to do the same news story as someone else?

Evelyne [00:36:20] Well, yeah, I don’t know what the others were talking about, but it was kind of like that. I did not want to be repetitive. Compared to them, and then on top of that, it’s a piece of information that was, as it were, interesting to me.
3.5.3 Transcription and Translation

To ensure that the participant's linguistic proficiency did not affect their ability to respond, all interviews were conducted in French, the learners’ first language. The interview questions can be found in Appendix E (in English) and Appendix F (in French).

I uploaded the MP3 recordings onto www.trint.com, where transcription is possible in a choice of languages. I estimate that 75% of the automatic transcription was correct and I then had to correct the rest of the transcript manually by listening to the audio and amending the transcript. These transcriptions were then translated into English using www.reverso.com and amended by myself to ensure accurate translations. The translated transcripts were then checked by two colleagues, one French but fluent in English and one British but fluent in French. After discussing the translations together, no significant discrepancies were found between the French and English versions. An example of the interview transcripts can be found in Appendix G and the translation in Appendix H.

Once transcribed and translated, the SR interviews were cleaned up (the spoken words were included but filler words, stutters and repetitions removed) to improve flow and readability. Using citations from the transcripts and visual extracts from Moodle, I created ‘Learner Stories’ that reflect what the learners said during the SR interviews and added context that provides a more detailed representation of their experiences. These stories were analysed and can be found in section 4.2.

In order for people to engage in a society and communicate their meanings to others, they need a voice, which is why voices are such crucial components of stories (Dingyloudi & Strijbos, 2015). SR interviews are an interaction between the interviewer and interviewee in which participants create and construct narrative versions of the activities. The aim is not just to provide a mirror reflection of the social learning space but to “provide access to the meanings learners attribute to their experiences” (Miller and Glassner, 2004, p. 126). Drake (2010) described the doctoral researcher as a storyteller with constructed text, shared stories and the researcher’s interpretation as a valuable resource. Kramsch (2009) also used a similar method and referred to these co-constructed texts as “language memoirs that contain subjective truths” (p. 6).

The initial interview and SR interview transcripts were then transferred to NVivo for analysis as described in section 3.6.
3.6 Data analysis

The data collected using the methods described in section 3.5 were analysed in order to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the challenges for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?
   a. What are the cognitive challenges?
   b. What are the affective challenges?
   c. What are the social challenges?
2. What are the rewards for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?
   a. What are the cognitive rewards?
   b. What are the affective rewards?
   c. What are the social rewards?

Thematic analysis refers to a range of qualitative research methods used to explore and understand patterned meaning across datasets. It emphasises identifying, analysing and interpreting patterns of meaning (themes) within qualitative data. Thematic analysis involves an active reflexive process in which the researcher's subjective experience is crucial to extracting meaning from the data. Data analysis in this study was undertaken using a combination of qualitative thematic analysis methods: a data-driven inductive approach and a deductive approach, using a template of codes derived from the initial interviews. Figure 8 shows the methods of data collection along with the methods of analysis.

Figure 8: Data analysis methods

The interview transcripts were analysed using NVivo, a form of Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS). Software packages such as NVivo are useful as they permit the storage of large amounts of data and facilitate the coding of text sections. Segments were the units of analysis. Based on the segmentation procedure proposed by Dingyloudi and Strijbos (2015), a segment
could be part of a sentence, a whole sentence or part of a paragraph. I identified a segment by highlighting the text and attaching a code. When the coded data are searched, the segment is the retrieved text. Figure 9 shows an example of the NVivo interface and some coded segments.

![NVivo Interface](image)

**Figure 9: NVivo interface**

### 3.6.1 Inductive analysis of initial interviews

The initial interviews were analysed using inductive thematic analysis, which aims to identify patterns of meaning (themes) across a dataset that addresses a research question. The researcher generates patterns through rigorous data familiarisation, data coding, and theme development and revision.

Braun and Clarke (2021) outline a six-step process to facilitate reflexive thematic analysis, see Figure 10. These steps do not provide a set procedure. They serve as a tool to aid the researcher in thoroughly examining, understanding, and presenting a pattern-based analysis from a dataset. The process of qualitative analysis involves the researcher, the dataset, and a variety of interpretive contexts. It is skilled, situated, and subjective (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The different steps of thematic analysis are described below.
Figure 10: Six-step process of Thematic Analysis

1. Getting familiar with the dataset: This step involved reading and re-reading the data to become thoroughly and deeply familiar with its content and making notes on initial analytic observations and insights regarding each data item (for example, an interview transcript) regarding the entire dataset.

2. Coding: To answer the research questions, this step involved creating brief labels (codes) that captured and evoked significant data aspects. It involved two or more rounds of coding on the complete dataset. Then, for analysis, I assembled all the codes and relevant data extracts.

3. Establishing early themes: This step entailed analysing the codes and gathering information to create more expansive patterns of meaning (potential themes). The next step required gathering information pertinent to each theme so that I could use the information to analyse each theme's potential.
4. Developing and assessing themes: In this step, the themes were compared to the coded data and the complete dataset to see if they adequately explained the data and addressed the research questions. Themes were expanded upon in this stage, which included splitting, combining, or discarding them. Themes are described by Braun and Clarke (2021) as a pattern of shared meaning supported by a primary notion or idea.

5. Refining, defining, and naming themes: This step entailed creating a thorough examination of each theme, figuring out its scope and main points, and identifying its narrative. Additionally, it included selecting a descriptive name for each theme.

6. Writing up: In this last step, the analytical narrative and data extracts were combined, and the analysis was contextualised in light of previously published literature.

The steps are sequential, and each build on the one before it, but analysis is often a recursive process that switches back and forth between them. As already mentioned, these steps and the methods they document are not strict guidelines to follow but rather a set of conceptual and practical ‘tools’ that direct the analysis and enable a thorough process of data interrogation and engagement. I followed steps 1-6 twice as initially the themes did not represent the richness or variety of the data; furthermore, the themes did not enable me to answer the research questions. I repeated steps 4 and 5 twice the second time in order to achieve the themes presented in Table 4 below.

A code “captures an analytic insight from the researcher’s systematic engagement with the data” (Braun and Clarke, 2021, p. 284). Each code has a minimum of two participants and at least two segments attributed. During the analysis step, any number of comments in a transcript that fall under the same general topic are given a code. A theme “encapsulates several related analytic insights, unified by a central organising concept or idea [and] developed by clustering codes together” (Braun and Clarke, 2021, p. 296).

The quantity of segments for a certain code can provide insight about the depth and variety of information contained in the interviews. The quantity of codes used on a transcript reveals the range of topics covered therein. Therefore, it may be argued that the number of codes is a measure of the item's content breadth; the more codes, the more material. There are two levels of coding: the initial open
level and the second level. Condensing the original open codes and merging related codes that deal with issues unrelated to the study's objectives result in this. Everything that was recorded is pertinent to the study since the amalgamated codes were applied to the transcripts and only captured information that was linked to those codes. A set of codes representing the breadth of discussion within the particular area of interest was created as a result. In total, there were 49 codes, found in Table 4:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CODE</th>
<th>THEME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>underused facilities</td>
<td>lack of knowledge + training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>safety online</td>
<td>digital skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>multimodality</td>
<td>big blue button (BBB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>access to documents</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grammar + vocab</td>
<td>progression – I can do more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helps comprehension</td>
<td>repeat activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helps pronunciation</td>
<td>writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not possible without Moodle</td>
<td>no added value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>compared to before</td>
<td>prefer physical contact F2F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>different to book</td>
<td>see what was done in class + homework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interesting subjects</td>
<td>culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>link F2F + Moodle</td>
<td>variety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>makes it easier</td>
<td>different way of working</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>choice / agency</td>
<td>anytime / anyplace</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fun / interactive</td>
<td>autonomy / working independently</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>motivation</td>
<td>need to be strict with oneself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>positive feelings</td>
<td>time and space to reflect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>builds confidence</td>
<td>inhibitions – not using Moodle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enrichment</td>
<td>desire to go further</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>investment</td>
<td>frequency using Moodle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>new horizons</td>
<td>more openness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunities to express oneself</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>family + friends</th>
<th>Relationships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>other learners</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>helped others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>assistance from others</td>
<td>Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>communication with others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no change socially</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Codes and themes found during inductive analysis

Segments were highlighted and either assigned to an existing code or given their own code when the transcriptions were analysed. The number of segments was recorded while the analysis was carried out because this was done using the NVivo software programme. This figure differs from the codes in that a single code may be supported by several segments, i.e., 49 different codes to summarise the topics of 1326 different segments. Table 5 shows the number of codes and segments for each participant.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTICIPANT</th>
<th>N° OF CODES</th>
<th>N° OF SEGMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L*1</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*2</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*3</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*5</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*6</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*7</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*8</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*10</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L*11</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following extracts show how different interview transcripts were coded with the “Writing” code which became part of the Language skills & knowledge theme.

L*4: it’s different and it allows us to write and visualise more when we are on Moodle
L*8: I know how to write better too
L*10: I can communicate in writing
L*13: It gives us writing exercises to exchange with others

Extract 6: Examples of coded segments in the Language skills & knowledge theme

In order to capture both positive and negative viewpoints, segments were attributed a positive + or a negative – value. The following extract shows a comment that was coded with a negative value.

L*11: For me, Moodle didn’t make me change the way I learn.

Extract 7: Example of a segment with a negative code
3.6.2 Deductive analysis of Stimulated Recall interviews

The Learners’ Stories created from the SR interview transcripts were coded using deductive coding, a top-down approach where you begin with a set of predetermined codes and then find segments that fit those codes.

Using deductive analysis, text was organised using a template in the form of codes from a codebook before being interpreted. Using codes, definitions, and examples as a guide, a codebook can be used to analyse interview data (DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011). Before beginning an in-depth analysis of the data while using a codebook, the codebook is defined by the researcher. For this study, the template was developed *a priori*, based on the findings of the inductive analysis and the research questions. Table 6 shows the themes from the inductive analysis and the dimension of learning that they relate to. The three dimensions of learning were applied to the stories whilst considering the themes for each dimension.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEME</th>
<th>DIMENSION OF LEARNING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DIGITAL SKILLS &amp; KNOWLEDGE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LANGUAGE SKILLS &amp; KNOWLEDGE</td>
<td>COGNITIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHER SKILLS &amp; KNOWLEDGE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERCEPTION OF AGE</td>
<td>AFFECTIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGENCY</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENRICHMENT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELATIONSHIPS</td>
<td>SOCIAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUPPORT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMUNICATION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6: Themes relating to dimensions of learning - used for deductive analysis

Using the codebook, I applied the three dimensions to the transcripts to identify meaningful units of text whilst considering the themes that relate to each dimension. In the NVivo data management programme, the stories had previously been saved as documents. The three dimensions were entered as nodes, and I analysed the stories by matching the dimensions to data segments chosen to be typical of each dimension.
In Extract 8 we find two examples of how the cognitive dimension was evident in Carol’s story, the first example from the Language skills & knowledge theme, the second example from the Other skills & knowledge theme.

She explained what Moodle enabled her to do, “it allows me to do what you tell us in class, it allows me to study, things that we didn’t quite understand in class or that we’re not sure about”, in particular listening activities, “we can listen quietly at home, listen again”.

When I asked what she had learned from this activity, she told me, “the customs, like Christmas. There’s a lot of singing at Christmas, I was surprised by that” and “even advertising, it’s a little different, humour too”.

Extract 8: Example of Cognitive dimension

Extract 9 from Evelyne’s Story shows two different segments coded using the theme “Agency” identified as part of the Affective dimension.

Evelyne described how using Moodle outside of class was interesting because “there isn’t a set time, we’re not always available at the same time either”; She went on to say how “it takes time between two classes to find things out, it takes more time, just the F2F class is not enough”.

Extract 9: Example of Affective dimension

Extract 10 shows two examples of how the Social dimension was attributed to Angela’s story, the first example shows the theme “Relationships” and the second shows the theme “Support”.

She told me how working together on Moodle had “strengthened our friendship”, and although seeing each other in class is important, using Moodle, she felt like “we had people all around us and when you feel lost you are not lost because others give you the solution”.

Extract 10: Example of Social dimension

Each of the five stories created from the stimulated recall interviews can be found in section 4.2 and have been highlighted using the three dimensions of learning as described in this section.
3.7 Ethics

Research brings distinctive ethical challenges, not least in terms of confidentiality and anonymity, all of which I addressed throughout the research process. I adhered to the Open University Research Ethics and the British Educational Research Association (BERA) ethical guidelines for educational research (BERA, 2018).

The research protocol for this doctoral project was submitted to the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) for review. The HREC review panel gave it a favourable opinion with the following reference displayed on all documents: HREC/3508/Wainwright/. The documents, in English and French, which were submitted to the HREC were:

- the participant consent form;
- information sheet;
- interview questions.

Regarding data protection and information security, this study collected basic personal information about gender and age. Interviews were anonymised by using pseudonyms once transcribed. All documents are securely stored in a locked cupboard in my office at home. As stated in the Learner Information Sheet, data will be kept for up to ten years. The information that is in a digital format is saved in my Dropbox account, which is password protected and also kept on an external hard drive that is password protected and kept at my home.

Consent agreements are best handled through a contract or form between the participant and the researcher (Robson, 2002). Before learners agreed to participate in the study, they were given an information sheet that described the research and the processes involved. Interviews took place on Skype, so the participants were asked to verbally agree to their consent to take part in the study at the beginning of the recording. All participants were informed of the anonymisation of data and their right to withdraw at any time on the information sheet and consent form. Participants were also reminded of this verbally by myself before the interviews took place.

The interviews that took place on Skype were downloaded to my computer and saved in my Dropbox account; previously mentioned, they were then automatically
deleted from the Skype platform after 30 days and this was verified by myself. The transcriptions uploaded to www.trint.com can only be accessed through my account with a username and password; they are also stored in my Dropbox account online.

The colleagues I asked to check the translations and the Open University colleagues mentioned in the following section were all asked that information remain confidential and to delete any files I sent to them by email once they were no longer required.

Research outcomes are being reported in this thesis, and parts of the research may be published elsewhere, such as articles in journals or conference presentations. However, I have made every attempt to ensure that participants are not identifiable through anonymising and using pseudonyms. Whilst complete anonymity cannot be guaranteed as I may be personally recognisable through my place of work, the identification of the individual participants has been protected through anonymising all data concerning them.
3.8 Issues of validity and reliability

As a teacher researching my work context, I position myself as a researcher on an insider-outsider continuum during this research process. I can identify with elements of being an insider as a foreign language learner. I can also identify with aspects of being an outsider: I am not within the age range this study focuses on and am not a language learner in the classes studied. I ensured the research was as transparent as possible and participants were fully informed about safeguarding against bias or potential problems. I showed a sensitive awareness of the varying positions as the situations differed. The goal should not be to eliminate the researcher’s influence but to understand and use it productively (Maxwell, 2013).

Although many of the learners in this study were in my classes, which may raise questions as to the trustworthiness of the research, being a teacher-researcher had many advantages. My inspiration for the study had come from seeing how older adult language learners participated and interacted with each other through using Moodle; without this knowledge the study may never have taken place. The learners felt at ease during the data collection phases as they were not being interviewed by a stranger and, in turn, this enabled participants to provide detailed accounts of their experiences.

In qualitative analysis, inter-coder checking is frequently recommended as good practice since it allows various coders to agree on how the same data should be coded. There are many advantages to inter-coder checking for qualitative research. These include enhancing the methodological, communicative, and transparent aspects of the coding process, encouraging reflection and discussion among research teams, and assisting in convincing various audiences that the analysis is trustworthy (O’Connor & Joffe, 2020). During the pilot stages of data analysis, I consulted with two Open University colleagues to conduct some inter-coder checks. When I sent the interview transcripts to the first colleague, I included the original text and the translation without stipulating which language I wanted her to use. She looked at the French version, whereas the second colleague only looked at the transcripts in English. The ideas and observations from the first colleague largely reflect the results I later found and are presented in the following chapter. The second colleague used the coding scheme I trialled in the pilot study, and our results were inconclusive. This result was one of the
reasons I decided not to use the value-creation coding system mentioned in section 3.4.1.

While it can be beneficial to code data with a different researcher (to exchange ideas and consider what might have been missed in the data), this does not always lead to "better" coding, merely different coding. The realist/positivist premise that there is a reality in the data that can be accurately captured through coding serves as the foundation for the usage of inter-coder reliability scores. Research within a qualitative paradigm values reflexivity and subjectivity. The methodology used in this study views the meanings of the data as subject to several subjective and contextual interpretations. Coding only tells part of the story; it is a process that the researcher inevitably and inescapably influences. Given the rigorous method of reflexive thematic analysis, the inter-coder checking during the early stages of analysis and the overall transparency throughout the research, internal validity can lead to an acceptable level of trustworthiness.

To create a thorough understanding of a phenomenon, triangulation in qualitative research refers to the utilisation of different methods or data sources. Triangulation can analyse the same phenomenon from several perspectives by combining data from various sources, and it can deepen our understanding by revealing new or hidden features. Triangulation can also be thought of as a qualitative research technique for evaluating the validity of data by combining data from several sources. The research findings' validity and credibility were improved by the use of triangulation. While validity is concerned with how accurately a study represents or evaluates the notion or concepts being explored, credibility refers to the reliability and plausibility of a study. This study uses data from initial interviews, follow-up SR interviews and evidence of learners' participation in the activities on Moodle.
Summary of Chapter 3

Research context and paradigm

Section 3.1 explained the research context, an approach to language learning that uses interactive tasks for learners to complete. Tasks allow for meaningful communication and the chance to learn a language by actually using it. A blended learning approach combines face-to-face teaching and opportunities for interaction online through the use of a learning management system such as Moodle. Moodle provides multimodal interactive environments that allow for text, audio, and video communication.

In section 3.2, the socio-constructivist paradigm described truth as variable, socially constructed, and always evolving. Social constructivism originates in the seminal work of Vygotsky (1978), who suggested separating learning from social context was impossible. Socio-constructivism was defined as a worldview wherein individuals seek understanding of their known world in a manner that is of their own experience. The assumption is that reality is produced collectively and that social interaction and interaction shape our perceptions of it.

Research participants and methods

This study used purposive sampling as it allowed for identifying and selecting participants related to the phenomenon of interest. Section 3.3 provided information about the twenty-two learners selected according to the needs of the study: older adult language learners aged 50 and over.

Section 3.4 described the qualitative case study methodology that enabled me to conduct an in-depth exploration of phenomena within a specific context. An explanation of the pilot studies that were carried out enables the reader to comprehend how and why the final methods were chosen.

Data collection and analysis

In section 3.5 the tools used to collect the data were explained. Twenty-two learners were interviewed using a semi-structured format and which took place on Skype. Five of these learners were then interviewed in person using a stimulated recall technique that involved looking back through Moodle while I encouraged them to talk about their participation in the activities. Screenshots of the Moodle
platform are used to supplement the interview data and enable triangulation of data from different sources.

The data from the initial interviews were analysed using inductive thematic analysis, and the data from the stimulated recall interviews using deductive thematic analysis. The segmentation procedure was described as well as the use of NVivo to carry out the coding of the data collected. The themes and corresponding codes were presented as well as how these relate to the three dimensions of learning. A table showing the number of codes and the number of segments per participant is also included.

**Ethics and issues of validity and reliability**

Section 3.7 described the steps taken in order to receive authorisation from the ethics committee to undertake the research. Issues of validity and reliability were addressed in section 3.8 and included steps taken to ensure the research methodology was as transparent as possible. The use of inter-coder checking and drawing on multiple sources of evidence enabled triangulation that helped to facilitate convergence and corroboration.
Chapter 4 Findings

In this chapter, I present the findings from the data collected between May and July 2020. The data were collected via the methods described in Chapter 3; the initial interviews were analysed using inductive analysis and the SR interviews using deductive analysis.

Section 4.1 presents the results from the initial interviews, and section 4.2 looks at the results from the stimulated recall interviews. In this chapter, L*1 refers to Learner 1, L*2 to Learner 2 and so on.

4.1 Inductive thematic analysis of initial interviews

Twenty-two initial interviews were analysed using NVivo following the rigorous process of data familiarisation, data coding, theme development and revision in order to answer the following three questions:

1. What are the cognitive challenges and/or rewards for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?
2. What are the affective challenges and/or rewards for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?
3. What are the social challenges and/or rewards for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?

To illustrate the number and distribution of the codes found during inductive analysis, I use radar charts. The centre of the chart reflects a score of zero and the outside of the chart shows the maximum score for that chart.

To demonstrate how the number of coded segments look when displayed in a radar chart, Table 7 and Figure 11 show the number of coded segments related to the three dimensions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COGNITIVE</th>
<th>AFFECTIVE</th>
<th>SOCIAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>407</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 7: Number of coded segments for each dimension of learning
In this chapter, I present the radar charts for All Learners and each CEFRL level (A1, A2, B2); a radar chart for each learner can be found in Appendix K. The charts for each CEFRL level showing the three dimensions of learning can be found in Appendix L, as there are no important findings from these charts. To see if there were any main differences between male and female learners, I also compared the results for each gender, but there were no significant differences; these radar charts can be found in Appendix M.

Table 8 and Figure 12 show the number of coded segments for each theme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEMES</th>
<th>DIGITAL SKILLS</th>
<th>LANGUAGE SKILLS</th>
<th>OTHER SKILLS</th>
<th>PERCEPTION OF AGE</th>
<th>AGENCY</th>
<th>ENRICHMENT</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIPS</th>
<th>SUPPORT</th>
<th>COMMUNICATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>125</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 8: Number of coded segments for each theme
The following sections give a detailed description of the findings for each of the three dimensions of learning which are further divided into the three themes that can be found in the table and the radar chart presented above. The analysis and quotes for each theme are from All Learners, and the findings are then discussed with reference to the literature in Chapter 5.

4.1.1 What are the cognitive challenges and/or rewards for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?

I identified three themes related to the cognitive dimension: Digital skills & knowledge, Language skills & knowledge and Other skills & knowledge. The following radar charts show the distribution of coded segments within these three themes in the cognitive dimension.
When comparing the findings for each CEFRL group, there are some differences. For A1 learners, there is a greater number of segments referring to language skills & knowledge followed by digital skills. For A2 learners, there is a greater number of references to other skills & knowledge followed by digital skills & knowledge. For B2 learners, there is a greater number of references to other skills & knowledge followed by language skills & knowledge. The radar charts that show a visual representation of these differences can be found in Figures 14 to 16 below.

Figure 14: Themes in the cognitive dimension for A1 learners

Figure 15: Themes in the cognitive dimension for A2 learners
Figure 16: Themes in the cognitive dimension for B2 learners

4.1.1.1 Digital skills & knowledge
In general, learners reported how they addressed their inability to use technology. L*4 said, “at first I was not very comfortable, not easy to know how to use a computer and the further one goes the more I enjoy it”. She went further to say, “I take pleasure working with Moodle, I find it pleasant, something that surprised me”. L*15 described how “I have no more fear”, and L*21 told me “what I have acquired with Moodle is to stay in flow with the computer, my PC”. Other learners gave more specific examples of the skills they have acquired through using Moodle; L*1, L*5, L*7 and L*13 all said they had learned how to upload photos and videos onto Moodle. L*6 and L*13 went further to say they had even helped others achieve this task. L*2 discovered “there were several ways to use the internet” through using Moodle. L*19 also mentioned that in participating in the interview for this study, “you made me go to a site that I didn’t know about”.

Learners discovered how to use the Big Blue Button (BBB) during the lockdown in April 2020. Although some learners found it “frustrating” (L*19), others found the “new challenge” (L*12) “motivating” (L*10). Multiple learners commented on how using the BBB in Moodle helped them to continue their lessons and maintain contact with the teacher and other learners, since “it was a way to maintain the connection between us” (L*17) and “it allows for dialogue” (L*22). L*14 found that using the BBB was “even more convenient doing it remotely and not having to make our way to the centre”. L*13 “really liked the fact that things were changing”. L*7 said, “I really liked the videoconference, I don’t have a profession where I
could do it, so I really enjoyed discovering that you could also do English at home in front of your computer”.

There were many comments about the need for some kind of manual or explanation of how to do specific tasks on Moodle. According to L*17, “you need to know how to use the tool”. This opinion was also expressed by many of the learners, as L*14 said, “I don’t think I’ve seen everything”. Learners talk about helping each other to complete tasks. Nevertheless, many felt they could do it independently with written support or a complete explanation of the functionalities of Moodle. Some learners said how they learned to use certain features by trial and error and how this can lead to frustration.

With the exception of L*11, learners found Moodle to be a safe space and were not afraid of sharing information. L*11 explained how she participated very little in Moodle “because I wanted my privacy to be extremely protected”. In contrast, L*6 said, “I was not afraid that all of France would see my mistakes, everything is within the safety of Moodle”. L*16 described Moodle as “secure”, and L*12 reported Moodle as “reliable, I have never had any problems of hacking, no bugs, no problems like that”.

4.1.1.2 Language skills + knowledge
The data show how Moodle enables learners to do and re-do many activities that are available to them and to learn more than in F2F classes alone. L*8 said, “I forget quickly but with Moodle it’s good”. L*14 explained how Moodle “enables us to revise and remember”. L*14 said, “we do it once, but [with Moodle] we can do it again and again”.

Moodle gives learners more opportunities to write in the target language. They have time to visualise and formulate what they want to say without the pressure of being time-restrained. L*10 explained how using Moodle “forces” the learners to write in English, and L*6 went further to say that if they used other methods of communication, such as WhatsApp, they would easily revert to French.

L*19 described writing activities on Moodle as “stimulating”, and L*15 said Moodle enabled her to write “longer, more elaborate sentences”. Many of the learners spoke about how writing in Moodle enabled them to feel connected to others in the group, and L*6 described this as “an exchange of friendship”. L*22 talked about writing about personal things during the 2020 lockdown in order to say, “how I was doing, how I was feeling”. L*10 and L*19 mentioned how writing on Moodle
enabled them to get feedback on their writing through corrections from the teacher. Learners also expressed how using Moodle enabled them to develop their knowledge and understanding of different grammar points. L*14 said Moodle helped her “to deepen the level of grammar”. The possibility to have more detailed explanations, both in written and video formats, enables them to work independently and improves their overall comprehension.

Vocabulary was also an area that learners described as being enriched through Moodle. The chance to see vocabulary in different contexts, such as in advertisements that other learners have uploaded, for example, “advertising taught me new words” (L*5), as well as in texts, related to what they had studied in class. Moodle allows them to progress and develop their vocabulary repertoires.

L*22 said, “it’s a good way to see English differently”, and “it allowed me to progress more easily than if I had only had a book”. L*14 said, “if you only have the book and the physical class, you don’t necessarily understand everything”. Many learners talked about having access to different information and how “there’s this wealth of things that aren’t in the textbooks” (L*19). L*8 described how information in the textbooks is the same year on year, but with Moodle, the topics change. She went on to say, “when I talk about what I have learned with the books to English people it doesn’t interest them, while they are interested in what I do on Moodle, it’s more about the news”. As well as variety, learners find the topics on Moodle stimulating, for example, “the news, it’s always interesting because it’s relevant for us” (L*8) and “there are always interesting topics” (L*20).

Aside from being different to the book, many learners appreciate the variety of topics that can be accessed using Moodle, “topical subjects that enable us to enrich ourselves personally” and “we are not frozen on a frame, we can talk about everything on Moodle” (L*13). L*2 said Moodle “is very diverse”, and L*14 said, “Moodle offers many possibilities to see, talk, improve or ask questions”.

Learners report how having access to the audio, video, and activities helps their understanding. The flexibility to re-do activities in their own time enables them to understand and use the language and exercise control and agency over their learning conditions. L*18 said, “we can learn what we want from Moodle”. Using Moodle gives learners choice of what activities to do but also practice that is not possible in a classroom or in real life situations. L*15 explained how with using
Moodle, “you learn a lot more”. L*14 described how Moodle “allows you to hear certain words, to understand certain words and then re-use them for expressions, to construct sentences more easily”.

Being able to listen again to audio and video extracts enables the learners to understand the content fully and to work on their pronunciation. The possibility of hearing different accents and an understanding of social identity is also made possible through Moodle, videos shared by both the teacher and other learners, and with video messages sent from an adult group in Derby (UK) who were learning French. Learners described how using Moodle to listen again enables them to “train our ears” (L*13) and “we have the music of English in our ears” (L*22).

Learners reported that Moodle made a difference in an overall improvement in their language use. As L*17 explained, “it allows us to progress”. L*18 said, “I know how to express myself better”. Using Moodle as a complement enabled L*22 “to progress more easily than if I only had a book”. L*14 described how “if there are things we didn’t understand, we can go back”, and L*15 said how Moodle “enables us to go back and complete things”. L*18 simply noted that through using Moodle, “I’ve progressed”.

4.1.1.3 Other skills + knowledge
Learners explained how having Moodle made their learning ‘more complete’. As a complement to the F2F classes, learners feel more supported and describe Moodle as “an extension to the course” (L*17). Having the opportunity to extend their learning in between the F2F classes is also a great advantage as learners report, “what you learn on Monday, the next Monday you have often forgotten” (L*9) and “Moodle allows you to go further because an hour and a half a week is really very little” (L*10). L*10 also said how using Moodle enables learners to “go into more detail about what we saw in class”. L*15 said that with Moodle, “we are more prepared to work”, and L*19 “it allows me to work on the programme but with additional contributions”.

Cultural knowledge is also something that learners reported getting from using Moodle. L*2 explained how “it’s more enriching for general culture”. L*13 said, “from a cultural point of view, it’s very interesting and culturally rewarding”. Being in contact with other older adults in Derby (UK) also brought something extra, “when we got in touch with people who speak French in England, it allowed me to
get an understanding of how they present their city” (L*16). L*17 described how “it brought me closer to some of the English heritage”. The learners reported learning about British culture and “we also learn about the United States, Canada, India, we learn a lot about people who speak English” (L*8). L*11 explained how studying certain celebrities, such as Martin Luther King or Florence Nightingale, “I realised it was someone very important to you, that there was a special day, I didn’t know that before”. L*14 said Moodle “allows me to know more about music and what happens in England, more than when you’re in France”. L*5, L*7, L*21 and L*22 all mentioned learning about the Christmas period particularly the songs sung during the festive season.

Many learners talked about the fact that Moodle enables them to have multiple resources for an exercise or activity. L*9 said, “it enables us to have the exercise and the audio or video support that goes with it”. L*10 talked about how on Moodle, “there are documents, there are quizzes, there are lots of things”. L*16 mentioned how through Moodle, they could access a virtual museum through Moodle, and L*17 discussed accessing “paintings, presentations of works of art and sculptures”. L*19 described how “it makes it easier for me to access anything that is visual”. L*22 said that Moodle “brings us extras”.

Moodle gives learners access to many resources within Moodle itself and resources available via links provided by the teacher or other learners. Within Moodle, learners found it helpful to have the audio and videos to support the texts and the ability to re-do activities and listen again to audio or video extracts. Having links to external sites is also an advantage for learners as they can be “selected by the facilitator” (L*12). L*20 said, “all the documents on Moodle, they push us forward, it encourages you to learn the language”.

Learners reported that using Moodle makes learning easier and some say, “it’s easier than in class” (L*15). One of the facilities of using Moodle was having access to what was done in class and seeing what homework was required for the next lesson. L*7 said, “if I’m ever away from class, I can catch up classes, all the documents are scanned, everything is available on Moodle”, and L*1 said, “with Moodle we can easily find the lessons we have missed”. L*4 said, “Moodle is a computerised way that allows a different way of learning English that makes a lot of things easier”. L*16 said, “it made it easier for me to reach out to my colleagues or my teacher in English”.
Moodle was described as “a complement to traditional physical classes” (L*19), and L*12 described Moodle as “a more dynamic aspect of the course”. L*10 said he had gone “from very academic teaching to more dynamic teaching” using Moodle. L*12 noted that “during lockdown, there was a more dynamic aspect of the course using Moodle”. The word ‘dynamic’ shows how many learners find the Moodle platform provides them with content and activities more appropriate to their expectations. L*5 explained that “at the beginning, it was just for homework, and now we use it to converse, do exercises, to share, to talk to others”. Some learners expressed a change over time; this could be as they become more used to using the platform or perhaps the activities from the teachers have evolved.

Learners described how using Moodle enabled them to do things that would otherwise be impossible. L*13 said, “it allowed me to get interested in topics that I would never have looked for”. L*2 said that Moodle enabled her “to read articles I wouldn’t look for otherwise”. L*20 described how Moodle gave her “an interest in history and details that I wouldn’t have learned without Moodle”. L*21 gave her example of something not possible without Moodle “I can write to someone on the other side of the world”.

Although nearly all the learners found using Moodle a positive experience, L*11 said, “Moodle didn’t make me change the way I learn”, and L*12 said he saw “no specific added value from Moodle”. Even if the majority of learners find value in using Moodle, there is still a need to have physical F2F classes as “it is more pleasant to have F2F lessons” (L*10) and “I prefer the physical contact” (L*19).

4.1.2 What are the affective challenges and/or rewards for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?

The three themes related to the affective dimension were: Perception of Age, Agency, and Enrichment. The following radar charts show the distribution of coded segments within these three themes in the affective dimension.
When comparing the findings for each CEFRL group, there are some differences. For A1 and A2 learners, there are a greater number of segments referring to enrichment than agency. For B2 learners, there are more references to agency than enrichment. The radar charts that show a visual representation of these differences can be found in Figures 18 to 20 below.

Figure 17: Themes in the affective dimension for all learners

Figure 18: Themes in the affective dimension for A1 learners
4.1.2.1 Perception of Age
Although only four segments from four different learners were identified, I have chosen to include them. Due to the focus of this study being on older adults, it is important to note what these four learners mentioned during their interviews. L*10 said that his lack of participation might be “due to my age, but I prefer F2F”, and L*21 said, “maybe we’re the old people”. L*15 said, “we don’t have the reflexes of young people”, and L*19 noted, “most of us are of an age when we need physical contact more and we complete it with Moodle”.

4.1.2.2 Agency
Learners found using Moodle motivating with comments such as, “Moodle encouraged me to practice” (L*9) and “it made me want to come back more to
learn English” (L*10). L*3 said, “I am more eager to learn and improve myself” and “when I watch the videos, it makes me try to speak for myself”. L*8 said, “it energises the learning”, and L*13 pointed out, “it’s rewarding”. L*17 described how using Moodle “motivated me to do my personal work at home”. L*11 said, “it enabled me to see the corrections, to keep me informed. That was a very positive thing for me because it kept me going”. For L*19, using Moodle, “I get the feeling that it encourages me to try to do better”.

Although learners found Moodle helpful for their learning, they also feel that they underutilised the platform, “I think we don’t use it enough” (L*5) and “we could do more” (L*10). Learners recognise the benefits of using Moodle but feel they could have had additional interactions with each other. L*19 said, “it is a good tool for autonomy, but we still have to use it”. Learners also feel that although they can see the benefits, they are not optimizing its use or exploiting the available facilities. L*6 said she would have increased her use of Moodle “if I were a little more conscientious”.

Many learners appreciate the “playful aspect of Moodle” (L*2) and the fact that “it was less boring” (L*8). L*5, L*19 and L*22 said simply, “it’s fun”. L*14 said, “it’s interactive”. L*13 said, “it’s more fun than a lecture”. According to L*17, using Moodle “is livelier and it has a fun side too”.

Using Moodle, “we are not frozen on a frame, we can talk about everything” (L*13). She also explained, “we have discussions with other learners and [Moodle] allows me to intervene when I need or want to discuss the topic”. L*18 said in using Moodle, “I am more diligent in doing my homework”. L*8 described how using Moodle, “we’re more interested, so we think more”, and how “using Moodle I am more actor than consumer”.

L*4 described how using Moodle, “we learn to fend for ourselves because we have no-one in front of us to answer our questions as in class” and “it’s great when you’re sick you can always learn at home”. L*9 explained how using Moodle “enables me to work at home… without support”. L*19 said that in order to use Moodle, “you have to be autonomous” and “we can repeat at our own pace… this progression at one’s own pace, it can be an asset”.

Learners appreciate the flexibility that Moodle provides in as much that “we can work at any time we want, for however long we want” and “we can exchange with other learners at any time” (L*4). L*9 also said, “we can access it all the time”, and
“that’s the advantage of Moodle, you can work on it whenever you want”. L*20 said, “it’s accessible when you want”, and L*21 “it is good to use at home”. This flexibility is also evident in comments such as “I would have worked at home less if I hadn’t had Moodle” (L*17). Using Moodle gives learners time and space to reflect on their participation and learning. For example, “we have more time, we think more” (L*4), “I take more time to do things” (L*15) and “we have time to do our lessons, time to do our homework quietly” (L*18).

Although learners report their increasing use of Moodle, some describe how they could do more “if I were a little more conscientious” (L*6). L*1 described his increasing use of Moodle, “I go more and more on Moodle” and “I can easily go on Moodle two or three times a week”. L*10 supported this concept “Moodle allows you to go further because an hour and a half a week is really very little”. L*16 added, “I go there more often”. L*10 explained how he would use Moodle more “if I were more assiduous and courageous”. L*19 said “I would have to be more rigorous” when describing her use of Moodle.

4.1.2.3 Enrichment
Learners describe how using Moodle encourages them to go further. For example, “the more we use Moodle the more we want to deepen our learning” (L*8); she also said, “it makes us look for things when there are topics, so to research as well as classes”. L*8 also described how after using Moodle, she used the Internet to find extra information about topics and “it got a little addictive, at first it was just for homework, now I want to do more research”. L*4 explained that “when we learned the words about the seasons etc., we want to learn more words by continuing […] I’m doing better and I want to do more now”. L*3 said, “Moodle allows me to complete my curiosity in relation to learning”. L*14 said that using Moodle “allowed me to go on and look differently and learn more about a given topic”. L*20 said, “let’s say that we are forced to look at the issues more”, and “the documents on Moodle push us forward, it encourages you to learn the language”.

L*17 described that “there are elements that I found enriching and that I was able to know thanks to Moodle”. Learners found that using Moodle provided “enrichment of the vocabulary”. Likewise, L*2 felt “it’s more enriching for general culture”. L*3 said, “it allows me to enrich my way of doing things”, and “with each other it is always enriching to keep in touch”. L*13 said that Moodle provides “topical subjects that enable us to enrich ourselves”, and using Moodle “we enrich each other”. She also believed that Moodle “is culturally rewarding”.

90
L*9 explained, “I’m not very confident in using English yet, but using Moodle provides security from the lessons we’ve already learned”. L*13 and L*15 said that by using Moodle, “we are more confident”. L*15 also said, “it gives us a boost”. L*19 said, “it helps to build confidence”. L*6 described how using Moodle gives confidence in the fact that “I’ve never questioned myself; I’ve never been afraid to say anything on Moodle, I’m not afraid of making mistakes as it is within the safety of Moodle”.

Using Moodle “allows everyone to express themselves” (L*22). L*2, L*5 and L*16 also said that Moodle enabled them to express themselves. L*9 described how using Moodle “enables us to understand better how to express ourselves through what we see on Moodle”. L*3 explained how “Moodle encourages me to be interested and learn more”. L*15 said using Moodle, “I’ve made myself work more seriously” and “it encouraged me to invest more in my learning”.

Some general comments about using Moodle were, “it’s faster, more efficient, more modern” (L21) and “it’s simple and practical and it suits me. The goal is to keep connected while learning English” (L*3). Learners described how “Moodle opens us up to other topics” (L*13) and “Moodle brings more openness” (L*17). L*11 also explained how Moodle “opened me up a little bit with respect to my patients” when talking about she had gained knowledge about specific topics through Moodle. L*15 explained that using Moodle “opened up a new horizon for me because I now know how to do very interesting things”. L*19 said, “it allows us to explore other areas”.

4.1.3 What are the social challenges and/or rewards for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?

Three themes were identified in the social dimension: Relationships, Support and Communication. The following radar charts show the distribution of coded segments within these three themes in the social dimension.
When comparing the findings for each CEFRL group, there are some differences. For all groups of learners there is a greater number of segments referring to Communication. For A1 learners, there is a more significant number of references to Support than Relationships. This is the opposite for A2 and B2 learners, where there are more references to Relationships than Support. The radar charts that show a visual representation of these differences can be found in Figures 22 to 24 below.

Figure 21: Themes in the cognitive dimension for all learners

Figure 22: Themes in the cognitive dimension for A1 learners
4.1.3.1 Relationships
Learners described how the activity of introducing themselves at the beginning of the year helped them to get to know each other. L*2 described how she “went to see the participants’ names”, and L*10 said, “we can know who is who, even without having had time to exchange with others”. L*22 talked about “the presentation that everyone does at the beginning of the year, if you’re curious you can go and see what everyone writes”.

L*14 told me, “that’s what I take from Moodle, that we can keep in touch with others”. L*19 said, “Moodle increases the dialogue we have with each other, and we do it on our own”. L*16 explained how they use Moodle “to get together and talk about something, if we haven’t understood or to challenge each other”. L*7
said, “now, I have contacts”. L*6 said, “Moodle allows me to have relationships with other learners in the class”, and “there are forums where we can discuss among ourselves”. L*5 described how using Moodle, “we know each other better, we dare to talk to each other more, we ask each other questions, we get to know each other”.

Learners talk about sharing what they have learned or seen on Moodle with others, such as their family or friends; for example, L*21 explained how she had used a quiz from Moodle with her family during the lockdown. L*5 and L*11 said they had talked to their families about Florence Nightingale. L*17 said he shared what he had learned on Moodle with his wife and both L*3 and L*20 said, “I share this with my daughters”. L*22 also talked about how she spoke to her husband “when it was Saint Patrick’s Day. I told him I knew”.

L*1 said that he used information from Moodle for conversation topics with his family, and L*8 said she talked about what she had seen on Moodle, such as current issues, with her grandchildren. She also said Moodle gives her topics for discussion, “when we see our English friends we used to talk about the same things, now we talk about more diverse topics. When we start from a subject, we can continue onto other subjects”. She also said how she shared “what we see on Moodle, like current issues” with a UK/France group with whom she socialises.

Although L*20 and L*22 talked about benefits gained through using Moodle in other areas, they found that using Moodle had not changed their relationships with others. In addition to not changing anything concerning social connections, L*22 also said, “I admit I have had few exchanges with other English learners”. L*11 said, “I didn’t like it when I was asked to introduce myself, I did it very succinctly, I never answered about personal things voluntarily”. As the majority of learners described how using Moodle had strengthened their relationships with others there may be a difference according to personality type, this could be examined further in future research.

4.1.3.2 Support

Through communicating, learners also find that they can ask for and assist each other in using certain functionalities, such as uploading a photo or video, and language areas. L*5 described how “when we had exercises to do on Moodle, we found affinities between us, we helped each other”. Both L*4 and L*18 said, “we help each other”. L*15 explained how “I have my husband who helps me a lot”,

94
and L*14 said, “I asked for help and I talked about where I was on Moodle”. L*7 explained how another learner “helped me put the video in”, and L*1, L*4, L*6 and L*16 said they had each helped a fellow learner with using the computer. L*16 explained how Moodle “made it easier for me to reach out to my colleagues in English or my teacher”. L*13 said, “during the lockdown, we sent letters to each other”, and with Moodle “we communicate properly with each other”.

L*15 said that help from other learners “reassures us, they put us on the right path”. L*20 explained how “there is always one person who has a little more vocabulary in a particular context, we share”, and L*22 said how “answering questions from other learners also helps me to write a short text myself”. L*2 noted that “keeping in touch remotely has been beneficial”, and L*3 explained how using Moodle “allows us to discuss together” and “it helps to keep in touch”. L*15 said, “this is really something extraordinary, I found that the way you work in a group brings a lot”. Having support from the group when she did not understand something stopped her from feeling alone; she said “everyone listens to the others and everyone answers questions for the person who doesn’t know”.

4.1.3.3 Communication
This theme had the highest number of coded segments in the social dimension (71) and shows that learners find one advantage of using Moodle is having a safe space to communicate with others, “it allows me to communicate with the teacher and the other learners” (L*6), “it allows us to exchange with other learners like us” (L*13). L*3 said, “it allows us to discuss together”, and L*1 described how “I got into it by telling my life story, some people responded, and it started from there”. L*14 said, “it allows you to make contact with others”, and L*16 told me “it was easier to access than on something personal”.

L*9 mentioned that Moodle enables them to “have connections” with learners in the UK, and Moodle “enables us to work with them”. L*16 also mentioned, “when we got in touch with people who speak French in England, it allowed me to understand how they describe their city”. L*11 found that “it allowed me to better integrate with the other participants”, and L*10 “without Moodle there wouldn’t be so many interactions, Moodle encourages us to create interactions”. L*13 said, “it is more of an exchange between us rather than in class when we listen to the teacher”. L*4 explained how “we can talk to each other, more than in class”.

95
Communication and exchange were the main advantages, with many comments such as, “we are communicating with each other” (L*19) and “we can correspond with every learner, we can communicate” (L*22). L*6 described how “there are exchanges of friendships and bonds. If we did it via WhatsApp or whatever, we would do it in French. We force ourselves to speak or write in English”. L*13 described how “we can exchange to have additional information in order to understand”. L*10 explained how “through exchanges, if I ever needed to ask questions, it’s much more practical”.
4.2 Deductive thematic analysis of Stimulated Recall interviews

In this section, I present the five stories written using citations from the SR interviews and extracts from Moodle about what the learners talked about. Each learner has been given a pseudonym, and the title of each story is a quote from the learner that reflects the overall picture of the learner’s account.

As a reminder, Table 9 shows the three dimensions of learning and corresponding themes that were derived from the inductive analysis of the initial interviews:

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Table 9: Three dimensions of learning and corresponding themes

As described in section 3.6.2, each of the stories has been highlighted using the three dimensions of learning from the table above whilst considering the themes that were identified from the inductive analysis of the initial interviews.

In chapter 5 the findings from both inductive and deductive analyses are discussed before the relevance to theory and practice are presented in chapter 6.
4.2.1 Angela (Learner 15 – A1 level) “It made me feel safe and confident”.

Angela was in her second year of studying English when she started to use Moodle in January 2020. To begin with, she was very apprehensive about using the computer and was afraid not to understand how it worked. She said, “the first time, I was shaking” and thought “this is going to be complicated”. She was helped initially by her husband and then by other members of the group who helped each other, “we call each other” and “it has helped us enormously”.

Angela was uncomfortable with the fact that she needed help, “at first I really didn’t like it and I felt like I needed help all the time”, but once she had accepted that this was not an issue, it made her feel at ease, “knowing that there was someone who was there whenever we had a question”, she spoke about her classmates, and how “they reassure us, they put us on the right path”. She told me how working together on Moodle had “strengthened our friendship”, and although seeing each other in class is important, using Moodle, she felt like “we had people all around us and when you feel lost you are not lost because others give you the solution”.

Her concerns stemmed from the fact that she had minimal experience of using IT. Apart from looking at photos or reading an email, communicating with others during a video conference was almost unthinkable. “I had never done visual so it had me”. Once she had got used to the idea, she talked about how Moodle enabled her “to do much more research”, “(it) forced us to search and work a lot more”.

Angela explained how using Moodle “made things easier, it prolongs the classes”, and she mentioned how “it allowed me to find some time to do it”. She spoke about taking time to go over the lessons and “just by being on Moodle by searching for videos, so looking for the lessons and videos and watching them x times, I think we go a long way in the language. If someone asks me how do I do it, etc., to progress. That’s what I’d tell them. You know, like me, you watch your videos 3, 4, 5 times and then it goes in really easily”.

The following screenshots show how Angela increased her connectivity to Moodle between January and June. She talked about watching the videos multiple times to aid her comprehension, which improved her confidence in using the platform.
When asked how Moodle had helped with her language learning, she described her most significant achievement as “building a sentence that has meaning, not just to make a very small sentence, you see what you understand when you read an English text. This allows me to go much further, much more. Yes, much more constructed sentences, which are longer, more elaborate”.

Angela described how using Moodle has changed the way she works, “I’ve made myself work more seriously”, and more specifically, her perspective on learning is that “it even helped me to invest more in learning”. She added, “even if we think we’re old and we don’t want certain things anymore, we still have to be aware of all this and start working because it’s the new generation and it boosts us. It gives us a boost”.

When it came to lockdown, the group only had Moodle for their lessons, to obtain documents and then video conferencing using a tool called the Big Blue Button. Angela explained how using a ‘flipped classroom’ approach was also beneficial, “as we have prepared the lesson, well prepared, so as not to waste the time of the other interlocutors, the others, the group, I think it is much easier and that we progress well”. By having learners read at home and work on real-world problems in class, the flipped classroom method is one sort of blended learning that tries to promote engagement and learning. Angela told me how she worked with others in the group, preparing the lessons before the video conference enabled them to do more research and be more confident with their answers, “it gives you more confidence in yourself”.

Extract 11: Angela’s connections to Moodle
Angela explained, "lockdown was terrible and it was very, very good that we did this work on Moodle in a group". She added, "even if you are retired, you have certain days to do activities", and how continuing to have lessons gave structure to her day and week. She went on to say that "working together made us feel safe".

Angela described her experience using Moodle and how it helped her as a learner as "really something extraordinary. Joining you and the others in the whole group. I found that working in a group brings a lot because I know that, when you're alone or you see that you're calling someone who’s stronger than you to say, I didn’t understand this and that, everyone listens to each other and everyone answers questions for the one who does not know".

Since January 2020, Angela’s opinions of using Moodle have changed quite drastically; “I have no more fear”, she went further to say, “it’s been very, very, very beneficial”. Her initial concerns about connecting have gone to the point that “I looked forward to the moment, it’s a pleasure”.

Angela described being introduced to using Moodle as “a breath of fresh air” and “it made me feel safe and confident”. She reflected on the experience by saying. “I was really against all that stuff. And in reality, it really opened up a horizon for me because I know how to do very interesting things".
4.2.2 Brenda (Learner 4 – A1 level) “Two things for the price of one”.
The first activity Brenda recalled was sending a message to a group of learners who were learning French; the group learning English in France were exchanging video messages with a group in Derby (UK). They worked on the vocabulary in class, wrote them in a forum on Moodle whilst at home and then recorded the messages in class. I sent the recorded New Year Resolutions to the group’s Moodle via their teacher, and then the messages they received in return were posted on our Moodle.

Extract 12: Tell us what your New Year’s Resolutions are.
Brenda described the advantages of using Moodle and the fact that “it allows me to see people we wouldn’t have seen if we were like this in class without Moodle. It really allows us to view people as they are”. She went on to say, “we can exchange and see each other and put a head on a person”.

Regarding watching the videos from Derby, Brenda told me about “how we see the difference between people, the way they talk, the speed, the accent, each person has a different voice, so intonations and all that”. She expressed her pleasure at these activities by saying, “I think it was great!”

As well as seeing the ‘heads’ of the learners in Derby, the French group could take a virtual tour of the museums in Derby. When I asked what Moodle added to the F2F lessons, she told me, “that’s what’s interesting about Moodle: you can do a lot of things you couldn’t do without it. How do you send pictures? How do you exchange in writing?”

Extract 13: Link to a website to do a virtual tour of the museums in Derby.

In the beginning, Brenda was uncomfortable using computers and felt that it would be too difficult, but she explained how her feelings had changed, saying “on the contrary, I think it’s good”. She said, “I was a little bit wary at the beginning and
now I think it’s a really good complement”. Brenda went on to say, “at first I was not very comfortable, not easy to know how to use a computer and the further one goes, the more I enjoy working in English”.

When she first connected to Moodle, Brenda said it was her husband who helped her and that once, when he was unavailable, she and a classmate had worked it out together. Eventually, Brenda helped her fellow students to connect to Moodle as well as with the English work. She explained, “we’d connect, we’d have our phones, and we’d do it together”.

Other than ‘seeing people’, Brenda talked about how Moodle gave them opportunities to do things differently. During class time, they concentrated on oral work as much as possible, then after class, “we had to write, it was different”. She even surprised herself with the quality and quantity of her productions, “I did sentences, but I got caught up in the thing, and I liked it, and puf puf puf it came out like that”. When I asked why she liked it, she went on to explain, “it’s the discovery of other things too, things I didn’t do before”.

When I asked Brenda if she learned things from reading what the other students had written, she said, “yes, it’s interesting to see how people live, what they like”. Brenda explained how writing on Moodle enabled them to say things they wouldn’t have said in class, “writing like that gives you more opportunities to learn about others”. She said, “it’s different, and it allows us to write and visualise more when we are on Moodle, we have more time, we think more etc., more details because they take the time to think about really saying what they are doing”.

Extract 14: Write about your typical day. Use adverbs of frequency (always, usually, etc.) and time words (then, after, breakfast, etc.)

Brenda talked about the flexibility that using Moodle gave her, saying “we can work at any time we want, for however long we want, we can re-do the exercises, we can work on pronunciation, but when we are in class, we cannot”. She explained, “by working and learning with Moodle (and the teacher of course), we work more. It is unlimited”.

102
Brenda described the difference between activities in F2F classes and on Moodle. She said in class, “we are here to listen and learn from what you were teaching us… we don’t have time to read it several times”, and “when there are ten of us, we can’t each take turns”. She also said, “we can watch videos several times, when we are in class, we see them only once… we can listen to everything we have done in class again”.

Extract 15: Example of a week’s activities before using the BBB to meet in a video conference during the lockdown.

Brenda told me that aside from learning English, she had learned how to use the computer, suggesting it was “two things for the price of one”, and that “I liked working with Moodle”. Brenda talked about autonomy and how “we learn to fend for ourselves because we have no one in front of us to answer our questions as in class or the teacher to explain to us”. She added that using Moodle “makes us want to do some research by ourselves. That’s what’s interesting because I never thought of it before”. To conclude, Brenda said, “I take pleasure in working with Moodle, I find it very pleasant, something that surprised me”.

4.2.3 Carol (Learner 5 – A2 level) “It’s more than just a website… it opens the mind”.

Looking back at Moodle, Carol described how her confidence had improved over the years she had been using Moodle, “before I was afraid of making mistakes, at first I looked to see if someone had started”. She explained how this increased confidence had led her to participate more regularly, and she was no longer afraid, “now I don’t care, if I want to do it, I do it”.

Carol described the cohesion of the class, “we know each other, we’re not afraid of other people’s judgement. That’s what I like about a group, if we are wrong or even if no one is wrong, we’re here to explain better, that’s all”. On multiple occasions, she explained to me how a small group of learners often worked together outside of class, “we talked about it, on the phone, before class, after class”, how they helped each other, “if I couldn’t do it, I sent them a little message”.

The first activity of the year was ‘introduce yourselves’, and Carol told me how “it allowed us to get to know each other better”.

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Extract 16: Introduce yourselves.

Carol spoke in length about how she used Moodle regularly, “in a week, I go at least four times to do the exercises, revise, to be in contact as much as possible”. She explained what Moodle enabled her to do, “it allows me to do what you tell us in class, it allows me to study, things that we didn’t quite understand in class or that we’re not sure about”, in particular listening activities, “we can listen quietly at home, listen again”. Carol told me, “I took all the links and I work on them regularly. I go to see, I do, I review and I do the exercises again”, and “it makes you feel safe”. Referring to the film and US series trailers, Carol told me, “it opens the mind, it makes you want to go and see it. In addition, we go with other
people”. She explained how not everybody was open to participating in all the activities and said, “it doesn’t work for everyone”. We discussed how some learners were more “open” to participating than others.

Carol told me how the activity ‘What is it?’ was a lot of fun. She had discussed it with friends and family looking for the answer “it makes us research”. However, she was unable to find the solution even after posing some good questions.

Extract 17: Sorry we missed you.

Extract 18: What is it?
During December, the learners had the chance to see various Christmas advertisements and were then asked to find and upload an advert they liked. Carol told me what she learned about the other learners in this activity, saying that “there were different subjects; we can see that others have gone onto something else”. She also told me that uploading the video was not easy for her. When she saw that another learner had succeeded, she asked for help, suggesting “we made a connection. I saw that she had done it, so I sent her a message”. When I asked what she had learned from this activity, she told me, “the customs, like Christmas. There’s a lot of singing at Christmas, I was surprised by that” and “even advertising, it’s a little different, humour too”.

Extract 19: Christmas adverts.

In the next activity, learners were asked what they would do if they had 24 hours to live, I replied to each learner with a picture, and it was well received, saying “you put a picture for me, that means that what I wrote - you understood, so I am happy”.

Extract 20: What would you do if… you had 24 hours to live?
During the lockdown, learners wrote about what they had been doing. When I asked Carol about this experience, she told me, “we know each other better (from what people write) a lot of them tidied their houses, some people said they miss their grandchildren, it is good if we have a garden as the weather was good”. She explained how using a ‘flipped’ methodology changed things, saying “it’s different because you can prepare your work, we had to prepare in order not to waste time because we only had 45 minutes”. Carol also told me about the connections with the small group of learners with whom she had previously worked. They used WhatsApp and the telephone to discuss their work before and after the video conference sessions.

Carol told me how useful she finds Moodle, “it’s much more than just a website, I don’t use paper, my medium is Moodle”. She told me that she had saved all the links we used and would use them during the holidays or later. Carol also explained to me about learning other things (other than the English language), such as how to upload a video and share it with other learners. She said that these were things she wouldn’t have been able to do without Moodle, so it added another element to her learning experience.
4.2.4 Dorothy (Learner 8 – A2 level) “We are more actors than spectators”.

Dorothy had been using Moodle for several years but changed group in September 2019. She explained the benefits of reading the profiles created at the beginning of the year, saying “it makes it possible to know everyone in the class” and “it’s useful to get to know each other more”.

Extract 21: Introduce yourselves.

One of the first activities was to watch the trailer for a British film that we had organised to go and see together, since “it provides a concrete basis for discussion afterwards”. She described how watching the film enabled such discussion, “then we talked a little, everyone who saw the film, we were on the same level”. Dorothy explained, “we have more time to reflect and certainly to go deeper” and “once we come to class we have the basics, we can discuss again but having thought about it, that’s what’s important, even for the vocabulary”.

Extract 22: Sorry we missed you.
The next activity was also a trailer but for an American series. Dorothy told me how she had spoken to her daughters, “who are in their forties”, about the series she hadn’t heard about. “It allowed us to talk, it’s always interesting to discover something. It was fun”. She continued to tell me how she had talked about this show to others and had discovered that “when I talked to others, they knew it well”.

After watching the clip on Moodle, she said, “it encourages exchanges with other people”.

I asked Dorothy to tell me more about how Moodle enabled her to communicate with others on specific topics. She said, “it’s really between generations, with my daughters, even my grandchildren”.

The next activity was a kind of guessing game, where they had a zoomed-in photo, and the idea was to discuss using the forum until they found what the object was, Dorothy said, “I asked other people what they thought about it and no one had found it, but it was funny, I find it more playful”.

Throughout December, the learners had the chance to watch various British advertisements. Dorothy said, “it was more English humour” and “it gives an idea of what English culture is for Christmas”. She described how “it’s easier when you see them on Moodle, you are at home so if there is one we like we can watch it again if we feel like it, or you can skip or think about it”. Dorothy went further to tell me, “I think that when we are in class, we are spectators, whereas, on Moodle we can take pauses, we are more actors in what we do” she continued, “we are more actors than spectators waiting for you to bring things”.

Extract 23: What is it?

Perhaps an old wither carrot?
Following on from ‘watch the advertisements’, learners uploaded an advert they had found. Dorothy told me about the video she had uploaded about a cat, saying “so after I looked for other videos and then I saw that he was originally a hero of children’s books”. I asked her what this had brought to her learning experience, and she told me, “English culture changes learning, and that makes you want to look further” she continued, “with Moodle, it’s much more motivating because we want to know more”. She described how using Moodle “opens a lot of doors”. Dorothy also explained how watching the videos on Moodle helped her learn, “you can replay it as many times as you want, we listen and understand nothing and then all of a sudden, it lights up right away”. She went on to say, “this is not possible in the classroom, so it is an interesting point about Moodle”. When I asked about the writing activities, Dorothy told me, “it’s interesting to see what others have written, it’s not the same form, the same way of thinking”. For example, “I really liked it when you responded with pictures because in the end, I remember the pictures more”. She pointed out, “I think I learn better: from the point of view of memorisation, it’s easier with Moodle” and “the more we do, the more we want to participate”.

Extract 24: Christmas adverts.
Dorothy described her participation in the following way, “Moodle gives us an opening on a lot of things afterwards, it’s an open-mindedness, a desire to look elsewhere [...] I find that with Moodle it’s less academic, we can go and see something else, we can go further in our discoveries. If you look at the books it’s the same subjects, but on Moodle it’s more reality, it’s English-speaking culture, British culture in particular.”

When I asked Dorothy to tell me about how she used the information she had seen on Moodle to communicate with others, she said “I told my grandchildren about Florence Nightingale”. She went on to say how “it was an interesting topic of conversation” and how with friends “it made it possible to make a link rather than talk about what we had been doing”.

Extract 25: What would you do if… you had 24 hours to live?
When we looked at the activities from previous years, there was one activity that we both remembered well, “I remember sending photos about Hip-Hop”. I asked her to explain why she put this post, “it’s funny because you can also put whatever you want, there are subjects we can put a bit of anything for a laugh, then we could talk about it together”. She told me, “I think I felt a little bit old and I was looking for something a little bit extraordinary”. She described her experience of using Moodle, “I think we are freer, we can blow off steam, even if it’s not the truth, it’s not important, it’s about making sentences”. Dorothy explained, “it gives you something more casual than in class because you can let go. I had fun writing this. I even have to find a brunette because I really thought about it.”
4.2.5 Evelyne (Learner 19 – B2 level) “With Moodle you can give something that is more refined”.

The first activity of each year is to introduce yourselves to the others in the class. Evelyne commented on how it was her “eighth registration for this course, how time flies!” Although Evelyne had been at the centre for eight years, she had only used Moodle for the last three years.

Evelyne described the use of Moodle as “an approach that is quite diversified, it allows you to have a lot of images” and “you have more information than with just a textbook”. This activity was based on a text about British Designs, and using Moodle; I was able to display the images of the designs both in the classroom and learners could access them after. Evelyne described how using Moodle was “fun and interactive” and how “one search would lead to another”.

In the activity, learners could comment on a film trailer (that we also went to see together). Evelyne explained how writing on Moodle “allows us to reflect”. She said it was more interesting to write on Moodle (rather than submitting a paper copy to the teacher) because it gave her the chance to reread and correct it. Evelyne went on to say how writing on Moodle gave an interactive element to the learning. Seeing what others had written often gave her inspiration either to respond in dialogue or to write on another topic “sometimes we don’t know how to start but we can reply to what others have said”. Evelyne also said, “every time I went there, I looked to see if anyone had written anything” and “it makes it possible to be inspired”.

Extract 27: British Designs
Evelyne found that having her writing corrected directly on Moodle was “super interesting”. I asked her if it was demotivating to see the errors, and she said, “on the contrary, we’re here to learn, and we can learn from each other’s mistakes.”

When looking at another activity, Evelyne explained how using Moodle “gives a very practical dimension because the idea is to master some knowledge to exchange on things that are ultimately very common”. She went on to say how Moodle enabled the learners to have “dialogues between each other”. This activity was to sell/buy items of clothing, and Evelyne told me that her comments were true, “I could have invented, but my daughter really is allergic to wool.”
Evelyne described how using Moodle outside of class was interesting because “there isn’t a set time, we’re not always available at the same time either”. She went on to say “it takes time between two classes to find things out, it takes more time, just the face-to-face class is not enough”.

Evelyne explained how using Moodle made learning “more individualised” and “the advantage is that with Moodle you can give something that is more refined”. She said, “being able to work at one’s own pace, I find that motivating”. She also said, “since we can go back to things, it encourages me to go on”. Evelyne described how she felt she was making progress using Moodle, “I feel I am getting somewhere, it seemed impossible for me to understand a conversation, now I am more attentive to what I hear, and I try more to understand”.

Evelyne told me that after three years of using Moodle, “I have more control over the tool, I spend more time there,” and she said how she could spend up to and sometimes more than two hours a week. Through Moodle, Evelyne found that “it showed me how to do other tasks”. Although she is a confident user of the internet, “every time it’s a source of learning, the more you learn, the more comfortable you are”.

Evelyne’s experiences of using Moodle were very positive. She found using Moodle to learn “an enrichment” and described how “it forces us to research” and
“one search would lead to another”. However, she told me it is important to have both F2F classes as well as Moodle. “The advantage of F2F is that we have the whole group together and there is another form of interaction”, and “the advantage of exchanging in class is that we are much more spontaneous”.

Although she considers herself “from a generation where we picked it up late”, Evelyne is not afraid of taking risks. She said, “I’m not afraid to screw up, that’s what we’re here for”, but she explained there could be others who “are a little inhibited” and “I get the impression there are people who find it more difficult to express themselves, me I’ll give it a go and see”. She continued, “I saw there are people who did not dare to say something because they were afraid, perhaps to say something stupid”.
Summary of Chapter 4
Inductive thematic analysis of initial interviews

In this section, the three dimensions of learning: cognitive, affective and social, were explored using nine themes that were analysed and reported using quotes from the learners.

Cognitive: this dimension was divided into the following themes:
- Digital skills & knowledge. Learners described how using Moodle led to an increase in their digital skills. However, some comments related to the frustration of acquiring new digital skills if they did not have sufficient support.
- Language skills & knowledge. Moodle allowed learners to reflect on lessons and activities, enabling them to retain more of the language learned. Learners described how using Moodle increases the variety of activities and they reported an overall progression in reading, writing, listening and speaking skills.
- Other skills & knowledge. Moodle enables learners to access resources on various topics, encouraging them to do more. They can learn about culture as well as language. Moodle increases learners' knowledge of English-speaking countries. Learners use Moodle to support their F2F classes and can access materials if they are absent.

Affective: this dimension was divided into the following themes:
- Perception of age. The learners were not asked any specific questions about age during the interviews. However, since age was a criterion for selection to be included in the study, any comments were reported and analysed. The four learners who mentioned age thought that maybe using Moodle is more difficult for them because they are older adult learners.
- Agency. Learners found using Moodle motivating, more interactive and varied. Moodle provides learners with flexibility to do activities wherever and whenever suits them. Although learners described how using Moodle increases their assiduity, they felt they were not making the most of it and could do more.
Enrichment. Moodle encourages learners to do more. They are more curious and intrigued by the language. Learners feel more confident and safe working within Moodle and are not afraid to make mistakes. Moodle enables learners to learn many different things, to discuss many topics and, in turn, they feel they can discuss openly with each other.

**Social**: this dimension was divided into the following themes:

**Relationships.** Moodle helps the learners to get to know each other and develop relationships outside the F2F classes. Learners often use what they have learned from Moodle to discuss with friends and family.

**Support.** Learners help each other to use Moodle. If they have a question or difficulty completing a task, they reach out for support from other classmates. Having support from other members reassures learners and enables them to give and receive support during the lockdown period of 2020.

**Communication.** Moodle enables learners to communicate with teachers, classmates and learners in other countries. Moodle encourages learners to communicate using the target language to discuss and exchange. Learners talk about the practicality of using Moodle, it is easy to contact others, and without Moodle, there would be less interaction.

**Deductive thematic analysis of stimulated recall interviews**

The five learners’ stories written from the stimulated recall interviews and supported by images from the Moodle platform were analysed using the three dimensions of learning informed by the nine themes.

Angela’s story “It made me feel safe and confident” describes how she developed her skills and confidence in using Moodle with support from her husband and classmates. Her story shows how using Moodle made her invest more in her learning and gave her extra opportunities to work with classmates. Angela now looks forward to connecting to Moodle and participating in the activities that have opened up a new horizon for her.

Brenda’s story “Two things for the price of one” demonstrates the various activities that using Moodle enabled her to do. Brenda described how using Moodle had increased her autonomy as well as digital and language skills. She described the
joy in seeing the people in the UK with whom they had communicated and said that communicating without Moodle was impossible, to send pictures and write.

Carol’s story “It’s more than just a website… it opens the mind” talks about how participating in Moodle had increased her confidence and that working with others motivated her. She explained how Moodle enables her to look back at activities to develop her understanding. Carol described how using Moodle encouraged her (and others) to do more research and discuss the activities with family and friends. Whilst learning about customs and humour Carol connected with classmates to succeed in a task with which she was having difficulties.

Dorothy’s story “We are more actors than spectators” shows how, by using Moodle, she feels more active in her learning; she has control over what she does. Dorothy described using Moodle as a liberating activity. She can be more playful with the language by posting pictures and comments that may or may not be true. Moodle also provides access to English-speaking cultures, is less academic and encourages her to discover more.

Evelyne’s story “With Moodle you can give something that is more refined” demonstrates how using Moodle adds diversity to language learning. When participating in the activities, Evelyne explained how she has time to reflect and take inspiration from other learners’ contributions. Receiving feedback on her contributions was also motivating. Evelyne said that seeing others’ mistakes and hers was helpful to her language learning. Evelyne felt that using Moodle gives her a more individualised experience that has helped her progress.
Chapter 5 Discussion

In this study the concepts of Second Language Acquisition, Sociocultural Theory, Situated Learning and Social learning spaces have been brought together through the use of Digital Language Learning in a Task-based Language Teaching environment. In this chapter, I discuss my findings, and then each of the research questions is discussed whilst referring to the literature presented in chapter 2. The findings from Chapter 4 are discussed in order to answer the research questions:

1. What are the challenges for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?
   a. What are the cognitive challenges?
   b. What are the affective challenges?
   c. What are the social challenges?

2. What are the rewards for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?
   a. What are the cognitive rewards?
   b. What are the affective rewards?
   c. What are the social rewards?

5.1 What are the challenges for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?

Although the integration of technology may present challenges for all learners, older adults, in particular, can face specific challenges within the cognitive, affective or social dimensions. This study’s findings suggest that, by acknowledging the challenges that older adults may experience and implementing strategies to help them overcome these challenges, this can lead to opportunities for growth and potential for rewards.

5.1.1 Cognitive challenges

As this study was interested in learners’ perceptions of using Moodle, there is no clear evidence that the older adults in this cohort are able to disprove the critical period hypothesis theory. In any case, the fact that there are a number of learners aged over 50 in a B2 level group indicates that they are still capable of achieving success in SLA. Given that the age range of the B2 group was 64-69 and that the maximum time of study was 10 years this is unlikely to have occurred before the learners reached 50.

Much research talks about the cognitive decline of older adults. This may be due to the fact they have some hearing loss, deteriorating vision or that their
processing skills are slowing down, thus causing cognitive challenges. Many learners reported that using Moodle improved their learning experience and enabled them to re-do activities. L*9 indicated that memory loss may be an issue, but whether this is due to age is not clear, saying “what you learn on Monday, the next Monday you have often forgotten”. L*8 said, “I forget quickly but with Moodle it’s good”. Learners described how using Moodle to listen again enabled them to “train our ears” (L*13) and “we have the music of English in our ears” (L*22), which indicates that, whether or not they have hearing difficulties, Moodle helps older learners with listening skills.

Digitalisation is a feature of the 21st century that has been further highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic's accelerated digitalisation. Digital inclusion requires a certain level of digital literacy. Angela’s story shows that “even if we think we’re old and we don’t want certain things anymore, we still have to be aware of all this”. Digital skills can be effective for older adults to feel empowered and in control of their own lives. L*9 explained, “I’m not very confident in using English yet, but using Moodle provides security from the lessons we’ve already learned”.

Digital skills help our relationships with our families, communities and even beyond. As Puebla et al., (2022) found, there are numerous obstacles to older adults using technology and engaging in digital activities. They include a lack of sufficient digital expertise, knowledge, motivation, and interest as well as a perception that digital technology is not relevant to their needs and preferences. Inaccessible technology design, which makes digital engagement more challenging, as well as the emergence of physical or cognitive impairments later in life are also included. Evidence in this study supports these points, for example L*15 said, “the first time, I was shaking”, and Brenda told me, “I was a little bit wary at the beginning”.

This study shows that using Moodle helps improve older adult learners’ digital skills and thus reduces the risk of digital exclusion, when people cannot participate actively in local society or civil activities (Mason et al., 2012). Overcoming the barriers to digital engagement by using Moodle can lead to positive outcomes such as social connectedness: personal relationships, community connections, and societal engagement.

One challenge facing older adults with regard to technology is that many are simply not confident in their ability to learn about and properly use technology. For
some learners, such as Angela and Brenda, a lack of digital skills, in general, had been a barrier to using Moodle. Some learners had never achieved tasks such as accessing the internet; this was in contrast to other learners who had relatively high-level digital skills. This study found, as did Lee et al., (2013), that the act of learning to use technology can add to a sense of achievement for older adults.

The A1 group of learners spoke more about experiencing challenges regarding digital skills than the A2 or B2 groups. Angela, in particular, had quite serious concerns about using Moodle initially but during the interviews said, “I have no more fear”. Brenda said, “I take pleasure working with Moodle, I find it pleasant, something that surprised me”.

The main challenge for older adults in using Moodle was a lack of training or knowledge to carry out certain tasks. Accessing Moodle was not an issue but more detailed activities, such as uploading a picture or video, posed problems for some learners (L*1, L*5, L*7 and L*13). Many learners had overcome this challenge by working together, and often, a ‘more knowledgeable other’ solved the issue. This is consistent with Vygotsky's (1978) SCT and the notions of scaffolding allowing learners to access and operate within their ZPD. One example is Carol’s story: “I saw that she had done it, so I sent her a message”. L*1, L*4, L*6 and L*16 said they had each helped a fellow learner with using the computer.

Many learners lack the expertise with Web 2.0 tools necessary to utilise them to their fullest potential. Support is required for the development of learners' technical, procedural, and operational skills, including logging in, navigating, understanding norms, and being aware of how to use the resources available to them. Gonzales (2021) planned practical workshops to support older adults with using technology. The findings of this study suggest that this would also be useful. As L*17 noted, “you need to know how to use the tool”. I had used a ‘How to sheet’ with the learners and this can be found in Appendix N. I come back to this in section 6.2, implications and recommendations for professional practice.

5.1.2 Affective challenges
As Ortega (2014) found, a small number of learners in this study reported apprehension or fear when faced with the task of using technology. This led to them having increased levels of anxiety when Moodle was introduced to them; the following learners’ comments are an example: “at first I really didn’t like it and I felt like I needed help all the time” (L*15) and “I was a little bit wary at the beginning”
(L*4). However, the learners that had experienced this anxiety reported overcoming these barriers with help from family members and other learners; an example from Brenda’s story shows this: “we’d connect, we’d have our phones, and we’d do it together”.

This study brings up to date evidence that agrees with Lamy and Hampel, (2007); Hampel et al., (2005); Hauck and Hurd, (2005); and Roed (2003) that communicating through Moodle may have the effect of lowering learners’ anxiety by allowing them to work with the target language without having to be put on the spot in front of other learners and thus increase motivation.

Some limitations exist with respect to WTC; the use of Moodle requires the learners to be strongly motivated and determined to participate. Whilst not all learners participate, some engage extensively. Although learning a foreign language can make some people feel ambivalent about communicating - both willing and unwilling to do so. L*6 said she would have used Moodle more “if I were a little more conscientious”. The learner is aware of the need of practising communication skills, but they also worry about looking foolish in front of people whose opinions matter to them, such as the teacher and peers. As Evelyne put it, “I saw there are people who did not dare to say something because they were afraid, perhaps to say something stupid”. Results from this study indicate that using Moodle primarily increases WTC and learners are willing to get out of their comfort zone in order to progress. However, as Carol said, “it doesn’t work for everyone” as some learners are more “open” to participating than others.

Privacy or trust is a challenge for some older adults. One learner (L*11) stated very clearly that she did not want to share information with others and therefore had not participated in the same way as the other learners in order to protect her private information. Piechurska-Kuciel (2018) also found that situational variables may affect an individual’s WTC, and it is also shaped by communication apprehension. On the other hand, learners report being comfortable with participating in Moodle and feel safe; they do not fear that others will see their interactions or judge them. As in Pavicic Takac and Pozega’s (2012) study, learners’ curiosity, imaginativeness and desire to seek out new experiences have an effect on WTC; therefore, WTC in this study was very varied.

Although not the overall feeling of the majority of learners in this study, Stickler (2022) observed insecurities in older adults learning a second language. A feeling
of inadequacy was expressed by a few, for example, “we don’t have the reflexes of young people” (L*15), though some learners said that they preferred physical contact in face-to-face classes and put this down to their age. As L*19 noted, “most of us are of an age when we need physical contact more and we complete it with Moodle”.

5.1.3 Social challenges
As Vseteckova (2019) and Pot, Keijzer and De Bot (2018) found, health and well-being depend on meaningful social connection. Many older adults struggle with loneliness and/or social isolation for a variety of reasons, and this became more important during the lockdown of 2020. L*13 said, “during the lockdown, we sent letters to each other”, and L*2 noted that “keeping in touch remotely has been beneficial”. L*17 also commented, “it was a way to maintain the connection between us”. L*22 talked about writing about personal things during the 2020 lockdown to say, “how I was doing, how I was feeling”.

Technology can be utilised to foster socialisation and enhance communication when it is correctly developed for older adults. For a minority of learners in this study, Moodle does not appear to change their relationships with other learners. Some of them felt it was purely a tool for working, and the social aspect did not concern them; as L*11 said, “Moodle didn’t make me change the way I learn”.

In sociocultural theory, age and identity are socially constructed. As Andrew (2012) said, the social construction of age is a discursive process whereby people give meaning to the experience of ageing and create their age identity through their interaction with each other. Angela (L*15) and Evelyne (L*19) expressed concern about being from a generation that has less ability to use technology and, as such, doubted their own ability to use Moodle. A very small number of participants compared themselves to a younger generation and the fact they know how to use technology from an earlier age. No significant conclusions can be drawn from these comments other than age identity cannot be easily separated from other identities and as such forms part of what Gánem-Gutiérrez (2013) described as learner’s ‘ontological baggage’.

Having looked at the cognitive, affective and social challenges for older adult learners using Moodle to learn languages the next section considers the rewards for each of these three dimensions of learning.
5.2 What are the rewards for older adults using Moodle to learn languages?

Research on technology use throughout the lifespan has frequently concentrated on the ‘digital divide’ which might present an unnecessarily negative picture of older adults by implying that they lack the aptitude and drive to keep up with the rapid changes in the technological environment. There are undoubtedly variances in people’s capacity and willingness to adopt a new technology, even though many older adults feel uneasy and scared by the idea of utilising them or their security. Results from this study suggest that technology has the ability to enhance and enrich the lives of older adult language learners.

5.2.1 Cognitive rewards

Moodle helps older adults succeed in 21st-century society; learners must be able to operate effectively in an environment shaped by technologies, such as the increasingly ubiquitous use of the internet. As Chen et al., (2021) explained, digital learning is part of life for most language learners, and Moodle can help older adults become digitally competent, having the ability to make technology do whatever one wants it to do. Many learners in this study described how they had gained specific skills relating to using technology, such as uploading a photo or video. Improving digital skills is not related to language level as B2 learners also reported gaining skills, with comments such as “there were several ways to use the internet” from L*2, and the use of Skype for the interview was itself a new skill for L*19 who said “you made me go to a site that I didn’t know about”.

The twentieth century concepts of time, place, and curriculum for learning are not constraints on learning in Moodle. As Barrs (2012) found, technology such as Moodle provides opportunities for learners to expand their learning time outside the narrow time constraints of the physical classroom and an institution’s opening hours. The independence of time and place offers enormous flexibility; learners are able to take part irrespective of location and at a time when it is most convenient. Moodle enables learners to work wherever and whenever they choose. Evelyne’s story shows that, “there isn’t a set time, we’re not always available at the same time either”. She went on to say “it takes time between two classes to find things out, it takes more time, just the face-to-face class is not enough”. The fact that a lot of the communication is written and staggered in time implies considerable learning advantages. L*19 described writing activities on
Moodle as “stimulating”, and L*15 said Moodle enabled her to write “longer, more elaborate sentences”.

Moodle helps learners by giving them exposure to grammar and vocabulary in various situations and a range of presentations that help them assimilate and put into practice what they have learned. L*14 said Moodle helped her “to deepen the level of grammar” and “if you only have the book and the physical class, you don’t necessarily understand everything”. Evelyne described using Moodle as “an approach that is quite diversified, it allows you to have a lot of images” and “you have more information than with just a textbook”.

Participation in certain activities in Moodle also increases learners’ opportunities to communicate with other learners and teachers in real-world tasks, such as the type of Task-based Learning advocated by Ellis (2017) and González-Lloret and Ortega (2015). Evelyne said Moodle enabled the learners to have “dialogues between each other”. L*13 gave further examples of this, “we have discussions with other learners and [Moodle] allows me to intervene when I need or want to discuss the topic”.

As Gabryś-Barker (2018) found, language learning benefits older learners; it provides a sense of purpose and self-recognition. This study indicates that using Moodle to learn languages also benefits older adult learners in similar ways. This was confirmed by an example from L*3: “I am more eager to learn and improve myself” and from L*8: “we’re more interested, so we think more”. As L*13 described, “we enrich each other”.

Moodle provides opportunities for learners to engage in meaningful, authentic interaction, as in the studies by Plonsky and Ziegler (2016) and Ziegler (2016). Evelyne’s story shows an example of how using Moodle “gives a very practical dimension because the idea is to master some knowledge to exchange on topics that are ultimately very common”. During an activity to sell/buy items of clothing, Evelyne told me that her comments were true, “I could have invented, but my daughter really is allergic to wool” thus indicating that the task was an example of authentic interaction. L*14 said, “Moodle offers many possibilities to see, talk, improve or ask questions”.

Expanding the language learning opportunities in an EFL environment is essential because learners have few opportunities to use the target language outside the classroom. As teachers, particularly in an EFL context, may have a limit on
providing authentic material and limited teaching hours, technology can be the facilitator that allows learners to access a vast amount of authentic material for self-directed learning and provides more learning opportunities outside of the classroom. L*10 explained how “Moodle allows you to go further because an hour and a half a week is really very little” and how using Moodle enables learners to “go into more detail about what we saw in class”.

As Jaroszewska (2009) found, one motivating factor for learning a language can be interest in other cultures; learners in this study found pleasure and satisfaction resulting from discovering new countries, nationalities and the possibility to participate in their culture. As L*2 explained, “it’s more enriching for general culture”. L*21 spoke about extending social relations, “I can write to someone on the other side of the world”. L*5, L*7, L*21 and L*22 all mentioned learning Christmas songs in the target language.

One affordance of a social learning space is the opportunity to learn about other cultures through intercultural exchange (Murray and Fujishima, 2013). L*16 described how “when we got in touch with people who speak French in England, it allowed me to get an understanding of how they present their city”. In Brenda’s story, she says, “it allows me to see people we wouldn’t have seen if we were like this in class without Moodle. It really allows us to view people as they are”. She went on to say, “we can exchange and see each other and put a head on a person”.

The study's participants said they were better able to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds, think and act correctly, and communicate with them. Findings showed that older adult learners critically evaluated other cultural communities’ ideas, values, and behaviours to their own while also learning new information about those communities. L*13 described the use of Moodle as “culturally rewarding”. They became more thoughtful intercultural learners while speaking the target language as they began to comprehend and discuss cultural ideologies, values, and beliefs through the analysis of various materials.

Moodle makes it possible to gain access to more authentic and diverse resources to develop listening skills and broaden cultural knowledge. These resources are particularly successful at encouraging independent learning and individualised learning, as well as the development of skills related to self-reflection, autonomy, and independence. In this study, as González-Lloret and Ortega (2015) found,
learners' motivation is improved when they are supported and encouraged through activities like conversations, participative, and collaborative activities that are specifically targeting their interests and needs. In exchange, this encourages their ability to understand how to learn independently. As expressed by L*20, “all the documents on Moodle, they push us forward, it encourages you to learn the language”.

Moodle has the potential to be a transformative setting where new knowledge may be developed and learning can take on broader forms. Moodle offered support to learners within their zone of proximal development, the space between what learners can do on their own and what they can do with help (Vygotsky, 1978). While the learners in this study exchanged a lot of material on Moodle, they also supported one another’s language learning. L*5 described, “when we had exercises to do on Moodle, we found affinities between us, we helped each other”. Both L*4 and L*18 said, “we help each other”. Brenda explained in her story how “we’d connect, we’d have our phones, and we’d do it together”.

Moodle extends learner access to content and, in doing so, increases opportunities for meaningful interaction with peers and teachers. L*10 and L*19 mentioned how writing on Moodle enabled them to get feedback on their writing through corrections from the teacher. Moodle can provide scaffolding opportunities, such as peer response feedback, as in the study by Liu and Hansen Edwards (2018). L*22 said “answering questions from other learners also helps me to write a short text myself”. Evelyne described how seeing what others had written “it makes it possible to be inspired”. By incorporating collaborative technologies into online course activities, encouraging engagement and collaboration between learners, taking part in online conversations, being responsive, and providing frequent feedback, teachers facilitate the course and build connectivity. Tools such as forums facilitate collaborative work among learners, and studies as by Garcia Mayo (2021) also show that this can have a lasting effect on language comprehension.

Several learners said that using Moodle had increased their digital skills and their desire to continue and learn other new skills. As Angela explained, “I was really against all that stuff. And in reality, it really opened up a horizon for me because I know how to do very interesting things”. Withnall (2009) and Narushima (2008) also found that older adult learners benefitted from intellectual stimulation in their
studies. L*8 described how “the more we use Moodle the more we want to deepen our learning” and L*14 said that using Moodle “allowed me to go on and look differently and learn more about a given topic”. Dorothy’s story shows, “Moodle gives us an opening on a lot of things afterwards, it’s an open-mindedness, a desire to look elsewhere […] I find that with Moodle it’s less academic, we can go and see something else, we can go further in our discoveries”.

5.2.2 Affective rewards
As technology is used in education more and more, learning experiences can be customised for individual learners in response to their preferences for where, what, and how they want to learn. As L*4 stated, “we can work at any time we want, for however long we want”. Moodle allows learners to manage their learning and promotes a learner-centred environment. Learner-centeredness embraces the notion that learners have agency over their learning; when learners believe they can control what happens in their immediate environment, they have a sense of agency. As L*17 described, “[Moodle] motivated me to do my personal work at home”. The purpose of Moodle in this context is to meet the needs and preferences of the learner. Having agency means that learners develop aspirations; participating in a social learning space reflects both the aspiration to gain some new capability and the expectation that it will contribute to a difference that matters. L*19 expressed “I get the feeling that it encourages me to try to do better”.

Not only was Moodle a place where important topics could be discussed in safety, but it also gave the learners some degree of autonomy. L*9 said, “we can access it all the time”, and “that's the advantage of Moodle, you can work on it whenever you want”. L*17 explained, “I would have worked at home less if I hadn’t had Moodle”. Findings show that learners had the freedom to exercise their agency, as L*13 said, “we have discussions with other learners and [Moodle] allows me to intervene when I need or want to discuss the topic”.

Agency and customisation are two components of personalisation. Due to high levels of personalisation and a strong sense of ownership, learners have a high degree of agency in appropriately designed learning experiences and can customise and change both tools and activities. Evelyne said that learning with Moodle is “more individualised”. Learners have the chance to receive fast, personalised feedback using this construct. Evelyne’s story shows how having her work corrected on Moodle was “super interesting”. In addition to receiving
customised feedback there is enjoyment in the feedback process, as learners enjoy getting better at using the target language. I asked her if it was demotivating to see the errors, and she said, “on the contrary, we’re here to learn, and we can learn from each other’s mistakes”.

Motteram (2013) described the access to authentic material and increased learning opportunities that using technology can provide as empowering. L*2 said that Moodle enabled her “to read articles I wouldn’t look for otherwise. L*3 explained how “Moodle encourages me to be interested and learn more”. L*15 said that by using Moodle, “we are more confident” and “it gives us a boost”. L*8 described, “the more we use Moodle the more we want to deepen our learning”.

Digital learning, such as using Moodle, can provide enhanced motivation for learners, keeping them interested and focused on the learning content because they are interested in engaging with the technology and technologically mediated materials. As Evelyne described in her story, “an approach that is quite diversified, it allows you to have a lot of images” and “you have more information than with just a textbook”. Benefits include being able to access authentic language learning inputs at any time, being able to follow a programme of learning in one’s own time, being able to interact with learning colleagues and peers in all parts of the world at any time, and being able to constantly assess and reassess one’s learning successes, strengths and weaknesses. As Brenda explained, “how we see the difference between people, the way they talk, the speed, the accent, each person has a different voice, so intonations and all that”. Or as Carrier (2017) said, digital learning puts learners in control of their own learning. L*19 said that in order to use Moodle, “you have to be autonomous” and “we can repeat at our own pace… this progression at one’s own pace, it can be an asset”.

Learners are, as Lantolf (2014) and L*8 described, social actors who make choices and decisions about their actions; “we’re more interested, so we think more”. The atmosphere and environment are generally different from those that are offered in the classroom teaching, as learners choose their own position, time, and location where they will complete the activities. Confident and highly motivated, communicative learners are more likely to be so depending on the online component's content and how well it appeals to the interests of the learners. Carol told me, “it opens the mind, it makes you want to go and see it. Dorothy said,
“with Moodle, it’s much more motivating because we want to know more”. She described how using Moodle “opens a lot of doors”.

The content can also define autonomy as much as independence. Moodle provides an environment encouraging freedom of expression in accordance with the needs and interests of the learners. Learners regularly collaborate with each other inside the classroom, but they often collaborate differently on Moodle. L*13 said, “it is more of an exchange between us rather than in class when we listen to the teacher”. As Ibrahim et al., (2015) found, motivation can be heightened as a result of collaborative learning as learners feel empowered. According to L*10, “without Moodle there wouldn’t be so many interactions, Moodle encourages us to create interactions”.

Many of the older adult language learners in this study commend the flexibility of the course materials. They express a preference for working at their own pace and devoting more time to the material that they find most challenging. L*15 explained how, with using Moodle, “you learn a lot more”. Golonka et al., (2014) also found that technology such as Moodle can increase learner interest and motivation. Brenda described how “by working and learning with Moodle (and the teacher of course), we work more. It is unlimited”.

With the help of Moodle, learners can take charge of their learning; when they connect course material to their interests and passions, they feel more invested in what they are doing. L*16 explained how Moodle “made it easier for me to reach out to my colleagues in English or my teacher”. By sharing knowledge and expertise and supporting each other in a CoP, as Wenger-Trayner and Wenger (2015) described, learners develop a shared collection of resources, and this sense of ownership leads to increased motivation and reduced feelings of isolation. Angela described her feelings: “we had people all around us and when you feel lost you are not lost because others give you the solution”. L*4 explained how “we can talk to each other, more than in class”.

As Grotek (2018) also observed, learners are more inclined to connect with teachers and peers and are less likely to overlook learning opportunities when they are at ease and feel safe in the learning environment. Carol explained how using Moodle “makes you feel safe”, and L*6 said, “everything is within the safety of Moodle”. Findings from this study indicate that Moodle gives older adults the feeling of being safe. As Angela stated, “working together made us feel safe”.
Findings in this study concur with Narushima, Liu and Diestelkamp (2019) and Vseteckova (2019) that older adults’ participation (in learning) is independently and positively associated with their psychological well-being. As in the study by Pot, Keijzer and De Bot (2018), Moodle can provide older learners with tools that contribute to lowering their anxiety and increasing their self-esteem, allowing them to be autonomous and fulfilled. Angela told me how working together on Moodle had “strengthened our friendship”. Learners using Moodle feel emotionally attached to other learners, spend time with peers, get to know others, and this makes the learners feel that others depend on them, as Gabryś-Barker (2018) also found. L*15 said, “this is really something extraordinary, I found that the way you work in a group brings a lot”.

Through their personal contributions, the individual learner becomes more visible as a person to both the teacher and the other learners; at the same time skills in expressing oneself in writing briefly and coherently can be strengthened to a greater extent than by face-to-face teaching. During one activity, I replied to each learner with a picture, and it was well received; Carol explained, “you put a picture for me, that means that what I wrote - you understood, so I am happy”. Dorothy responded, “I really liked it when you responded with pictures because in the end, I remember the pictures more”. She pointed out, “I think I learn better: from the point of view of memorisation, it’s easier with Moodle”. These findings indicate that learning a language with the aid of Moodle is vastly improved; learners appreciate the variety of tools and personalised content, this in turn improves their language skills.

Gabryś-Barker (2018) found that lifelong education offers older adults new opportunities for overcoming a state of isolation, stagnation and despair. During the lockdown period of 2020, this could have become more of an issue. L*3 explained how using Moodle “allows us to discuss together” and “it helps to keep in touch”. L*2 noted that “keeping in touch remotely has been beneficial”. Angela explained, “lockdown was terrible and it was very, very good that we did this work on Moodle in a group”. Lind, Bluck and McAdams (2021) found that successfully migrating some traditional F2F experiences to an online environment can give learners a sense of empowerment. Mason, Sinclair and Berry (2012) found that this can increase social inclusion and reduce feelings of isolation. Findings from this study also show that using Moodle can increase social inclusion and reduce isolation (particularly during the COVID-19 lockdown).
Findings from Murray and Fujishima (2016); Smith (2017), and Etienne and Beverley Wenger-Trayner (2020) concur with the finding that, as a social learning space, Moodle has a positive impact on learners’ confidence and perceived competence, as well as their WTC in the target language. Angela said, “I have no more fear” and “it made me feel safe and confident”. Carol told me, “now I don’t care; if I want to do it, I do it”. Evelyne stated, “the more you learn, the more comfortable you are”. L*6 described how using Moodle gives confidence in the fact that “I’ve never questioned myself; I’ve never been afraid to say anything on Moodle”.

Dirkx (2001) argued, learning is inconceivable without emotion and feelings. Findings from this study suggest that older adult learners really enjoy using technology. As L*17 said, using Moodle “is livelier and it has a fun side too”. L*15 said, “it’s a pleasure” and “it gives us a boost”.

Learners in this study find using Moodle ‘fun’ as evidenced in Carol, Dorothy and Evelyne’s stories, Xiong and Zuo (2019) found ‘seeking fun’ to be a motivating factor unique to older learners.

Even though Vygotsky (1978) described learning a second language as a liberating activity for children, this study shows that the same is true for older adults. Dorothy explained how using Moodle enables learners to “let go” and “I think we are freer”.

5.2.3 Social rewards
Through collaborative learning, the use of Moodle to learn languages has the potential to increase older people's levels of social support, social networking, and social solidarity. Preece (2002) suggested that online communities, such as Moodle, are a means to build social capital, which contributes value to the quality of life through networks of reciprocal support; as Angela explained, “I found that working in a group brings a lot”. Stickler (2022) also described the importance of others in the learning environment; L*6 said using Moodle was “an exchange of friendship” and “Moodle allows me to have relationships with other learners in the class”.

Antoniou, Gunasekera and Wong (2013) reported that L2 learning stimulates social participation and interaction and increases independence for older adults; there is also evidence in this study that using Moodle to learn languages provides this. L*19 said, “Moodle increases the dialogue we have with each other, and we
do it on our own”. When Angela said, “it really opened up a horizon for me”, this supports Pot, Keijzer and De Bot's (2018) findings that communicating independently in a foreign language broadens an individual’s horizons and strengthens their self-worth and well-being.

As Amaro, Oliveira and Veloso (2016) and Ronda and Belda-Medina (2018) found, learners in this study report that Moodle can provide them with resources for intergenerational communication with children and grandchildren. They have knowledge and skills that can help with topics of conversation as well as digital connectivity. This intergenerational communication can give older adults increased self-esteem and self-confidence, thus adding an overall sense of well-being. Dorothy mentions in her story that “it’s really between generations, with my daughters, even my grandchildren”. Many learners in this study reported having shared information they had learned from Moodle with family and friends.

Many learners described how topics from Moodle had informed their conversations with family and friends, in particular current affairs; as L*8 described, “when I talk about what I have learned with the books to English people it doesn’t interest them while they are interested in what I do on Moodle, it’s more about the news”. By letting people know about future events, assisting in the integration of newcomers, and raising learners’ knowledge of language-learning opportunities, the information made available on Moodle strengthened the community. In addition to serving as a key role of communities of practice, information exchange is a prerequisite for the development of these groups (Wenger et al., 2002).

The findings from this study support the idea that there is a supportive climate in their groups, as Pawlak, Derenowski and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2018) reported. As L*5 described, “when we had exercises to do on Moodle, we found affinities between us, we helped each other”. L*15 explained how “everyone listens to the others and everyone answers questions for the person who doesn’t know”.

Learning is made more connected when learners relate their own work to that of others, discuss concepts, collaborate together, and share knowledge. L*5 described how by using Moodle, “we know each other better, we dare to talk to each other more, we ask each other questions, we get to know each other”. Findings also show how Moodle is an example of a social learning space where Murray (2017) described how learners learn with and from each other through
interaction; as L*10 explained, “though exchanges, if I ever needed to ask questions, it’s much more practical”.

The findings from this study support SCT in that language learning with Moodle is largely a social process. This also concurs with Lave and Wenger (1991), who suggested that learning takes place through active social participation in the environment of a CoP; and Illeris (2017), who said that we do not learn in isolation but through our interaction with others. L*14 told me, “that’s what I take from Moodle, that we can keep in touch with others”.

When learners are able to make meaningful contributions to their community through their learning, their voices become more prominent through the use of Moodle, and this results in more empowerment and personal investment. Angela described how using Moodle has changed the way she works, “I’ve made myself work more seriously”, and more specifically; her perspective on learning is that “it even helped me to invest more in learning”. L*3 said, “I am more eager to learn and improve myself”.

**5.3 Further Discussion**

This section covers points that have not been previously discussed in response to the research questions but are relevant to the findings and form part of the conclusion of this thesis.

The learners in this study felt that they belonged to a CoP. They realised that they are a group of learners who have similar objectives, passions, preferences, and requirements. In order to accomplish their social community aims and objectives for language learning, learners used Moodle to engage in interactive communication. Social learning is a process that contextualises language practice within the exchanges of a community of learners, resulting in shared benefits in the language learning process. As Murray (2011) found, OALLS benefit from the development of social learning spaces like Moodle because these environments give them the ability to exercise their autonomy and self-direction, the opportunity to engage in a community of learners, and possibilities for language development.

As the radar charts in Figure 26 and Appendix K show, each older adult learner experienced unique challenges and rewards when using Moodle to learn languages. Angela’s most significant theme was Enrichment with 9 segments,
“[Moodle] helped me to invest more in learning”. She then had 7 segments for Digital skills & knowledge and Language skills & knowledge.

Brenda had 7 segments that referred to Language skills & knowledge; she described “how we see the difference between people, the way they talk, the speed, the accent, each person has a different voice”. Brenda then had 6 segments for Digital skills & knowledge and 5 segments for Agency.

Digital skills & knowledge was the most prominent theme for Carol with 6 segments; she was one of the learners who said they had learned how to upload photos and videos onto Moodle. Other skills & knowledge had 4 segments and Communication / Language skills & knowledge followed with 3 segments respectively.

Dorothy had 7 segments for the theme Other skills & knowledge; she said “it was more English humour” and “it gives an idea of what English culture is for Christmas”. She also had 6 segments for Agency and 5 segments for Relationships / Digital skills & knowledge.

Evelyne’s most significant theme was Agency with 14 segments; she said “[Moodle] is a good tool for autonomy”. She had 12 segments for Other skills & knowledge and 11 segments for Digital skills & knowledge.

Whether their needs were primarily cognitive, affective or social, each learner in this study found benefits through using Moodle. For OALLS, a blended environment using an LMS, such as Moodle, can give them individualised support to meet their personal needs. When OALLS use technology, such as Moodle, they are supported both as individuals and as a CoP, as in Hoadley and Kilner’s (2005) C4P model (Figure 4, page 35).
Figure 25: Themes for the 5 learners who took part in stimulated recall interviews
In order to capture the individualised support that blended learning using an LMS, such as Moodle, can provide OALLs I created the 3DC4P model in Figure 27.

3D refers to the three dimensions of learning (Illeris, 2003). The cognitive dimension is comprised of knowledge and skills allowing learners to use and understand the target language and technology. The affective dimension involves emotions and feelings, moods and attitudes, anxiety and motivation. The social dimension involves interaction such as participation, communication, and cooperation allowing learners to communicate and interact in the target language.

C4P refers to four ways in which technology can support a CoP (Hoadley & Kilner, 2005). Through the use of technology, ‘connections’ helps people connect with others who share their practices in order to support a community of practice. Technology can help communities of practice by offering some type of shared repository of information resources, or ‘content’. By giving people the means to converse with one another, ‘conversation’ serves as a direct means of facilitating communication. A community’s awareness of the information context of multiple resources is made possible by ‘context’.

In my 3DC4P model, cognitive support can be provided through content, affective support can be provided through connections and social support can be provided through conversations. Moodle provides the context for all of these domains.
Content refers to explicit, static knowledge objects such as documents or video clips which can be uploaded to Moodle. L*2 described the content available on Moodle as “very diverse” and L*8 found Moodle interesting as “it’s relevant for us”. L*19 explained that “there’s a wealth of things that aren’t in the textbook” and L*13 found “topical subjects that enable us to enrich ourselves personally”.

Conversation refers to synchronous and asynchronous discussions on Moodle. The key distinction between content and conversation is that content can be understood as a one-way communication between and object and what the learner makes of it, whereas conversation is two-way enabling interaction between learners. L*6 said, “there are forums where we can discuss among ourselves”. L*19 said, “Moodle increases the dialogue we have with each other, and we do it on our own”.

Connections refer to interpersonal contacts between community members described in words that are not specific to individuals but the group as a whole. Angela told me how working together on Moodle had “strengthened our friendship” and “working together made us feel safe”. L*3 said “with each other it is always enriching to keep in touch”.

Context is the ‘who, what, where, why, when and how’ that enables members of a CoP (learners) to assess whether and how information is relevant to them. L*18 said “we can learn what we want from Moodle”. L*17 described Moodle as “an extension to the [F2F] course”. L*15 explained how using Moodle “you learn a lot more”.

Older adult learners will always be different from one another in terms of their skills, needs, preferences, backgrounds, and interests. Moodle is a tool that can provide older adult learners with individualised support and make language learning cognitively, emotionally, and socially rewarding for each learner. The 3DC4P model shows how technology, such as Moodle, can support learners in a community of practice in all three learning dimensions. This may help when designing future courses. By being aware of and thus implementing support in each area, this will ensure that blended learning courses provide all learners with additional targeted support where needed.
Summary of Chapter 5

Challenges

Cognitive factors can affect language learning, though as Bialystok and Hakuta (1999, p.134) found, “age differences in second language acquisition ability are inconsistent, sometimes to the advantage of older learners, but appearing only on certain kinds of tasks that assess specific aspects of knowledge”. Although learners in this study might experience some difficulties with listening, vision and memory, challenges related to digital skills were much more evident. Findings suggest a lack of knowledge and/or confidence can lead to anxiety and/or a lack of motivation.

Emotional factors can also affect older adult learners. For some older adult language learners, using technology to learn a new language can be more challenging for older people. These negative opinions may result in older learners having self-defeating attitudes and affecting their motivation. According to Ramírez-Gómez (2016b), these unfavourable perceptions may restrict the aspirations, objectives, and successes of older learners.

Social factors can also influence language learning for older adults. Learners mentioned feelings of loneliness and isolation during the lockdown period of 2020 and how keeping in touch with other learners through Moodle helped them to overcome these feelings. Stereotypes concerning older adults and technology still exist, which may have led to the previous lack of research in this area.

Rewards

Learning a new language has a lot of advantages. Maintaining cognitive activity may delay onset or slow advance of dementia (Mehmedbegovic & Bak, 2017).

Learning a second language might help cognition as we age. Learners in this study found that they had increased their digital skills, and using Moodle increases the opportunities to communicate in the target language. Moodle enables learners to work within their ZPD through collaboration with others and enables them to practice different skills in real-world tasks.

Since older adults rarely need certification or degrees, their needs and motivations may be different from those of younger adults. Older learners are very driven, and their drive stems from ‘wanting to’ study and learn something new rather than ‘having to’. Moodle gives learners a more personalised feel to their learning; topics
are often led by the learners themselves and content is consequently more appropriate. As Knowles, Holton and Swanson (2005, p.66) stated, “the richest resources for learning reside in the adult learners themselves”. Moodle gives older adult learners the flexibility to access resources at a time and place of their choice, thus giving them increased agency.

There are also social benefits of L2 learning at a later age. Ramírez-Gómez (2016b) emphasised that the development of new social networks and emotional and social well-being are two additional benefits of L2 learning. This study of older adult language learners in France demonstrates that self-esteem is increased and there are other social advantages to language learning using Moodle.

In sum, this study shows that using technology to learn a language is a cognitive activity that can be challenging but very beneficial for older adults. There are a number of difficulties, like age-related cognitive or motivational challenges. However, technology, such as Moodle, also provides rewards for them to improve their knowledge and skills, increase motivation and enlarge their social networks. L2 learning is much more than just learning a language.

3DC4P model

The 3DC4P model presented shows how the use of an LMS, such as Moodle, can provide older adult language learners with individualised support according to their personal needs. Support in the cognitive dimension can be found in the content on Moodle, such as documents, audio or video files and links to external resources. Support in the affective dimension can be found through the connections with other learners and the sense of a community of practice to which they belong. Support in the social dimension is found through the authentic conversations that Moodle makes possible. Moodle itself is the context where all activities take place and it enables support for older adult language learners in each of the three learning dimensions.
Chapter 6 Conclusions, reflections and recommendations

Having presented my findings in Chapter 4 and discussed them in Chapter 5, this chapter focuses on the relevance to theory and practice. To begin, I consider the relevance of my research to two main areas, Second Language Acquisition and Digital Language Learning, before the implications and recommendations for professional practice are presented. Next, the strengths and limitations of the study are discussed before my personal reflections on the Doctorate in Education journey. Finally, some suggestions for future research are identified and the closing section of this chapter concludes the whole thesis by completing the title: When older adults use Moodle to learn languages… A list of references and appendices follow the final conclusions.

6.1 The relevance of the research to SLA and DLL

While research on SLA in children, adolescents, and young adults is expanding, there is still much to understand about how older adults learn a new language (Cox, 2019; Pfenninger and Singleton, 2019). The learning of additional languages by older adults has only recently begun to be researched with any intensity; this study provides empirical evidence as part of this ongoing trend. As Ortega (2005) commented: “if SLA researchers do not study certain populations, we do not serve them” (p. 434). In order to provide teaching and learning environments that are best suited to older adults, it is necessary to include them in research, as does this study.

Since L2 learning is cognitively demanding, it has been hypothesised to support healthy ageing by promoting brain plasticity and fostering social engagement, individual mobility, and autonomy. There is a plethora of benefits of language learning at any age and digital technologies can support communication in other languages. This study provides evidence of how using technology in a blended learning model can also support healthy ageing for older adult language learners.

Reliance on chronological age is problematic in numerous ways, as Oxford (2018) pointed out. Although age is used to define people, its nature and influences are not completely internal to the person; rather, age is important at every stage of life because of how society is structured. Chronological age does not dictate how L2 learners are positioned in later life; rather, age is one social characteristic among
many that intersect to determine a learner’s relative status and prospects, including gender, socioeconomic background, and psychological and personality aspects. Findings reported in this thesis support this view.

Whilst older adults should not be categorised according to socially constructed stereotypes, it is necessary to conduct research into this cohort in order to better understand the full spectrum of language learners, young and old. This study shows that all language learners are unique individuals, and technology, such as Moodle, provides opportunities for development and support to all users.

Findings from this study support Oxford’s (2018) view that any differentiation of language instruction for older adults should take into account their interests and preferences as well as their sensory preferences and abilities. Instruction should also be matched to their cognitive levels and learning styles as well as their level and type of learning strategy. This is all possible through the use of technology, such as Moodle.

Ware et al., (2017) outlined how L2 learning may become a pleasurable lifestyle choice for older adults. Findings from this study demonstrate how older adult language learners can find joy and delight through using Moodle. This study agrees with a lot of other studies that technology integration improves motivation and engagement opportunities within the context of language teaching and learning. Digital language learning promotes and supports learners’ independence in addition to their positive motivation and attitudes. As a result, there is a perceived need to create diverse models of lifelong learning and education. This is made possible by the rapidly advancing state of technology and the accessibility of relevant resources (Gabryś-Barker, 2018).

With the development of technology, there has never been a better opportunity to foster language learning, and blended learning serves a specific purpose in the context of digital language learning. This study demonstrates that older adult learners value the blended learning strategy, which aims to strike a healthy balance between online knowledge availability and face-to-face human interaction. The conditions for interaction are conceivable in the context of digital language learning, which is essential for SLA. Through engagement and collaboration with others, L2 learners can find meaningful environments in which to negotiate meaning and integrate learning.
Bax's (2003) notion of ‘normalisation’ described the state where the technology used in English language classrooms “becomes invisible, serving the needs of the learners and integrated into every teacher’s everyday practice” (p. 27). Whilst the research showed that the use of Moodle served the needs of these learners, the extent to which it was integrated into the teacher’s practice was not always clear. This was not the focus of the research but, as indicated in Chapter 4, some participants did allude to how well they felt it was an integral part of the teaching. Nevertheless, this could be a potential area for future research.

In contrast, it is possible to agree with Bax’s (2011) redefined notion of ‘normalisation’ as the stage when technology reaches “its fullest possible effectiveness in language education” and becomes “a valuable element in the language learning process” (p. 1). This study shows that the use of technology, such as Moodle, is effective and a valuable part of older adults’ language learning environments. The findings in Chapter 4 demonstrate that older adult language learners can make use of technological tools for learning and pedagogical purposes, as Bax (2011) noted is the aim of normalisation.

This study shows how Moodle can bring together the fields of second language acquisition and digital language learning by providing evidence of the rewards to older adult language learners. As with learning any new skill there are challenges, however, with the correct support older adult language learners can overcome these challenges and turn them into positive outcomes. Moodle allows older adults to use technology for their learning and in doing so enables language development to occur and become a source of enjoyment that can enrich their individual and collective experiences.

6.2 Implications and recommendations for professional practice

The COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown periods that followed forced most learning to go online. Older adults who already had experience with a blended learning approach were able to navigate the online elements of language learning much more successfully than those for whom it was a new concept. Moodle supported learners in each of the three learning dimensions: cognitive, affective and social, which enabled them to access individualised assistance. This study demonstrates that blended learning can extend opportunities and support older
adult learners, which is vital to ensure they continue and are equipped to deal with the present and the future.

If there is any likelihood of a future crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, the findings in Chapter 4 show how using Moodle can prepare older adult learners for the transition onto online learning and avoid the risk of potential inequality, isolation and exclusion.

In blended learning, the learning experience is improved by redesigning instruction to include new learning opportunities added to the F2F experience. Blended learning has the advantage of giving older adults the chance to be independent and active learners when it is properly developed. It promotes self-regulatory behaviours including time management and planning. Similar to this, blended learning encourages communication and collaboration among learners and supports the development of reflection and critical thinking.

Personalised learning is possible with blended learning. It emphasises being highly learner-centred, developing identities, creating connections within communities, and reconsidering resources like time, space, and technology. Technology, such as Moodle, provides older adult learners with support in all three learning dimensions. By using technology learners are able to choose where and how to best achieve learning goals.

Blended learning can provide more dynamic and rich learning experiences by incorporating new types of online instruction and learning management systems. Blended learning, however, cannot be accomplished by simply incorporating a few digital tools or resources into the teaching and learning process. Moodle supports older adults, but they may require additional help in order to navigate the platform effectively. Learning providers should provide assistance and make adjustments for each learner, such as ‘How to’ sheets, detailed explanations with follow up and reminders when necessary.

Using ‘How to’ sheets is an example of how teachers and learning providers can continue to scaffold the integration of new technologies. By providing this assistance learners develop their abilities until they become more independent, thus working within their ZPD. Without an element of challenge the learner can never break away from preconceptions and rise to more critical levels of thinking and analysis (Bax, 2011).
It is not possible to entirely agree with Ramírez-Gómez (2016a), who suggested that as older adults experience cognitive changes, they may require different teaching tools. On the contrary, as this study shows, they need support in using the existing tools because the evidence from the research is that they can use technology effectively once it has been explained and demonstrated to them. It is important that older adults are able to pick up new technology at their own pace with whatever support they may need. This study shows that, with the correct support, blended learning enhances language learning for older adults.

Ramírez-Gómez (2016a) highlights ageist discrimination as a significant issue in education for older adults. Older learners may develop self-defeating attitudes as a result of their preconceptions about FL learning and this could hinder their learning. Academic self-efficacy is the term used to describe learners’ attitudes and beliefs about their abilities to succeed academically, as well as their confidence in their capacity to complete academic assignments and successfully learn the subject.

Teachers’ beliefs and attitudes regarding how languages are best learnt and taught have a significant impact on their propensity to adopt new methods and how they integrate new technologies (Whyte, 2015). There is an urgent need to include issues related to teaching older adults in teacher training as only in this way can pre-service and in-service teachers be prepared for the challenge of providing effective instruction in this age group, which is growing in number. To properly incorporate technology for older adult language learners, institutions must also provide teachers with technological and pedagogical support.

In the centre where this research took place, the use of Moodle is optional for both teachers and learners. The findings from this study could be used by management to encourage teachers to incorporate the use of technology thus expanding the learning opportunities for all learners. This could then be used to advertise and recruit new learners looking for this kind of learning environment. Through dissemination of my work, it is possible that learning providers in many contexts may be persuaded as to the benefits of using technology with older adults.

6.3 Strengths and limitations of the study

Chapter 2 detailed the theoretical foundations of this study, the works of Lantolf and Thorne (2006); Bax (2003); Lave and Wenger (1991); Illeris (2003) were all influenced by Vygotsky’s (1978) sociocultural theory. In SCT the interactions
between people and society are considered. Compared to other theories, it offers a more comprehensive perspective of personality and development. This helped to enrich the current study as it describes how social context affects conduct. It describes how society and culture are intertwined with the person.

However, one critique of sociocultural theory is that it only considers the collective and ignores the individual. SCT presupposes that learning in a group is more advantageous, although there is proof that learning can occur alone, depending on learning preferences and styles. The idea that SCT applies to all cultures is a second criticism of it. SCT might not be equally effective for all types of learning in all cultures. In some cases, acquiring a skill through observation and practice may be more beneficial.

The significance of qualitative research is in its transferability rather than its attempt to be generalisable. Transferable research must be used by the reader as they draw connections between the research and their personal experiences, as opposed to generalisable research, which seeks to apply its findings to the entire population. Descriptions of the decisions, structures, findings, and other rules that were discovered in this case study can help make them transferable to other situations. It takes rich detail to achieve this level of transferability.

Case study criticisms are consistent with criticisms of qualitative research methodologies as a whole. These include the time-consuming processes involved in gathering and analysing data, the greater possibility of researcher bias, and the lack of generalisability, which may affect trustworthiness. These issues were addressed in section 3.8, issues of validity and reliability. Some critics claim that when a researcher simply delivers information that supports their stance, qualitative research methodologies are more prone to data cherry-picking. Some are concerned that qualitative research is more susceptible to a researcher’s assumptions and biases. Whilst it is difficult to make statistical generalisations, due to the lack of random selection and small sample size, this study makes it possible to provide theoretical generalisations.

Case study research has several benefits because of the comprehensive and rich detail it provides. In-depth analyses of a phenomenon’s complexity within a particular case or context took time to observe, describe, and analyse. Other research methods would not have provided this depth and detail because they have a larger scope, which may limit them to collect more superficial data. This
study used multiple methods to establish trustworthiness that acknowledges and reduces bias, such as triangulation from multiple data sources and full transparency regarding data collection and analysis.

As the 3DC4P model (Figure 27) shows, the three dimensions of learning are interlinked and often overlap. In the findings and subsequent discussion sections, the three dimensions have been separated. This is purely for reporting purposes in order to answer the research questions in this thesis and it is acknowledged that in reality learners’ experiences regularly intersect multiple dimensions.

6.4 Reflections on undertaking the research

This study followed on from my Masters in Education thesis, “Embracing students' digital literacies in our teaching” (2017) and enabled me to further explore the use of Moodle for language learning but this time with older adult learners. Having worked with older adults since 2011, I felt it was important to investigate their use of Moodle in order to provide evidence that could improve the use of Moodle for this group of learners in the future. There was always a chance, as the findings show, that using Moodle is not beneficial or enjoyable for some learners. Through this research and future dissemination of the results, educators can design courses that incorporate strategies for support for all learners whilst taking into consideration the challenges that using technology may present.

An alternative strategy that I could have implemented would be using action research: a methodology that involves implementing a new technology through one mechanism and one approach, carefully observing the change’s effects, soliciting input from stakeholders, and then attempting a further step in response. Had I undertaken a longitudinal study over a longer period of time, this would have been possible. I could have made changes over time and measured their effects as well as soliciting learners’ perceptions.

At the beginning of my study, I wanted to adopt a collaborative action research framework, however, when I approached other teachers at the centre, they were generally unwilling to participate. I believe that as the use of Moodle is optional, many thought that their use (or lack of use) would have been judged negatively and they were afraid of retribution. However, I hope that the results of my study will encourage them to use Moodle with older adults as the findings suggest there are many benefits.
During the lockdown periods of 2020, the lack of face-to-face classes enabled me to test the use of a flipped methodology. By providing the learners with vocabulary and grammar inputs before the online video conferencing lesson, they were able to identify areas with which they needed help and make more effective use of the time together. The learners were highly appreciative of this method and it is an approach that I have continued to use in my teaching ever since.

### 6.4.1 My personal journey

At the beginning of my doctoral journey, I set out to find out more about how older adults use technology to learn languages. Initially I was interested in their acquisition of languages and as such a lot of my literature searches led me to scholars and theories that related to SLA. One area I found difficult was being able to express exactly what it was I wanted to know, and as such my research questions were not clear and I was unable to explain what my overall hypothesis was. There were so many areas that interested me and I wanted to include everything in my study, however, this was unfeasible. Through discussions with my supervisors and a lot of reorganization of my literature review I finally found the path I wanted to follow.

After much trial and error, I realized that what I wanted to know was not necessarily how older adults used the technology to learn languages, but rather how they felt about using it and what it added (or not) to their learning experiences. I read many different explanations of cognitive, affective and social aspects of language learning and once I found Illeris’s (2003) framework I immediately knew this was how I wanted to investigate the experiences of the learners in my study.

My own experiences and observations of how learners used Moodle inspired me to read more about CoP theories and that led me social learning spaces, situated learning and sociocultural theory. The theoretical frameworks for my study came naturally from the context and what I sought to know more about.

As my study was about language learning, the theories of SLA are relevant and therefore included in Chapter 2 of this thesis. Nevertheless, I did not search for a research project that fitted the theory I had chosen; in contrast it was the context of my study that led me to SCT and the three dimensions of learning theory.
6.5 Recommendations for future research

As the worldwide population of older people rises, people who are older are participating more visibly in social life. The demand for L2 learning will continue to rise as a result of changes in health care services, better economic conditions, and more social and educational opportunities. Therefore, it is necessary to continue researching older adult language learners and the use of digital tools. Here, I propose some of the possibilities:

Blended learning using an LMS, such as Moodle, may have an effect on language acquisition. Investigating and comparing learners’ language skills of those that do and those that do not use the LMS could provide interesting results. By comparing a control group and a group that uses Moodle in addition to F2F teaching, learners could be presented with the same learning materials. Analysis of their language development would give an insight as to how using Moodle influences acquisition.

Although not used as part of a blended learning model, interactive whiteboards are an effective digital tool that allows teachers to engage learners in the lesson, making learning more fun and interesting. Interactive whiteboards have been increasingly used and researched with younger learners; to my knowledge, there is still little research on their use with older learners. As such, this could be a potential area for future research.

If this study were to be replicated on a larger scale, more comparisons could be made that would make it possible to identify challenges and rewards that learners with certain characteristics experience. Other comparisons could be made with the amount of time learners spend on the LMS or the types of activities in which learners participate. Moodle is now available as an application for smartphones, future research could look into any differences between learners that access the platform using their telephones compared with those that use computers.

The use of ‘How to’ sheets could be investigated in more detail with older adult learners. By providing written assistance, such as how to upload a video (Appendix N), learners’ might improve their digital skills whilst reducing the anxiety that this can impose on them.

This study only looked at older adult learners of English; future research could compare results with older adult learners of other languages. For example, in the same centre where this study took place, Moodle is available to support learners
of Spanish, Italian, German, Chinese, Japanese and Russian. The learners in this study were based in France, future research could involve learners of other languages in different locations around the world.

‘Identity’ was an area that came up in the literature, however, in the findings of this study there were few results that could be used to make any significant conclusions. For example, in Dorothy’s story she spoke about posting a picture of a hip-hop dancer that had the same colour hair. She also mentioned being able to say things that were not true just for fun and in order to use the target language. This could be an area for more investigation if the interview questions were written with that in mind.

In recent years Social Presence (SP) has been defined as the feeling of community a learner experiences in an online environment. SP theory notes that computer-based communication is lower in SP than F2F communication, but different computer-based communications can affect the levels of SP between communicators and receivers. Future research on older adult learners learning languages facilitated by digital technologies could include the concept of social presence to establish how the important social and affective aspects of the learning process manifest.

The 3DC4P model (Figure 27) could be applied to other digital language learning environments, such as WhatsApp, other LMSs, and social networking sites, to investigate if older adult language learners can access the same support provided by using Moodle.

Although this thesis has argued the need for research with older adult language learners, the 3DC4P model could also be applied to research with younger learners, such as university students, using Moodle. The model could also be used to investigate online-only learning environments, such as at The Open University.
6.6 Final conclusions from the study

The purpose of this section is to reflect on the key conclusions that can be drawn from the study and therefore complete the title: When older adults use Moodle to learn languages…they access a social learning space that enables them to participate in a community of practice. The possibility of participation in an online CoP may have the following benefits for older adults:

- An extended virtual classroom that allows older adult learners to engage in material beyond the constraints of the physical classroom.

- The opportunity to develop a ubiquitous form of learning: anytime, anywhere and at a pace best suited to the learner.

- Interaction between learners that provides peer scaffolding opportunities and communication possibilities that enable real-world, authentic language use.

- A collective zone of proximal development and communicative collaboration that enables opportunities for development of both language and digital skills.

- The ability to assess and re-assess learning successes and weaknesses and find compensatory strategies, allowing older adult learners to be autonomous and fulfilled.

- Individualised support, in each of the three dimensions of learning, depending on learners’ needs. Support can be provided by the technology and/or other learners in the CoP.

- A shift from academic teaching to dynamic learning. Moodle provides older adult learners with content and activities more appropriate to their expectations.

- Culturally diverse resources for learning that increase learner engagement, provide enjoyment and satisfaction.

- An increase in learner centredness. The teacher becomes less central, older adult learners can create their own input and design their own learning experiences.
People age in many ways and at different moments in their lifespan. This means that older adult learners cannot be treated as a single undifferentiated population. There are age-related differences that distinguish learners from one another. However, chronological age is not a reliable indicator of where a person is in the life course. This study demonstrates that, despite the fact that a variety of affective and social factors can interact with age-related limitations to produce undesirable outcomes, teaching foreign languages should not be based on assumptions about potential inadequacies in older adult learners. Moodle can compensate for such deficits and contribute to both linguistic and non-linguistic improvements for all learners.

Language learning using Moodle can fundamentally change the teacher and learner roles. Teachers move from experts at the front of the classroom to facilitators working with learners, and learners shift from passive consumers to active agents. In the words of Dorothy, “using Moodle I am more actor than consumer”.

As Pfenninger and Singleton (2019) claim, second language acquisition in older adults needs to be seen as a means of fostering social integration and interaction as well as a goal in and of itself, and it is partially via the stimulation of social well-being that its potential cognitive impacts may be noticed. It appears conceivable that learning a second language at least has the ability to support an active and fulfilling old age. The best chances for maintaining cognitive function in old age may come from leading a lifestyle that combines intellectually engaging activities with a vibrant social life (La Rue, 2010).

Technology must remain a means to facilitating language learning, and not become an end in itself. Neither should it remain the one and only teaching tool, but can effectively be integrated with traditional methods and materials. Results from this study suggest that blended learning, using Moodle, has the ability to enhance and enrich the lives of older adult language learners. Older adults’ participation in learning is independently and positively associated with their well-being. Well-being is not just physical: it is cognitive, affective and social.
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Appendices

Appendix A: CEFRL levels with ‘can do’ statements.

The CEFRL organises language proficiency in six levels, A1 to C2, which can be regrouped into three broad levels: Basic User, Independent User and Proficient User, and that can be further subdivided according to the needs of the local context. The levels are defined through ‘can-do’ descriptors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficient user</th>
<th>C2</th>
<th>Can understand virtually all types of texts. Can summarise information from different oral and written sources, reconstructing arguments and accounts in a coherent presentation. Can express themselves spontaneously, very fluently and precisely, differentiating finer shades of meaning even in more complex situations.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent user</td>
<td>C1</td>
<td>Can understand a wide range of demanding, longer texts, and recognise implicit meaning. Can express themselves fluently and spontaneously without much obvious searching for expressions. Can use language flexibly and effectively for social, academic and professional purposes. Can produce clear, well-structured, detailed text on complex subjects, showing controlled use of organisational patterns, connectors and cohesive devices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic user</td>
<td>B2</td>
<td>Can understand the main ideas of complex text on both concrete and abstract topics, including technical discussions in their field of specialisation. Can interact with a degree of fluency and spontaneity that makes regular interaction with users of the target language quite possible without imposing strain on either party. Can produce clear, detailed text on a wide range of subjects and explain a viewpoint on a topical issue giving the advantages and disadvantages of various options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B1</td>
<td>Can understand the main points of clear standard input on familiar matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise while travelling in an area where the language is spoken. Can produce simple connected text on topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes &amp; ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Can understand sentences and frequently used expressions related to areas of most immediate relevance (e.g. very basic personal and family information, shopping, local geography, employment). Can communicate in simple and routine tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters. Can describe in simple terms aspects of their background, immediate environment and matters in areas of immediate need.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Can understand and use familiar everyday expressions and very basic phrases aimed at the satisfaction of needs of a concrete type. Can introduce themselves and others and can ask and answer questions about personal details such as where someone lives, people they know and things they have. Can interact in a simple way provided the other person talks slowly and clearly and is prepared to help.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Council of Europe, 2020)
Appendix B : Information letter for participants

**FICHE D'INFORMATION**

Titre: Moodle, Older Adult Learners and Communities of Practice.

Chercheuse: Jodi Wainwright  Email: jodi.wainwright@open.ac.uk

Faculty of Well-being, Education and Language Studies

The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA, UK

Je vous invite à participer à une étude de recherche. Avant de décider de participer ou non, il est important que vous compreniez pourquoi la recherche est en cours et ce qu'elle implique. Veuillez prendre le temps de lire attentivement les renseignements suivants.

C'est à vous de décider de participer ou non. Si vous décidez de participer, je vous demanderais de signer un formulaire de consentement. Si vous décidez de participer, vous êtes toujours libre de vous retirer à tout moment et sans donner de raison.

**Quel est l'objectif de cette recherche?**

Le but de cette étude est de découvrir ce que les apprenants adultes plus âgés pensent de l'utilisation de Moodle dans les cours d'anglais dans un contexte en France.

**Qui mène la recherche et à qui s'adresse-t-elle?**

J'effectue cette recherche pour un doctorat en éducation avec l'Open University.

Ce projet de recherche a été examiné et a reçu un avis favorable du Comité d’éthique de la recherche humaine de l'OU - Numéro de référence :

HREC/3508/Wainwright

http://www.open.ac.uk/research/ethics/

**Pourquoi suis-je invité à participer à cette recherche?**
En tant qu’adulte plus âgé apprenant l’anglais, j’aimerais vous inviter à participer à mon étude. Cette étape consiste à la collecte des données. Je communiquerai avec les autres apprenants de votre classe pour qu’ils y participent également. Votre participation (ou non) n’aura aucune incidence sur votre poste d’apprenant dans votre classe.

**Si je participe à cette recherche, de quoi s’agira-t-il?**

Je vous demanderai de participer à un entretien qui durera environ 60 minutes via la plateforme Skype. L’entretien sera enregistré via cette plateforme. J’utiliserais également les informations recueillies à Moodle, telles que les captures d’écran et les statistiques tirées de Moodle.

**Comment les données que je fournirai seront-elles utilisées?**

Les formulaires de consentement des participants et les documents papier seront numérisés et stockés sur un serveur sécurisé avant d’être détruits. Les données anonymes seront ajoutées à un répertoire de données accessibles et partagées ouvertement, et les données non anonymes seront stockées dans une zone contrôlée d’accès pendant au moins 10 ans après la fin de l’étude et seront ensuite détruites. L’information peut être utilisée dans des rapports futurs, des articles universitaires, des publications ou des présentations par la chercheuse, mais aucun renseignement personnel ne sera inclus et vous ne serez pas identifiable.

**Est-ce que c’est confidentiel ?**

Votre participation sera traitée en toute confidentialité conformément à la Loi sur la protection des données et au RGPD. Aucun renseignement personnel ne sera transmis à qui que ce soit à l’extérieur de l’équipe de recherche. Je rédigerai un rapport sur les résultats de cette étude, mais aucune personne ne pourra être identifiée dans les résultats publiés de la recherche, car tous les renseignements seront anonymes.

**Vous avez plusieurs droits en tant que sujet de données:**

- Pour demander une copie des données personnelles que nous avons à votre sujet
- Corriger les données personnelles inexactes ou incomplètes
- Pour restreindre le traitement de vos données
• Pour recevoir une copie de vos données dans un format facilement transférable (le cas échéant)

• Pour effacer vos données

• S’opposer à ce que nous traitions vos données

Vous avez le droit de vous retirer de l’étude en tout temps en informant la chercheuse.

Vous avez le droit de demander que vos données soient supprimées après votre participation à l’étude en communiquant avec la chercheuse jusqu’à ce que les données aient été agrégées pour analyse.

Et si j’ai d’autres questions ?

Si vous avez d’autres questions au sujet de l’étude, je serai très heureuse d’y répondre. Veuillez me contacter par courriel : jodi.wainwright@open.ac.uk

Si vous n’êtes pas satisfait d’un aspect quelconque de la recherche, veuillez communiquer avec mon maître de thèse : klaus-dieter.rossade@open.ac.uk

Merci d’avoir pris le temps de lire cette information.
FORMULAIRE DE CONSENTEMENT

Titre: Moodle, Older Adult Learners and Communities of Practice.

Chercheuse: Jodi Wainwright    Email: jodi.wainwright@open.ac.uk

Faculty of Well-being, Education and Language Studies
The Open University Level 1, Stuart Hall Building, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA

Veuillez cocher les cases appropriées

1. Participation à l'étude

J'ai lu et compris la fiche d'information. J'ai pu poser des questions au sujet de l'étude et on a répondu à mes questions à ma satisfaction.

Je consens volontairement à participer à l'étude et je comprends que je peux refuser de répondre aux questions et me retirer de l'étude à tout moment jusqu'à ce que les données aient été analysées, sans avoir à donner de raison.

Je comprends que participer à l'étude implique de participer à un entretien qui sera enregistré.

J'accepte que ma participation à Moodle soit enregistrée et stockés.

2. Utilisation des données dans l'étude

Je comprends que tous les informations que j'ai fournies peuvent être utilisés dans des rapports, des articles universitaires, des publications ou des présentations du chercheur, mais mes données personnelles ne seront pas incluses et je ne serai pas identifiable.

Je comprends que les informations personnelles recueillies qui peuvent m'identifier, comme mon nom, ne seront pas communiqués au-delà de l'équipe d'étude.
Je conviens que mes informations peuvent être citées dans les résultats de recherche.

Je comprends que des données anonymes seront ajoutées à un dépôt de données accessible et ouvertement partagées, et que des données non anonymes seront stockées dans une zone contrôlée d'accès pendant au moins 10 ans après la fin de l'étude et seront ensuite détruites.

3. Utilisation et réutilisation futures de l'information par d'autres

J'autorise le dépôt dans un centre de données spécialisé, après anonymisation, des données de l'entretien et des données documentaires que je fournis, afin qu'elles puissent être utilisées pour des recherches et des apprentissages futurs.

Ce projet de recherche a été examiné et a reçu un avis favorable du comité d'éthique de la recherche humaine de l'OU – référence : HREC/3508/Wainwright

http://www.open.ac.uk/research/ethics/
## Appendix D: Participants’ details

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Appendix E: Initial interview questions (English)

1. In what ways, if any, is using Moodle changing you as an English language learner?
   - Tell me about any new skills, vocabulary, grammar or knowledge you have acquired through using Moodle.
   - How has your understanding of English language learning or your perspective as an English language learner changed through using Moodle?
   - Describe how your use of English has changed through using Moodle. Think about when you started and now.
   - What does Moodle enable you to do as an English language learner that you wouldn’t be able to do otherwise?
   - Give an example of how your confidence as an English language learner has changed by using Moodle.

2. In what ways, if any, is using Moodle affecting your social connections with other language learners?
   - How has using Moodle helped you get to know better the people in your class?
   - Tell me about how your participation in Moodle has changed. Think about when you started and what you do now.
   - Describe how your relationships with classmates have changed through using Moodle. Think about when you started and now.
   - How has using Moodle changed how you interact with your classmates?
   - Give me an example of how using Moodle enables you to express yourself in English?

3. In what ways, if any, is using Moodle helping your English language learning?
   - What documents or sources of information have you come across using Moodle that you might not have had otherwise? How have these helped your learning?
   - Describe what new skills, vocabulary, grammar or knowledge you have learned from using Moodle?
   - Give an example of what you can now do in English through using Moodle.
   - Give me an example of what you now know about the English language through using Moodle.
   - Give me an example of what you now know about English speaking cultures through using Moodle.
   - Tell me how this has enabled you to communicate differently in English?

4. In what ways, if any, is using Moodle changing your ability to influence others?
• Describe a moment when you realised you had helped or influenced another learner through using Moodle (skills - how to do something; language - providing an example; something else).

• Tell me about something you have learned from using Moodle that you can use to help others. Skills (participating in a forum, uploading or downloading files/images/videos); language (grammar, vocab); something else?

• How has using Moodle changed your outlook on learning English or learning languages in general?

• Are there any examples of how Moodle has had an impact of your life beyond language learning? Tell me about it.

• We recently used Moodle to do video conferences during this lockdown period. Can you tell me about your experiences?
Appendix F: Initial interview questions (French)

1. De quelle façon, le cas échéant, l'utilisation de Moodle vous change-t-elle en tant qu'apprenant de la langue anglaise?
   - Parlez-moi des compétences, du vocabulaire, de la grammaire ou des connaissances que vous avez acquises en utilisant Moodle.
   - Comment votre compréhension de l'apprentissage de l'anglais ou votre point de vue en tant qu'apprenant de l'anglais a-t-il changé en utilisant Moodle?
   - Décrivez comment votre utilisation de l'anglais a changé en utilisant Moodle, depuis votre première connexion.
   - Qu'est-ce que Moodle vous permet de faire en tant qu'apprenant de la langue anglaise que vous ne pourriez pas faire autrement?
   - Donnez un exemple de la façon dont votre confiance en tant que personne apprenante de la langue anglaise a changé en utilisant Moodle.

2. De quelle façon, le cas échéant, l'utilisation de Moodle influe-t-elle sur vos liens sociaux avec d'autres personnes apprenantes en langue?
   - En quoi l'utilisation de Moodle vous a-t-elle aidé à mieux connaître les gens de votre classe?
   - Dites-moi comment votre participation à Moodle a changé. Pensez à quand vous avez commencé et à ce que vous faites maintenant.
   - Décrivez comment vos relations avec vos camarades de classe ont changé en utilisant Moodle. Pensez à quand vous avez commencé et maintenant.
   - En quoi l'utilisation de Moodle a-t-elle changé la façon dont vous interagissez avec vos camarades de classe?
   - Donnez-moi un exemple de la façon dont l'utilisation de Moodle vous permet de vous exprimer en anglais?

3. De quelle façon, le cas échéant, l'utilisation de Moodle vous aide-t-elle à apprendre l'anglais?
   - Quels documents ou sources d'information avez-vous trouvés à l'aide de Moodle que vous n'auriez peut-être pas eu autrement? En quoi cela a-t-il aidé votre apprentissage?
   - Décrivez les nouvelles compétences, le vocabulaire, la grammaire ou les nouvelles connaissances que vous avez apprises à l'aide de Moodle?
   - Donnez un exemple de ce que vous pouvez maintenant faire en anglais en utilisant Moodle.
• Donnez un exemple de ce que vous savez maintenant sur la langue anglaise en utilisant Moodle.

• Donnez un exemple de ce que vous savez maintenant sur les cultures anglophones en utilisant Moodle.

• Comment cela vous a-t-il permis de communiquer différemment en anglais?

4. De quelle façon, le cas échéant, l’utilisation de Moodle modifie-t-elle votre capacité d’influencer les autres?

• Décrivez un moment où vous avez réalisé que vous aviez aidé ou influencé une autre personne apprenante en utilisant Moodle (compétences - comment faire quelque chose; langue - donner un exemple; autre chose).

• Parlez-moi de quelque chose que vous avez appris en utilisant Moodle que vous pouvez utiliser pour aider les autres. Compétences (participation à un forum, téléchargement ou téléchargement de fichiers/images/vidéos); langue (grammaire, vocabulaire); autre chose?

• En quoi l’utilisation de Moodle a-t-elle changé votre vision de l’apprentissage de l’anglais ou des langues en général?

• Y a-t-il des exemples de la façon dont Moodle a eu un impact sur votre vie au-delà de l’apprentissage des langues? Si oui, pouvez-vous me les décrire.

• Dernièrement nous avons utilisé Moodle pour faire les vidéos conférences pendant cette période de confinement. Est-ce que vous pouvez me parlez de vos expériences de ça ?
Appendix G: Example of Initial interview transcript

Bonjour,

Avant de commencer, pourriez-vous confirmer que vous avez reçu la fiche d'information et le formulaire de consentement et que vous donnez votre accord de participer.

Bonjour, Oui

Avez-vous des questions ?

Non

Ok, L’objective de mon étude est de découvrir ce que les apprenants adultes plus âgés pensent de l'utilisation de Moodle dans les cours d’anglais, j’effectue cette recherche pour un doctorat en éducation. Merci d’avoir pris le temps de me parler de vos expériences.

Pour les statistiques pourriez-vous m’indiquer votre âge ?

J’ai 64 ans.

Et depuis quand êtes-vous apprenant de l’anglais à l’IMEP ?

8 ans

Et avez-vous utilisez Moodle pendant ces 8 ans ?

C’est récemment avec vous. Oui, ça fait deux ou trois ans, mais avant non.

Donc il y aura 4 parties avec environ 4 à 5 questions par parties avec une première question suivie de petites questions en rapport avec la première. Donc une vingtaine de questions.

1. De quelle façon, le cas échéant, l'utilisation de Moodle vous change-t-elle en tant qu’apprenant de la langue anglaise?

• Parlez-moi des compétences, du vocabulaire, de la grammaire ou des connaissances que vous avez acquises en utilisant Moodle.

Alors, ça nous permet d'avoir des parties du cours par vidéo, d'entendre aussi, d'avoir effectivement une transmission de certains textes à travailler, donc textes, vidéos. Donc ça nous permet de travailler. Moi, ça me permet de travailler le programme, mais avec des apports supplémentaires. Donc, je pense à certaines, certaines interviews. Donc, on a aussi le langage parlé. En plus des aspects de grammaire, de vocabulaire écrit. Mais voilà, l'aspect vidéo est quand même intéressant. C'est un plus.

• Comment votre compréhension de l’apprentissage de l’anglais ou votre point de vue en tant qu’apprenant de l’anglais a-t-il changé en utilisant Moodle?

C'est une question difficile, c'est à dire que je trouve que je peine beaucoup quand même. Alors c'est vrai qu'il faudrait surtout que je consacre plus de temps. Je pense que c'est un outil intéressant, mais que je n'optimise pas. C'est parce qu'effectivement, il faudrait que je prenne le temps de réécouter des interviews ou de revoir certaines vidéos, de retravailler davantage. Donc,
c'est pour ça que c'est intéressant parce que c'est aussi ludique. Donc ça, c'est important. Mais j'aperçois les avantages, mais je ne les utilise pas pleinement.

- Décrivez comment votre utilisation de l’anglais a changé en utilisant Moodle, depuis votre première connexion.

Alors, je pense que je suis en train peut-être de lever un préjugé parce que ça me facilite l'accès à tout ce qui est visuel, par exemple même quand visuel ou même tout ce qui est auditif. Je pense, quand j'écoute la radio ou quand je regarde la télé, j'ai l'impression que ça me désinhibe pour essayer de mieux, de mieux comprendre ce qui est, ce qui se passe. Et Moodle, peut-être, le facilite. Je ne sais pas si je suis très clair.

- Qu'est-ce que Moodle vous permet de faire en tant qu'apprenant de la langue anglaise que vous ne pourriez pas faire autrement?

Alors, je ne sais pas. Je pense que quand même, les cours en direct, c'est hyper important. Moi, je suis beaucoup plus attentive en cours. Moodle, ça peut être intéressant, mais je pense que c'est plus une formation personnelle, individuelle. Il faut avoir le courage d'y aller et donc prendre le temps, avoir une discipline. Quand on va en cours la discipline est donnée par vous. Donc c'est à la fois plus passif, mais au moins on va en cours. Et au moins, ça me force à travailler. Alors que Moodle, il faudrait que je sois beaucoup plus rigoureuse. Donc, c'est intéressant et c'est peut-être une pratique qu'il faut acquérir. Bon, comme je fais des cours d'anglais en plus du travail, ce n'est pas mon activité, donc c'est plus un loisir et donc je ne le fais peut-être pas assez sérieusement. Pour profiter du Moodle il faudrait que je sois discipliné, régulière, que je retourne sur les vidéos, les interviews, que je creuse. Il faut être, il faut être autonome.

- Donnez un exemple de la façon dont votre confiance en tant que personne apprenante de la langue anglaise a changé en utilisant Moodle.

Je l'ai un petit peu dit tout à l'heure en disant qu'il y avait peut-être un petit effet de désinhibition puisque face à la machine, on peut peut-être, donc, on répète les choses à son rythme. Donc, peut-être que ça permet de gagner en confiance. Mais après, il faut justement cette rigueur pour continuer. Donc, effectivement, on peut répéter à son rythme ce qu'on voit ce qu'on entend. Peut-être que ça c'est, cette progression à son propre rythme, ça peut être un atout.

2. De quelle façon, le cas échéant, l'utilisation de Moodle influe-t-elle sur vos liens sociaux avec d'autres personnes apprenantes en langue?

Théoriquement, il faudrait qu'on soit plus interactif entre nous et que parfois, on se contente. On est un petit peu scolaire, je pense dans la classe, mais je pense que voilà, déjà, il faudrait qu'on se consacre peut-être plus à ce qu'on fait et on est un peu trop dilettante. Voilà donc. Si on était plus plus sérieux, on pourrait être plus interactif, se répondre. Alors parfois, on le fait un petit peu. Mais sur vos sollicitations à vous quand vous insistez pour qu'on échange, on le fait un petit peu, mais on en est vraiment très, très scolaire et on ne fait que ce que la prof dit, d'aller plus loin. Voilà, donc, ça serait ça, l'intérêt. On communique les uns avec les autres et on le fait très peu encore.
• En quoi l’utilisation de Moodle vous a-t-elle aidé à mieux connaître les gens de votre classe?

Alors, Je ne sais pas si c'est Moodle qui m'a permis de mieux les connaître parce que c'est plus en cours qu'on se connaît, je pense, quand on se voit. Moodle vient un petit peu, donc compléter cette connaissance, mais je ne dirai pas que c'est Moodle qui nous permet de nous connaître. Après, effectivement, si on échangeait plus, il y a un lien, mais qui s’est fait plus par les cours et après, on va communiquer les uns avec les autres par Internet ou via Moodle. Bien sûr, on sera moins moins moins gêné de le faire, mais je ne pense pas que ce soit Moodle qui initie cela. On a commencé par se connaître physiquement, par les échanges qu’on a en cours. Donc, physiquement, je pense que Moodle n'a pas un gros impact sur cette connaissance.

• Dites-moi comment votre participation à Moodle a changé. Pensez à quand vous avez commencé et à ce que vous faites maintenant.

Alors, on y va plus, mais grâce à vos sollicitations, parce que ça ne fait pas très longtemps, finalement, qu'on l'utilise en cours. Je disais 2/3 ans, je ne pense pas me tromper de beaucoup, mais de toute façon, si j’y étais allée, il y a quelques années, c'était de temps en temps, très ponctuellement, alors que là, on a une utilisation plus régulière et je pense que c'est en utilisant davantage qu'on va se, on sera de plus en plus familiarisé avec Moodle. Mais c'est aussi parce que vous insistez et donc ça nous force à tous ces échanges, comme là avec le confinement. Si cela été également un facteur incitatif.

• En quoi l’utilisation de Moodle a-t-elle changer la façon dont vous interagissez avec vos camarades de classe?

Encore une question, je n’en suis pas sûr. C'est ce que je disais, on a plus commencé à se connaître physiquement pendant les cours et on communique donc des fois via Moodle, mais voilà. Mais en même temps, peut-être qu'on est d'une génération où on a moins cette pratique. Je pense qu'il y a quand même des échanges sur Internet chez les gens très jeunes. Ils n'ont pas forcément besoin de se connaître. Ils sont amis, par exemple, ils sont tous connectés sur les réseaux sociaux. À 64 ans, je ne suis peut-être pas parti vraiment de cette génération et moi, je ne suis pas sur les réseaux sociaux, par exemple, et avec mes compagnons de cours, je pense qu'on est majoritairement quand même d'un âge où on a plus besoin du contact physique et on le complète avec Moodle. C'est vrai, mais je pense que c'est l'inverse qui s'est produit. On a commencé par se connaître physiquement. Et Moodle, je pense pour, pour moi et pour les étudiants de ma génération, ce n'est pas quelque chose qui nous est évident. Voilà, je pense qu'on y en a peu qui sont sur les réseaux sociaux, il me semble. Ou même s'ils le sont, ils n’ont pas une utilisation aussi massive que les jeunes. C'est un fait de génération.

• Donnez-moi un exemple de la façon dont l’utilisation de Moodle vous permet de vous exprimer en anglais?

Déjà, c'est peut-être mon côté un peu ancien, le côté un peu littéraire, on écrit. On doit donc construire des textes, donc c'est encore plus par le biais de l'écriture sur Moodle, que moi ça me
3. De quelle façon, le cas échéant, l'utilisation de Moodle vous aide-t-elle à apprendre l'anglais?

Alors, il y a cette richesse effectivement sur des choses qui ne sont pas dans les manuels que vous apportez, donc tout ce qui est supplémentaire, les vidéos, les liens possibles pour aller faire des recherches. Quand on avait dû chercher des publicités, par exemple. C'est vrai que ça nous permet de prospecter sur d'autres domaines. Je n'aurais peut-être pas eu l'idée d'y aller. Donc, c'est comme toujours sur Internet, quand on commence, on dévie de quelque chose et on va sur d'autres sites. Et donc, on peut ouvrir un peu son champ de recherche. C'est peut-être ça.

- Quels documents ou sources d'information avez-vous trouvés à l'aide de Moodle que vous n'auriez peut-être pas eu autrement?

Peut-être par la recherche de certaines vidéos, notamment puisque ça a été quand même un entraînement et de fil en aiguille, on cherche comme ça. Je pense que c'est plus ce biais-là, effectivement que ça. Surement oui.

- Décrivez les nouvelles compétences, le vocabulaire, la grammaire ou les nouvelles connaissances que vous avez apprises à l'aide de Moodle?

Les nouvelles, je ne dirais peut-être pas des nouvelles, mais ça permet de creuser ce qu'on apprend. C'est plus un approfondissement pour moi. Et puis peut-être ce côté un peu oui au désinhibition d'aller sur d'autres vidéos, d'autres choses. Un peu quand même. Donc oui, oui, c'est un peu comme ça, oui.

- Donnez un exemple de ce que vous pouvez maintenant faire en anglais en utilisant Moodle.

Peut-être effectivement essayer, je suis peut-être plus attentive quand j'entends effectivement un dialogue réel, par exemple une interview qui n'est pas une construction pour le cours, à destination des étudiants, mais quelque chose de la vie réelle et j'essaie de davantage comprendre. Alors, je ne comprends pas grand-chose parce qu'il y a souvent un flot de paroles, un débit que j'ai du mal à comprendre. Mais j'essaie quand même de m'astreint à ça. Et donc, je pense que Moodle facilite cette approche.

- Donnez un exemple de ce que vous savez maintenant sur la langue anglaise en utilisant Moodle.

Alors je ne saurais pas quoi dire. Il y a effectivement la diversité des accents, des débits de parole. Et donc, parce qu'il y a parfois des choses auxquelles je ne comprends strictement rien. Il y a parfois quand même certains échanges, certaines interviews que je parviens un petit peu à comprendre. Alors ça, ça me rassure. Ce n'est quand même pas très fréquent. Parce que voilà, il y a une telle foule d'accents fin bon, c'est quand même très, très compliqué. Mais parfois, j'essaye de décrypter certains échanges et c'est peut-être ça que Moodle facilite.
• Donnez un exemple de ce que vous savez maintenant sur les cultures anglophones en utilisant Moodle.

À ce que je sache, alors j’ai du mal à faire la part des choses entre Moodle et quand même tout ce qu’on apprend de la culture anglo-saxonne en général par tous les médias, en fait, parce que c'est quand même très, très intriquées. C'est ce que tout à l'heure, vous m'avez interrogé sur ce que facilitaient Moodle. C'est quand même l'accès à tout ce qui est dit vidéo, tout ce qu'on entend, la musique aussi. Et donc, je pense que Moodle est un facteur, un peu de facilitation et je veux dire de désinhibition. Et mais après, je ne sais plus faire la part des choses. Je sais plus trop si c'est par Moodle, mais par-là, c'est que ça permet. Je parlais de la télé aussi. Parfois, il m'arrive quand même d'essayer de comprendre un film que je vois en version originale ou quand j'entends un morceau de musique. J’essaie de décrypter ce que j'entends. Et alors? Peut-être que Moodle a participé également, bien sûr. Je pense que c'est toujours cet aspect-là qui peut revenir.

• Et comment tout cela vous a permis de communiquer différemment en anglais ?


4. De quelle façon, le cas échéant, l'utilisation de Moodle modifie-t-elle votre capacité d'influencer les autres?

• Décrivez un moment où vous avez réalisé que vous aviez aidé ou influencé une autre personne apprenante en utilisant Moodle (compétences - comment faire quelque chose; langue - donner un exemple; autre chose).

Alors peut-être que justement, on a trop peu d'échanges encore entre étudiants sur Moodle. Mais les rares fois où s’est arrivé, c'était quand même assez stimulant parce qu'il y a eu quand même eu des moments où je répondais à certaines questions que d'autres étudiants posaient. Et l'inverse aussi, ou certains, effectivement, ont pu s'intéresser à ce que j'avais écrit à un moment donné, il y a eu quelques échanges comme ça, alors on ne peut pas parler vraiment d'influence, mais il y a quand même eu des échanges qui ont été stimulants.

• Parlez-moi de quelque chose que vous avez appris en utilisant Moodle que vous pouvez utiliser pour aider les autres. Compétences (participation à un forum, téléchargement ou téléchargement de fichiers/images/vidéos); langue (grammaire, vocabulaire); autre chose?

Ça serait peut-être effectivement augmenter les dialogues qu'on a les uns avec les autres et les faire peut-être de notre propre initiative. Ce qu'on ne fait pas encore assez. En général, il faut l'aiguillon de votre intervention. Sinon, on ne le fait pas assez. Mais c'est vrai que c'est dommage. On n'est pas assez autonome. Je pense que Moodle, c'est intéressant pour nous montrer qu'on a notre responsabilité et qu'on progressera grâce à notre travail, je pense que c'est un bon outil.
d'autonomie, mais encore faut-il l'utiliser. Mais les rares fois où on a pu le faire entre étudiants, ça s'est révélé intéressant. Bien sûr.

- En quoi l'utilisation de Moodle a-t-elle changé votre vision de l'apprentissage de l'anglais ou des langues en général?

Ce que ça change, c'est que peut être que ça peut être un moyen complémentaire aux cours traditionnels, physiques. Je pense que c'est comme même incontournable, mais il y a des moyens supplémentaires, alors qu'il faudrait utiliser plus. Après, c'est une question de courage et d'envie de l'utiliser. Mais je pense que c'est voilà. Je ne vais pas, je ne vais pas assez loin pour profiter de tous ces avantages.

- Y a-t-il des exemples de la façon dont Moodle a eu un impact sur votre vie au-delà de l'apprentissage des langues? Si oui, pouvez-vous me les décrire.

C'est un élément parmi les autres qui facilite le contact, je veux dire l'appropriation d'Internet. Vous voyez même le fait que là, finalement, avec cette interview, vous vous m'avez fait aller sur un site que je ne connaissais pas, etc. Il y a un aspect plus général, effectivement, de relation par le biais effective d'Internet. Ça, c'est quand même quelque chose qui est pleinement de notre époque d'aujourd'hui. Et voilà, on sait que c'est important. Et Moodle est un exemple de l'expansion de ce type de contact.

- Dernièrement nous avons utilisé Moodle pour faire les vidéos conférences pendant cette période de confinement. Est-ce que vous pouvez me parlez de vos expériences de ça ?

J'ai trouvé que c'était quand même en deçà du contact qu'on a en cours puisqu'avec la visioconférence, déjà, il peut y avoir des petits problèmes de réception quand même. Le son n'est pas toujours impeccable. Bien, il y a un léger décalage. C'est peut-être une question d'habitude. Pour moi qui ne suis pas habitué, je privilégie tellement le contact physique en cours que j'ai trouvé que c'était quand même un petit peu plus sommaire, donc sommaire. Et puis parfois, il y avait des petits problèmes de compréhension. En cours direct je trouve qu'on visualise plus les choses. Donc, vous m'avez moins apporté pendant ces cours là en visioconférence que quand on était en contact direct. Et puis, il y avait tout le groupe. Là, c'est vrai qu'on était quand même moins nombreux. Alors il faut peut-être s'approprier la technique, mais pour l'instant, je trouve que c'est un peu décevant par rapport au cours réel. Après, c'était mieux que par email. Tout simple. C'est vrai qu'effectivement, ça peut être un petit plus, mais c'est vrai que c'était frustrant quand même.
Good morning Learner 19*,

Before you begin, please confirm that you have received the information sheet and consent form and that you agree to participate.

Hello, Yes

Do you have any questions?

No

Ok, the objective of my study is to find out what older adult learners think about using Moodle to learn English, I'm doing this research for a doctorate in education. Thank you for taking the time to share your experiences with me.

For statistics, could you tell me your age?

I’m 64 years old.

And how long have you been learning English at the centre?

8 years

And did you use Moodle for those eight years?

It was recently with you. Yes, it was two or three years ago, but before that it wasn’t.

1. In what ways, if any, is using Moodle changing you as an English language learner?

   • Tell me about any new skills, vocabulary, grammar or knowledge you have acquired through using Moodle.

So, it allows us to have parts of the course by video, to hear also, to have a transmission of certain texts to work on, so texts, videos. So it allows us to work. It allows me to work on the programme, but with additional contributions. So I’m thinking of some, some interviews. So we also have spoken language. In addition to grammar, written vocabulary. But the video aspect is still interesting. It’s a plus.

   • How has your understanding of English language learning or your perspective as an English language learner changed through using Moodle?

It’s a difficult question, in other words, I find that I still struggle. So I would have to spend more time. I think it’s an interesting tool, but I’m not optimizing it. It is because, indeed, I would have to take the time to listen to interviews or to review certain videos, to rework more. So that’s why it’s interesting because it’s also playful. So that’s important. But I see the benefits, but I don’t use them fully.

   • Describe how your use of English has changed through using Moodle. Think about when you started and now.
So, I think that I am perhaps lifting a prejudice because it makes it easier for me to have access to everything that is visual, for example, even visual or even auditory. I think, when I listen to the radio or when I watch TV, I feel that it helps me to lose my inhibitions to try to better understand what is, what is happening. And maybe Moodle is facilitating that. I don’t know if I’m being very clear.

- What does Moodle enable you to do as an English language learner that you wouldn’t be able to do otherwise?

So I don’t know. I still think that F2F classes are extremely important. I am much more attentive in class. Moodle, it may be interesting, but I think it’s more personal, individual training. You have to have the courage to go and therefore take the time, have discipline. When you go to class, discipline is given by you. So it’s both more passive, but at least we’re going to class. And at least it’s forcing me to work. While Moodle, I would have to be much more rigorous. So it’s interesting and perhaps a skill that needs to be developed. Well, since I do English classes in addition to work, it’s not my activity, so it’s more of a hobby and so I may not do it seriously enough. To take advantage of Moodle I would have to be disciplined, regular, I would have to go back to the videos, the interviews, I would have to dig. You have to be, you have to be autonomous.

- Give an example of how your confidence as an English language learner has changed by using Moodle.

I said it a little earlier when I said that there might be a bit of a disinhibition effect because, in front of the machine, things can be repeated at one’s own pace. So, perhaps this will help build confidence. But after that, we need that rigour to continue. So, yes, we can repeat at our own pace what we hear. Maybe this is, this progression at our own pace, it can be an asset.

2. In what ways, if any, is using Moodle affecting your social connections with other language learners?

Theoretically, we need to be more interactive with each other and that sometimes we are too content. We are a little bit academic, I think in the classroom, but I think that, already, we should devote ourselves perhaps more to what we do and we are a little too dilettante. So that’s it. If we were more serious, we could be more interactive, answer each other. So sometimes we do it a little bit. But on your solicitations when you insist that we exchange, we do a little bit, but we are really very, very academic and we only do what the teacher says, to go further. So that would be the interest. We communicate with each other and we still do very little.

- How has using Moodle helped you get to know better the people in your class?

So I don’t know if it was Moodle who gave me the opportunity to get to know them better because it’s more in class that we know each other, I think, when we see each other. Moodle comes a little bit, to complete this knowledge, but I will not say that it is Moodle that allows us to know each other. After that, yes, if we exchanged more, there is a link, but it was more in class and then we will communicate with each other on the Internet or via Moodle. Of course, we will be less embarrassed to do so, but I don’t think that Moodle is what initiated this. We started by getting to know each other physically, by the exchanges we have in class, so, physically, I don’t think Moodle has a big impact on that knowledge.
Tell me about how your participation in Moodle has changed. Think about when you started and what you do now.

So, we go there more, but thanks to your solicitations, because it hasn’t been very long, after all, that we’ve been using it in class. I was saying 2/3 years, I don’t think I’m far off, but anyway, if I had been there a few years ago, it was from time to time, very punctually, whereas here, we have a more regular use and I think that it is by using more that we go more. We are also more and more familiar with Moodle. But it’s also because you insist and therefore it forces us to exchange, like here with the lockdown. This was also an incentive factor.

Describe how your relationships with classmates have changed through using Moodle. Think about when you started and now.

Another question, I’m not sure. That’s what I was saying, we got to know each other physically during classes, so we communicate sometimes through Moodle, but there you go. But at the same time, perhaps we are from a generation where we have less of this practice. They are friends, for example, they are all connected on social networks. At 64, I am not really part of that generation and I am not on social networks, for example, and with my classmates, I think that we are still mostly of an age where we need more physical contact and we complete it with Moodle. That’s true, but I think the opposite has happened. We started by knowing each other physically. And Moodle, I think for me and for the students of my generation, it’s not something that’s obvious to us. Well, I don’t think there are many on social media, it seems to me. Or even if they are, they’re not as widely used as young people. It’s a generational thing.

Give me an example of how using Moodle enables you to express yourself in English?

First of all, maybe it’s my old side, the literary side, we write. So we have to build texts, so it’s even more through writing on Moodle, that I get to progress. So there you are, and sometimes with the corrections you then make about what we had proposed, for example.

In what ways, if any, is using Moodle helping your English language learning?

So, there is this wealth actually about things that are not in the manuals that you bring, so everything that is extra, the videos, the possible links to go do research. When we had to look for advertisements, for example. It is true that this allows us to explore other areas. Maybe it wouldn’t have been my idea to go. So, as always on the Internet, when you start, you deviate from something and go to other sites. So we can open up a little bit of our research. That may be it.

What documents or sources of information have you come across using Moodle that you might not have had otherwise? How have these helped your learning?

Perhaps by looking for some videos, especially since we were still learning and one thing leads to another, we search like this. I think it’s more of that bias, yes. It certainly is.

Describe what new skills, vocabulary, grammar or knowledge you have learned from using Moodle?
New, I may not say new, but it allows us to dig into what we learn. It’s more of a deepening for me. And then maybe this side a little yes to disinhibition to go on other videos, other things. A bit anyway. So yeah, yeah, it’s kind of like that, yeah.

- Give an example of what you can now do in English through using Moodle.

Maybe actually, I try more, maybe I am more attentive when I actually hear a real dialogue, for example an interview that is not a construction for the course, intended for students, but something from real life and I’m trying to understand more. So, I don’t understand much because there is often a flood of words, a flow that I have trouble understanding. But I’m still trying to do that. So I think Moodle is facilitating that approach.

- Give me an example of what you now know about the English language through using Moodle.

So I wouldn’t know what to say. There is indeed the diversity of accents, of speech flows. And so, because there are sometimes things I don’t understand anything about. Sometimes there are some exchanges, some interviews that I can understand a little bit. So that reassures me. It’s not very common. Because there you go, there are so many fine accents, it’s still very, very complicated. But sometimes I try to decipher certain exchanges, and maybe that’s what Moodle facilitates.

- Give me an example of what you now know about English speaking cultures through using Moodle.

As far as I can say, I have a hard time understanding the difference between Moodle and everything we learn about Anglo-Saxon culture in general through all the media, in fact, because it’s still very, very intricate. That’s what you asked me earlier about what Moodle was facilitating. It is still access to everything that is said video, everything we hear, music too. And so, I think Moodle is a factor, a bit of facilitation and I mean disinhibition. But afterwards, I don’t know how to balance things. I’m not sure if it’s through Moodle, but that’s how it works. I meant the TV, too. Sometimes I still try to understand a movie that I see in the original version or when I hear a piece of music. I’m trying to decipher what I’m hearing. So what? Maybe Moodle was involved as well, of course. I think it’s always that aspect that can come back.

- Tell me how this has enabled you to communicate differently in English?

Perhaps by lifting some prejudices anyway, some yes some inhibitions. Of course, a little bit, yes, still. To try, despite everything, to communicate. Despite all my imperfections. No, but there is still an addiction to the language, I think. So, in terms of vocabulary, I don’t think there are 36 ways to work. You always have to work a little bit academically and literary. But after that, there may be an accent. That’s it. It makes pronunciation easier.

4. In what ways, if any, is using Moodle changing your ability to influence others?

- Describe a moment when you realised you had helped or influenced another learner through using Moodle (skills - how to do something; language - providing an example; something else).
So maybe, precisely, we still have too few exchanges between students on Moodle. But the few times that happened, it was quite stimulating because there were times when I answered some of the questions that other students were asking. And the reverse as well, or some of them may have been interested in what I had written at one point, there were some exchanges like that, so you can't really talk about influence, but there were some stimulating exchanges.

- Tell me about something you have learned from using Moodle that you can use to help others. Skills (participating in a forum, uploading or downloading files/images/videos); language (grammar, vocab); something else?

That might actually increase the dialogue we have with each other and perhaps do it on our own initiative. We're not doing enough yet. In general, you have to be guided by your intervention. Otherwise, we're not doing enough. But it is true that it is a shame. We are not autonomous enough. I think that Moodle is an interesting way to show us that we have our responsibility and that we will progress thanks to our work, I think it is a good tool for autonomy, but we still have to use it. But the few times that we were able to do it between students, it turned out to be interesting. Of course.

- How has using Moodle changed your outlook on learning English or learning languages in general?

What it does change is that maybe it can be a complement to traditional, physical courses. I think that it is essential, but there are additional resources that should be used more. Then it's a matter of courage and wanting to use it. But I think that's it. I'm not going, I'm not going far enough to take advantage of all these benefits.

- Are there any examples of how Moodle has had an impact of your life beyond language learning? Tell me about it.

This is one element among others that facilitates contact, I mean the appropriation of the Internet. You even see the fact that there, finally, with this interview, you made me go to a site that I did not know, etc. There is a more general aspect, indeed, of the relationship through the Internet. This is, after all, something that is fully in our time today. And here we are, we know that it is important. And Moodle is an example of the expansion of this type of contact.

- We recently used Moodle to do video conferences during this lockdown period. Can you tell me about your experiences?

I found that it was still below the contact that we have in class because with video conferencing, there can be small reception problems anyway. The sound isn't always perfect. Well, there's a bit of a lag. Maybe it's a matter of habit. For me who is not accustomed, I prefer the physical contact in class so much that I found it was still a little more basic, so basic. And sometimes, there were small problems of understanding. In F2F classes I find that we visualise things more. So, you brought me less during these classes in videoconferencing than when we were in F2F contact. And then, there was the whole group. Now, it's true that there were fewer of us. So we may have to appropriate the technique, but for now, I find it a bit disappointing compared to the real classes. Afterwards, it was better than by email. Simply. It is true that it can be a little more, but it is true that it was frustrating.
Appendix I: Example SR interview transcript

**Jodi** [00:01:47] En début d'année on a regardé un texte sur les téléphones boxes, et j'avais fait les top 25 designs et les images.

**Evelyne** [00:02:02] Oui, oui, je me souviens de ça.

**Jodi** [00:02:04] Il y avait un texte du journal Le Guardian. Qu'est-ce que tu penses d'utiliser Moodle pour avoir les images, les textes? Comment ça aide à apprendre l'anglais?

**Evelyne** [00:02:22] Alors déjà, c'est, je trouve qu'y a une approche qui est assez diversifier, ça permet d'avoir pas mal d'images plus que quand on a simplement un cours sur les manuels, puisque là, on peut avoir beaucoup d'informations, on peut aller en chercher d'autres. Je me souviens de moment où on avait fait un travail sur les publicités, et on avait pu prospectées les uns les autres. Ça force à certaines recherches et en même temps on peut diversifier, comme ça, à la fois les informations, les supports aussi. Et même là, quand on voit effectivement ces images sur les objets qui étaient emblématiques, effectivement, sur un cours avec un manuel, on a forcément moins d'éléments. Et voilà. Donc, c'est à la fois diversifié. C'est aussi ludique. Il y a ce côté interactif. Je me souviens qu'effectivement, pour cette histoire de publicité qu'on allait chercher, on pouvait tomber sur des tas de choses. Et une recherche aurait entraîné une autre aussi.

**Jodi** [00:03:37] Oui, c'est différent.

**Evelyne** [00:03:39] C'est différent.

**Jodi** [00:03:53] Avant d'aller regarder le film j'ai mis la bande annonce.

**Evelyne** [00:03:58] Oui, c'est ça la bande annonce. Oui, oui, oui, c'est ça. Ah oui, c'est vrai qu'on avait parlé de ce film là aussi.

**Jodi** [00:04:05] Et là tu as fait tes remarques sur la bande annonce?

**Evelyne** [00:04:10] Oui, oui, mais sur le film aussi, je ne me souviens plus, comme je l'avais, je n'avais pas vu, effectivement en même temps que le groupe, je l'avais déjà vu. Je ne sais plus comment.

**Jodi** [00:04:25] Et le fait d'écrire sur Moodle, est ce que ça donne quelque chose différent?

**Evelyne** [00:04:34] L'intérêt, c'est que sur Moodle, on peut corriger et que ce soit propre. C'est quand même ça l'intérêt. C'est vrai que bon, on peut relire avant d'enregistrer ou même si on enregistre, on peut revenir sur le texte alors qu'effectivement une copie qu'on rends sur papier, quand c'est écrit, c'est écrit, c'est à dire qu'effectivement, c'est assez, là, ça permet de réfléchir, de modifier certains, certaines phrases, d'y revenir. C'est ça l'intérêt, je le trouve.

**Jodi** [00:05:07] Est ce que tu trouves que c'est moins scolaire? Que de rendre un papier?

**Evelyne** [00:05:13] Je ne sais pas si c'est sous cet angle-là. Alors là, je ne saurais pas répondre à ça, parce qu'effectivement, je trouve que c'est le côté interactif est moins scolaire. Je trouve d'une manière générale, après le fait de rendre un devoir papier, je ne sais pas. Effectivement, c'est plus figé. Donc voilà. Mais sur le devoir lui-même qu'on peut rendre, je pense que ça change peu. Sauf
que nous avons pu rendre quelque chose de plus propre. Ça encourage aussi à revenir sur ce qu'on a fait, quand on a déjà écrit quelque chose sur un papier, si on veut corriger, il faut tout refaire, donc, ça incite à tout laisser tomber, et quoi. Alors que là, ce qui est bien, c'est qu'on peut quand même revisiter ce qu'on a fait de manière permanente. Donc ça, c'est quand même assez intéressant.

Jodi [00:06:10] Et quand tu écris, est ce que tu regardes qu'est-ce que les autres ils ont écrit avant, après? Est-ce que ça apporte quelque chose?

Evelyne [00:06:21] Oui, c'est vrai que à chaque fois que j'y suis allée, je regardais si quelqu'un avait déjà écrit quelque chose. Et puis parfois, effectivement, ça permet de répondre pas forcément, mais au moins de s'inspirer de ça. C'est vrai que parfois, il y avait quand même un dialogue qui pouvait s'instaurer avec des gens qui avaient déjà écrit ou d'autres après, qui venaient et qui faisaient la même chose. Donc, c'est ce côté interactif qui est aussi intéressant.

Jodi [00:07:01] Tu n'as pas joué le jeu pour cette activité?

Evelyne [00:07:05] Non, parce que je crois que je n'avais pas compris du tout ce que c'était ça. Et alors, je ne sais plus. Après, parce qu'il y avait d'autres choses, j'essayais quand même, mais sur cette image-là, j'avais été tellement surprise.

Jodi [00:07:23] Tu sais qu'est-ce que c'est au final ?

Evelyne [00:07:26] Ce n'était pas une queue de pomme. Voilà, c'est ça mais vraiment. Est-ce que j'avais manqué de temps parce que en général, je me dis bon l'intérêt c'est au moins de participer et même d'écrire un peu n'importe quoi. Mais je ne sais plus pourquoi est-ce que je n'avais pas répondu à cette image-là? Il y avait d'autres choses ce jour-là, je crois peut-être que j'avais répondu autre chose et que ça j'avais laissé. J'avais laissé tomber.

Jodi [00:08:04] Les questions? Je pense que tu as répondu. Non. Là, tu as commencé, mais je pense que tu as répondu. Sur un. Quelqu'un?

Evelyne [00:09:05] C'est vrai que parfois, effectivement, oui, il fallait bien repérer le système parce que soit écrire quelque chose d'emblée soit sinon en réponse à quelqu'un, et c'est vrai parfois je m'étais un peu emmêlé les crayons.

Jodi [00:09:20] Des fois, c'est comme tu dis. L'objectif, c'est de participer. Si ce n'est pas dans le bon endroit, ce n'est pas grave. Et là, la dernière année quand on l'a utilisé, j'ai utilisé. J'ai fait les corrections sur les textes. Est-ce que c'est? C'est intéressant?

Evelyne [00:09:40] Ah ça, c'est super intéressant parce qu'effectivement, c'est toujours une question qu'on se pose. Voilà dans quel ordre on doit mettre les mots et voir apparaitre les corrections en plus en rouge comme ça, c'est bien. Oui, parce que c'est très parlant. Ça, c'est très, très parlant.

Jodi [00:09:55] Ce n'est pas démotivant parce que les autres ils peuvent voir les erreurs?

Evelyne [00:10:01] Non, on est là pour apprendre. Je pense qu'on apprend aussi des erreurs des autres. Alors moi, personnellement, ça me gêne pas du tout, au contraire. Et puis, même quand
je vois les corrections, pour les autres, c'est pareil. On a tous, chacun son type d'hésitation et de problème. Donc, souvent, on refait les mêmes erreurs, mais pour les autres, c'est pareil. Donc je trouve que ce n'est pas, on est là pour apprendre. Donc voilà, je pense que, on n'a pas vu, ce n'est pas confidentiel. Je veux dire. Au niveau du cours, ce qui est important, c'est ça. Justement parce que même ce type d'erreur, les autres peuvent aussi apprendre quelque chose. Donc non, non, je trouve que c'est

**Jodi** [00:10:50] Est-ce que tu trouves que le site, vu qu'il y a un mot de passe, c'est assez sécurisé? Est-ce que tu te sens sûr?

**Evelyne** [00:11:02] Oui

**Jodi** [00:11:03] Ce qui se passe dans les cours, ça reste dans les cours.

**Evelyne** [00:11:06] Oui, c'est ça, bien sûr. C'est bien que ce soit sécurisé. Je ne m'inquiète pas quand même du niveau de sécurité, autant quand il s'agit de la banque je suis plus inquiète où mes numéros de carte bancaire et autre, mais parce que là, effectivement, peut être sur des choses plus délicates. Mais là, je me dis à la rigueur, même si quelqu'un voit que j'assiste aux cours, que je fais des fautes. Bon, ben voilà, c'est comme ça, d'ailleurs c'est pour ça que je continue l'anglais. J'ai beaucoup à apprendre, mais même si parfois, entre nous, on peut échanger sur des questions personnelles, familiales. Ça ne va jamais très loin, même si quelqu'un, effectivement, nous épiait et reprenais des données ou des informations qu'on a pu donner plus tôt. Ça ne me paraît pas très gênant

**Jodi** [00:11:59] Vous vous connaissez un peu les gens dans la classe?

**Evelyne** [00:12:03] Oui, c'est vrai, donc, mais il y a toujours effectivement des gens qu'on retrouve d'une année sur l'autre. Il y a toujours des nouveaux. C'est vrai qu'on se connaît un petit peu quand même. Je pense donc qu'on est un petit peu à égalité sur ce plan-là.

**Jodi** [00:12:24] Et là, on parle des publicités.

**Evelyne** [00:12:27] Les fameuses publicités

**Jodi** [00:12:29] C'étaient juste après noël. Donc, tu as regardé les autres? Il y avait beaucoup de participation. Des fois, il y a très peu. Oui, tout le monde a joué le jeu. Et tu as trouvé cette publicité?

**Evelyne** [00:12:50] Ah oui, c'était ça? Oui, celle-ci, oui, j'avais trouvé très drôle.

**Jodi** [00:12:58] Et comment tu l'as trouvé.

**Evelyne** [00:13:00] Et bien, je ne sais plus. Je crois que tu nous avais donné un lien pour aller chercher justement des pubs.

**Jodi** [00:13:08] C'était YouTube.

**Evelyne** [00:13:09] Oui, alors après, j'ai dû partir de là et à un moment donné, je suis tombé sur celle-ci et je me souviens qu'il y avait plusieurs versions en différentes langues. Donc je ne sais
plus après. Ça, c'est Internet aussi, on part sur quelque chose, ça nous emmène sur autre chose. Donc, c'est vrai que ça permet de brasser pas mal d'infos.

Jodi [00:13:31] Tu as répondu à la vidéo de Kate? Avec la souris.

Evelyne [00:13:38] Oui, c'est ça. Oui, oui, oui, oui.

Jodi [00:13:46] À l'aide de Moodle, vous pouvez avoir des dialogues entre vous?

Evelyne [00:13:49] Alors bien sûr, bien sûr oui, ça, c'est intéressant.

Jodi [00:14:05] Cette activité, c'était de mettre quelque chose à vendre. Décrire l'objet.

Evelyne [00:14:14] Tout à fait.

Jodi [00:14:16] En fait, ce que j'ai essayé de faire, c'est de faire les activités en lien avec ce qu'on a fait en cours, soit avec le langage, soit avec un thème, le sujet. Mais pour aller plus loin.

Evelyne [00:14:30] Et puis aussi, à chaque fois, ça veut une dimension très pratique parce que l'intérêt, c'est de maîtriser quelques connaissances pour échanger sur des choses finalement très quotidiennes. Et donc, ça permettait ce genre de choses, effectivement.

Jodi [00:14:45] Est ce que c'est quelque chose que c'est impossible ou c'est très difficile à faire en cours. C'est d'écrire, de créer les textes, de partager les textes.

Evelyne [00:14:56] Oui, bien sûr. Effectivement, il faut avoir un peu, un peu de recul. Il faut avoir du temps supplémentaire. C'est vrai qu'il faut ce temps entre deux cours pour pouvoir effectivement déjà s'informer, regarder quel est le programme, ce qu'on écrit, les autres éventuellement répond, donc il faut un peu plus de temps. Je veux dire le simple, le seul cours ne suffit pas. Donc, c'est comme ça, c'est ça qui est intéressant. C'est qu'on peut y revenir après. Bon, mais c'est aussi un peu l'avantage d'Internet. On va sur quelque chose. Il y a toujours ce côté ludique qui, finalement, nous amène pas mal d'infos alors qu'on ne cherche pas toujours, mais déjà d'une manière générale, dont on est quand même abreuvé. Et là, du coup, c'est intéressant. En plus, ce qu'il y avait de bien, c'est qu'effectivement, on pouvait venir si on avait le temps le weekend. Et puis après revenir un petit peu plus tard, si on n'était pas inspiré, justement, entre deux connexions, on pouvait se dire je vois un petit peu de quoi il peut s'agir, ou ce que j'ai envie de dire. Donc ça, c'est intéressant aussi. Quoi il n'y a pas un temps qui était délimité, donc on n'est pas toujours tous disponible non plus au même moment.

Jodi [00:16:16] Ça donne la flexibilité.

Evelyne [00:16:17] Exactement ça c'est bien, oui.

Jodi [00:16:21] Est ce que, parce que tu travailles encore et il y d'autres qui ne travaillent pas? Est-ce que tu as senti une différence de temps libre, d'investissement?

Evelyne [00:16:34] Je ne sais pas parce que finalement, je crois que ce n'était pas si différent que ça, entre ceux qui sont déjà à la retraite, qui, en principe, ont plus de temps. Mais je remarque que les retraités ont moins de temps que moi. C'est vrai que c'est un constat général. On les voit plus difficilement parce qu'ils sont toujours pris par des tas de choses et ils sont vraiment over booké.
Alors parfois, j'ai l'impression d'avoir plus de temps. Donc, je crois que ce n'était pas significatif, c'est ça? Bon, effectivement, c'est une autre organisation.

Jodi [00:17:09] On 'n'a jamais assez de temps.

Evelyne [00:17:11] Voilà, c'est ça. Et donc, je crois que ce n'était pas. Et le travail en soi n'était pas un alibi. Non, parce que justement, parfois, moi, j'y voyais l'intérêt de passer à autre chose après le travail. Bon, dans la soirée, parfois, ça m'a changé les idées. Et puis non, je crois que ce n'était vraiment pas un handicap.

Jodi [00:17:37] Est ce que tu sais à peu près combien de temps tu te connecte? Pendant une semaine, après, un cours et avant le prochain? Tu as une routine?

Evelyne [00:17:47] Effectivement 2018-2019 c'était le démarrage assez balbutiant. Je ne sais pas si ça, ça devait être 30. Je ne sais pas. Je dirai 30 minutes, une heure, une heure et demie, peut être grand maximum, mais j'ai l'impression que le pratique venant, je me connecte plus aisément, maintenant. C'était le démarrage. On avait découvert pas mal de choses avec des agacements aussi, parce que je me souviens de certaines fois, on ne savait plus où on devait écrire tel texte. Je me demande si parfois d'ailleurs, il n'avait pas des choses que je n'avais pas pu rendre parce que c'était, on ne savait pas trop comment se connecter. Donc, et je pense que le pratique venant, il me semble que je me connecte un petit peu plus maintenant, plus aisément. Je veux dire, voilà, je me sens moins, moins figé. Au début, c'est toujours est-ce que je vais réussir et c'est vrai qu'au démarrage, les connexions n'étaient pas simples. Je me souviens qu'il y avait des choses.

Jodi [00:18:52] C'est à un niveau technique ou un niveau de langage?

Evelyne [00:18:58] C'était ce repérage technique, mais comme toujours sur Internet. Mais il me semble que c'était le système n'était pas si simple que ça quand même. Je me souviens qu'on avait parlé. On avait évoqué ça en cours. Parfois pour se connecter. On ne savait pas trop où on devait cliquer pour valider je ne sais plus telle chose et il y avait quelques ratés. Donc ça, ça pouvait être un petit peu agaçant. Et c'est vrai que bien comprendre le système, c'est effectivement, ça facilite la connexion et surtout, ça donne l'envie d'y retourner. C'est vrai qu'au début, au début, c'était simple. On avait parfois tout ça en cours. Tu reprenais la façon de se connecter, etc. Et ça, c'était parfois effectivement un petit peu, c'était un frein quand même. Bon, mais c'est vrai que ce système est effectivement bon quand on y parvenait, c'est intéressant comme même d'échanger.

Jodi [00:20:05] Tu l'as acheté le pull ou pas? Pour ta fille.

Evelyne [00:20:11] Oui, oui, c'est ça. Oui, oui, elle est allergique. En plus, c'est vrai, elle ne peut pas porter de pull en laine.

Jodi [00:20:23] C'est vrai en plus?

Evelyne [00:20:23] Oui, c'est vrai, c'est vrai. J'aurais pu inventer, bien sûr.

Jodi [00:20:29] Mais c'est ça, des fois, on peut utiliser la vérité ou on peut parler de n'importe quoi. Vous pouvez, vous pouvez dire des choses qui ne sont pas vraies juste pour participer ou d'avoir une autre identité.

Evelyne [00:21:28] Je ne sais plus ce que c'était.

Jodi [00:21:31] Ils ont reporté les Jeux olympiques. C'est qui Teddy Ryner?

Evelyne [00:21:50] C'est un champion français de judo et il est multi médaillé en judo, donc que ce soit un champion du monde. Il a été plusieurs fois champion du monde dans la catégorie des lourds et donc aussi plusieurs fois médaillé olympique.

Jodi [00:22:09] Donc il est censé participer cette année?

Evelyne [00:22:11] Oui, parce qu'effectivement, il y avait cette question. C'est vrai qu'il a une carrière qui est assez longue, donc je pense que comme tous ces athlètes de haut niveau, à un moment donné, se pose la question de continuer. Et pour combien de temps? Et oui. Et en plus, il est très célèbre en France parce qu'il a l'air effectivement très charismatique. Et c'est un grand black très sympa. Il donne l'impression vraiment d'être très ouvert et donc ça contribue aussi à sa célébrité.

Jodi [00:22:57] Et après, c'était en 2020, on a commencé de faire les cours avec la visio. Donc, ce n'était pas facile au début. Est-ce que tu as des souvenirs?

Evelyne [00:23:12] Non, pas vraiment. Parce que je sais que je me suis équipé à la rentrée pour cette année, j'ai acheté un casque sans fil parce que c'était un peu compliqué, sinon. Et donc, alors là, ça marche très bien. Mais ça, c'est effectivement à l'automne que je me suis équipé et je garde aucun souvenir de ces.

Jodi [00:23:34] On en a fait deux.

Evelyne [00:23:37] Il y en avait 2 ?

Jodi [00:23:40] 3, 3, 3, 3 et on avait trois


Jodi [00:23:48] Pas de souvenirs?

Evelyne [00:23:51] Je me demande si j'ai assisté dans ces trois cours là, effectivement, parce que je n'ai pas de souvenirs, mais peut être que j'ai assisté.

Jodi [00:24:01] Ou peut être tu as travaillé?

Evelyne [00:24:05] De toute façon. Oui, puisque moi, je n'ai pas cessé de travailler. De toute façon, malgré le confinement. Et oui, c'est vrai qu'on était en groupe, effectivement. Ah oui, c'est étonnant. Parce que oui, pourtant. Ouais, mais oui, tout ça. Mais alors, comment je faisais puisque je me suis équipé là?

Jodi [00:24:32] Oui, mais cette année, tu as l'habitude. Et comment c'est différent qu'en présentielle? Tu l'aimes, il y a des positifs, des négatifs?

Evelyne [00:24:49] Oui, c'est à dire que moi, je suis assez bien connecté. Heureusement, je ne sais pas. Moi, ça marche à peu près depuis j'ai ce casque en plus sans fil. C'est impeccable. J'ai
toujours l'image. J'ai toujours le son et l'image, mais au niveau des participants, ce n'est pas toujours le cas. Donc, parfois, certains, effectivement, on ne les voit plus. On les entend plus. C'est un petit peu compliqué. Alors l'avantage, c'est qu'on est en groupe ultra restreint. Donc on est quoi 6/7 en cours et donc on peut beaucoup plus échanger. Mais l'élément un peu fâcheux, c'est qu'effectivement, certains ont des problèmes de connexion manifestement, plus que moi. J'ai l'impression. Bien sûr, je ne sais pas comment les autres m'entendent, mais moi, je n'ai pas de remarque sur le fait qu'on ne voit pas ou qu'on n'entend pas. Mais pour certains, c'est un peu difficile, avec beaucoup de parasites, un son qui est très alors, des fois, les échanges ne sont pas facilités, à l'inverse, comme on est vraiment en petits groupes, c'est assez facile d'échanger quand même. Et c'est une habitude à prendre? Au début, je trouvais ça fastidieux. Je crois qu'il faut qu'on prenne tous l'habitude. Ça, c'est aussi penser à couper le micro quand on ne parle pas pour éviter les bruits parasites. C'est vraiment une autre culture et j'ai l'impression qu'avec le temps, au fil de l'année, c'est mieux, c'est plus facile.

Jodi [00:26:13] Est ce que tu sais s'il y a des gens qui n'ont pas se réinscrit à cause du visio?

Evelyne [00:26:20] Alors oui, je crois, puisque oui, il y a Barbara qui elle s'était inscrit parce que c'était même elle en septembre qui m'a dit alors il faut qu'on se réinscrit et alors que moi, je ne savais pas, confinement, pas confinement, je n'étais pas très enthousiaste. En fait, elle ne vient plus en cours et c'était elle qui m'avait même donné le conseil pour le casque sans fil. Et elle a complètement laissé tomber, ce qui est un peu dommage. J'ai essayé de la relancer. C'était quand même intéressant. On arrive à travailler quand même. Et justement, avec le système d'Internet, on peut aller regarder les vidéos. Et puis, c'est bien. Parce que quand il faut s'imprégner à la fois de l'accent, du vocabulaire, on peut faire ça plusieurs fois. Et au total, maintenant que je maitrise un peu mieux l'outil, j'y passe plus de temps. Quand je te disais peut-être entre une demi-heure à une heure 30 au démarrage à 2018 2019, là, je pense que j'y passe facilement 2 heures dans la semaine quand je ne calcule pas. Mais voilà, je trouve que voilà il y a une facilitation.

Jodi [00:27:34] Et tu parles de l'internet quand tu te connectes sur Moodle et tu vas faire autre chose, est-ce que Moodle t'incite d'aller plus loin.

Evelyne [00:27:46] Ben oui, parce que maintenant, j'essaie davantage de comprendre ce que j'entends. Quand j'entends l'anglais. Parfois même que ce soit un film. Il me semble que je suis beaucoup plus volontaire. Il me semble que je suis, je ne sais pas, mais j'ai l'impression de passer un cap. C'est à dire que ça me semblait complètement impossible que je puisse comprendre une conversation. Alors, je ne la comprends pas plus actuellement, mais au moins, j'essaye. Et ça, c'était quelque chose que je ne faisais pas, que je ne m'autorisais pas. Mais avec cette espèce de d'habitude qu'on prend à écouter ces gens qui parlent dans ces vidéos avec tous ses accents. Cette vitesse, donc. Mais comme on peut venir y revenir. Ça, disons que ça me désinhibe pour aller sur d'autres choses. Que ça soit internet, la radio, la télé. Et quand j'entends effectivement de l'anglais, alors j'ai l'impression de me forcer davantage à essayer de comprendre. Bon, même si le résultat reste très, mais enfin bon, c'est quand même je suis plus attentive à ce que j'entends et j'essaye davantage de comprendre. Et je me demande si cette habitude qu'on prend ... Oui. Voir une vidéo pouvoir la reprendre à son rythme. Mais je me souviens qu'on le faisait déjà en cours
avant le gros boum d'Internet et des Visio, puisque on faisait déjà ça. Mais effectivement, on avait un regard pendant le cours et c'était tout quoi. Et c'est vrai qu'il faut quand même faut revenir.

**Jodi** [00:29:46] Est-ce que tu trouves que c'est plus individualisé parce que tu écoutes à ton rythme? Et combien de fois que tu as besoin. Par contre en cours si c'est une fois, deux fois, trois fois, tout le monde écoute le même.

**Evelyne** [00:30:00] Oui, c'est vrai que c'est plus individualisé, alors ça c'est un avantage. Je crois que les deux sont intéressants parce qu'effectivement uniquement la visio comme actuellement, il n'y a plus l'effet de groupe qui est quand même aussi dynamisant. Bien sûr, mais finalement, il y a une compensation qui n'est pas neutre, qui est intéressante. Je veux dire d'être à son rythme, effectivement, on individualise plus. Et bon, je trouve ça, c'est motivant. Autant Barbara qui n'y vient plus en cours, elle, je crois que ça, c'est quelque chose qui l'a découragé.

**Jodi** [00:30:35] Ouais, ça dépend. Je pense. Ça dépend de ce qu'ils font dans leur vie. Tu travailles, toujours, tu vois des gens.

**Evelyne** [00:30:47] Oui, c'est ça. C'est vrai que moi, oui, pour rencontrer du monde j'ai cette compensation. Moi, je n'ai pas vécu le confinement du tout puisque j'ai continué mes activités quasiment comme avant. Donc, pour moi ça n'a pas été pesant. C'est vrai qu'autour de moi, il y a beaucoup de gens qui sont dans la recherche de contacts et qui ont tendance à fuir tout ce qui est maintenant individuel et donc en distanciel. Oui, bien sûr.

**Jodi** [00:31:12] On utilise les ordinateurs pour parler avec la famille. Peut-être ça suffit. Ouais, c'est assez, c'est assez fatiguant. Et si on le fait tous les jours avec tout le monde.

**Evelyne** [00:31:26] Ouais, c'est ça. Alors que moi, finalement, je n'utilise pas l'ordinateur pour ma famille. Bon, j'arrive à quand même, et même pendant le confinement puisque j'ai pu rendre visite à certains membres de ma famille, ma mère étant dans un EPHAD. Du coup, malgré le confinement, j'avais eu cette possibilité quand même de sortir et par là, de rencontrer un peu comme même ma famille. Donc, j'étais sûrement moins privé que d'autres. Ça, c'est quand même important. Je comprends qu'après effectivement, ceux qui ont toujours été un distanciel pour tous sont vraiment dégouté de toutes ces approches.

**Jodi** [00:32:04] C'est un bon outil, mais pas 24/24.

**Evelyne** [00:32:10] Oui, oui, c'est ça. Oui, c'est souvent intéressant quand on peut mixer les différents procédés.

**Jodi** [00:32:24] Là je suis en 2018-19. Si je vous demande encore votre avis sur quelque chose et c'est devant tout le monde. Ça peut être gênant? Ou est-ce que c'est plus facile de dire des choses sur Moodle? Parce que tu es seul, tu comme tu dis, tu peux réfléchir. Est-ce que tu es plus ouvert?

**Evelyne** [00:32:58] C'est vrai sur Moodle. L'avantage, c'est qu'on peut donner quelque chose qui est davantage peaufiné. L'avantage aussi d'échanger en cours, c'est que là, on est beaucoup plus spontané. Après, effectivement, moi, ça ne me fait pas peur de me planter, que ce soit dans une tournure, mal utiliser, ou soi-même sur une idée, on est là pour ça. Alors, je comprends que les gens qui sont un peu inhibé, qui peuvent ressentir ça, c'est mal. Mais je pense que c'est une
approche qu'on a vis à vis des cours en général. Moi, c'est vrai que ce n'est pas pour moi. Ce n'est pas un problème. J'ai déjà tellement l'habitude d'être en contact avec des tas de gens que si je faisais attention à ce que je dis sans arrêt, je ne dirai rien. Moi, ça ne me dérange pas, mais effectivement, j'ai toujours constaté et même là actuellement on est en distanciel, et il y a quand même des gens qui parlent très, très peu sur l'ensemble du cours, alors il y a des problèmes connexion, certes, etc. Mais on a l'impression qu'il y a des gens qui sont qui ont plus de mal à s'exprimer. Moi, j'y vais et on verra bien.

Jodi [00:34:13] Ça dépend de la personne.

Evelyne [00:34:15] Ouais, c'est ça. Non, moi, ça ne me dérange pas. Mais effectivement, quels que soient les modalités d'ailleurs, que ce soit en présentielle. J'ai toujours vu qu'il y avait des gens qui n'osaient pas dire quelque chose parce qu'ils avaient peur, peut-être de dire une bêtise. Mais là même en visio. Quand on est en groupe pour échanger, il y a des gens qui parlent plus difficilement. Donc oui, là, ce n'est pas un problème pour moi, mais je vois que c'est surement un problème pour certains.

Jodi [00:35:15] J'ai demandé ce qui se passait dans le monde pour partager les actualités. Oui, tu as parlé des élections. Est-ce que tu sais pourquoi tu as choisi cette histoire?

Evelyne [00:35:42] Puisque je venais de l'entendre à la radio, je crois on échangeait sur quelque chose de l'actualité du moment. Donc, ça m'a semblé quand même un élément intéressant, d'autant plus que je crois que j'avais dû répondre après les autres et certains avaient déjà cherché d'autres. Donc certains avaient déjà et certains avaient déjà abordé d'autres choses, alors, et ça me semblait être une comme une information intéressante.

Jodi [00:36:15] Tu n'as pas voulu faire la même actualité de quelqu'un d'autre?

Evelyne [00:36:20] Bah oui, je ne sais plus de quoi les autres avaient parlé, mais c'était un peu ça, quoi. Je ne voulais pas effectivement être dans une redite. Par rapport à eux, puis en plus, c'est un élément d'information qui était, comme même, qui me semble intéressant.

Jodi [00:36:45] Je vous ai demandé ce que vous préférez de faire en ligne ou dans la vraie vie. Là, Margaret elle a dit que je préfère être en contact avec des gens, Ça parle d'aujourd'hui, mais même si c'était 2019.

Evelyne [00:37:03] Tout à fait, c'était déjà. Oui, il y avait déjà toute la problématique d'Internet, des commandes en ligne: Amazon. Oui, on était quand même déjà là-dessus, bien sûr.

Jodi [00:37:15] Est ce que tu utilises l'internet ou l'ordinateur pour faire plein de choses? Ou ça dépends?

Evelyne [00:37:26] C'est quand même assez sélectif déjà je suis d'une génération où on s'est mis sur le tard. Donc moi, je ne trouve quand même pas mal d'information. C'est vrai que je trouve ça drôlement agréable. Quand je regarde un film, ou j'entends un morceau de musique de pouvoir tout de suite avoir sur Internet des informations sur je ne sais pas, le metteur en scène, le chanteur ou je ne sais qui. Et ça, je trouve que c'est instantanéité, elle est intéressante. Il m'arrive quand même de commander des choses sur Internet parce que c'est vrai que finalement, maintenant,
beaucoup de commerces passent par là. On ne trouve pas tout ce qu'on veut dans les magasins. C'est de plus en plus sélectif et je trouve que ça, c'est quand même embêtant. Moi qui adore lire, j'essaie d'aller à la FNAC ou chez Cultura. J'arrive à trouver des bouquins, mais il faut que je les commande chez eux puisque j'ai mes habitudes. Mais sinon, effectivement, après, la solution, c'est d'aller sur Internet. Je préfère encore commander à la FNAC ou à Cultura. Je passe par eux, mais c'est vrai que maintenant, effectivement toutes les facilités sur Internet. Alors bon, je fais aussi beaucoup de choses et tout ce qui est administratif puisque maintenant tout était matérialisé dans les déclarations de revenus. Et tout ça, je trouve que ça, c'est pratique.

Jodi [00:38:54] Est ce que tu as appris à faire des choses sur Moodle que tu n'aurais pas pu faire autrement. D'ajouter un vidéo: est-ce que c'est quelque chose que tu savais faire avant?

Evelyne [00:39:14] Oui, c'est vrai que ça m'a familiarisé encore avec d'autres manoeuvres. Bien sûr, parce que bon, à la longue, j'arrive quand même à faire pas mal de petites choses sur Internet. Mais effectivement, ça m'a encore ouvert des informations à ce sujet-là. Se connecter, effectivement, pour aller chercher une vidéo ou autre. Oui, bien sûr, à chaque fois, c'est une source d'apprentissage. Oui, et plus on a appris de choses et plus on est à l'aise.

Jodi [00:40:49] Ici, on a fait un wiki, donc c'était la première fois, personne n’a répondu, mais cette fois ci, il y avait beaucoup de réponses. Vous avez créé un document ensemble? Est-ce qu’au lieu de faire chacun son commentaire, vous avez édité le même document.

Evelyne [00:41:17] Je me souviens comment on avait fait? Je ne sais plus.

Jodi [00:41:20] Tu as écrit de Agnès Varda, c’est cette partie-là que tu as écrit?

Evelyne [00:41:30] Oui, d'accord.

Jodi [00:41:32] Forcement, je pense que je vous ai montré comment faire.

Evelyne [00:41:39] Oui, c'est ça. Et bien j'avais dû réussir puisque je l'ai fait, mais j'avais oublié cette procédure là comme ça. Oui, ça aussi, c'est intéressant effectivement d'avoir en direct ce que les autres écrivent, rajouter quelque chose. Ça, c'est oui. Ça s'est bien. Oui, ça, c'est. Mais ce système d'interactivité, c'est ça aussi qui est très, très sympa. Parfois, on ne sait pas comment démarrer, mais on va démarrer sur ce que l'autre a pu dire, répond. Et c'est vrai que.

Jodi [00:42:17] Des fois j'ai mis un PowerPoint avec un quiz, par exemple? Est-ce que tu as eu l'occasion de réutiliser?

Evelyne [00:42:28] Non, Parce que, en fait, je suis quand même assez dans l'instant. C'est vrai que déjà, j’essaie quand même de travailler un tout petit peu entre les cours, mais c'est vrai que je n'y suis pas revenu. Par contre, je me dis que ça peut être quelque chose auquel je pourrais revenir par la suite?

Jodi [00:42:50] Ça dépend et même je pense qu'il ferme l'accès à la fin de l'année.

Evelyne [00:42:57] C'est dommage parce que quand je serai à la retraite. Je pense que si j'ai plus de temps, je vais faire comme tous les retraités, j'aurai moins de temps à consacrer à l'anglais,
donc je ne sais pas. C'est vrai que là, j'essaye surtout effectivement de revenir un petit peu, mais sur le cours présent. C'est vrai que c'est un peu compliqué de revenir sur les cours.

**Jodi [00:43:21]** Ce que tu peux faire, par exemple, pour cette année, tu peux enregistrer les liens. Dans les favoris ou télécharger les documents.

**Evelyne [00:43:30]** ça peut être intéressant, effectivement. C'est probablement ce que je vais faire parce qu'effectivement après, sinon, on perd aussi. C'est le problème de tous ces liens dématérialisés. Les bouquins ou les gardes, mais ça il faut les enregistrer. Oui, je pense que je vais sûrement faire ça pour après, peut être essayer d'y revenir. Oui, c'est intéressant.

**Jodi [00:44:04]** Est ce que tu as des remarques sur l'utilisation du Moodle ou la balance entre les cours en présentiel avec le support de Moodle? Qu'est-ce que ça donne?

**Evelyne [00:44:18]** De toute façon, je trouve que c'est un enrichissement. C'est vrai que je ne l'avais pas mesuré parce qu'on était informé que ça existait il y a déjà quelques années et je n'allais absolument jamais sur Internet pour l'anglais. Donc, et c'est vrai que là, ça s'est accentué et je trouve que c'est quand même drôlement pratique. C'est vrai que cette individualisation des informations, du rythme du cours qu'on peut reprendre, c'est beaucoup. C'est facilitant donc, alors je ne sais plus quelle était la question. Alors oui, la balance entre présentiel et puis? C'est vrai que je pense que c'est intéressant de maintenir les deux, parce que c'est vrai aussi que moi, je trouve que là, actuellement, j'ai pris quand même cette habitude. C'est assez confortable. Oui, c'est vrai que toutes ces images humoristiques sur des gens qui sont en distanciel et qui sont par exemple en slip chez eux. Oui, c'est ça. Et alors? C'est vrai qu'il y a une espèce de laisser aller quand même quand on n'a plus ce type de contact. Moi encore, heureusement, j'ai le travail. Mais effectivement, je crois qu'on pourrait finir par vivre dans sa bulle, complètement. Donc ça c'est quand même un peu. Quand même le présentiel à l'avantage, effectivement, qu'on a tout le groupe ensemble et il y a une autre forme d'interaction, c'est ça. C'est vrai que je pense que c'est important de pouvoir mixer les deux. Bien sûr, parce que je crois qu'on peut devenir des vrais sauvages après si on n'a plus du tout de présentiel. Et puis même l'idée de sortir de chez soi après, voilà. Là, effectivement, je rentre, j'arrive directement ici au lieu de partir au centre et moi encore, heureusement, j'allais au centre directement venant du travail, mais je comprends pour ceux qui étaient chez eux sortir de chez soi déjà c'est un effort. Et donc, c'est quelque chose. Je crois qu'on perd certaines habitudes. Oui, il y a quand même cet avantage quand on est en groupe, en présentiel. Oui, c'est une autre forme d'interaction comme même, on peut les avoir et avec ces systèmes qui sont bien performants. Ça peut être intéressant en visio. Mais c'est vrai que la confrontation, on a quand même aussi des attitudes qu'on n'a pas parce qu'on voit le visage de la personne, on entend sa voix, mais donc ce n'est pas la même chose que d'avoir quelqu'un qui est là en chair et en os. Donc, oui, je crois que c'est quand même intéressant de mixer les deux.
Appendix J: Example of SR interview translated

**Jodi** [00:01:47] At the beginning of the year we looked at a text on the telephone boxes, and I created the top 25 designs and images.

**Evelyne** [00:02:02] Yeah, yeah, I remember that.

**Jodi** [00:02:04] There was a text from the newspaper The Guardian. What do you think about using Moodle to get the images, the texts? How does it help you learn English?

**Evelyne** [00:02:22] So, I find that there is an approach that is quite diversified, it allows to have a lot of images more than when you just have a course with textbooks, since, you can have a lot of information, you can go and get more. I remember when we did some work on advertising, and we were able to canvass each other. It forces some research and at the same time we can diversify, like that, at the same time the information, the media as well. And even then, when we actually see these images of objects that were emblematic, indeed, a course with just a textbook, we clearly have fewer elements. There you go. So it’s both diverse and it’s also fun. There’s that interactive side. I remember that, in fact, for the advertising when we were looking, we could run into a lot of things. And one search would lead to another, too.

**Jodi** [00:03:37] Yes, it's different.

**Evelyne** [00:03:39] It's different.

**Jodi** [00:03:53] Before going to watch the movie I put the trailer.

**Evelyne** [00:03:58] Yes, that’s the trailer. Yes, yes, yes, that’s it. Oh yes, it’s true that we talked about that movie too.

**Jodi** [00:04:05] And then you made your comments on the trailer?

**Evelyne** [00:04:10] Yes, yes, but on the film too, I don’t remember anymore, as I didn’t see it at the same time as the class, I had already seen it. I don’t know how.

**Jodi** [00:04:25] And writing on Moodle, does it give you something different?

**Evelyne** [00:04:34] The interesting thing is that on Moodle, we can correct it and that it is clean. That's still the interest. It is true that, well, we can reread before saving or even if we save, we can go back to the text when in fact a copy that we return on paper, when it is written, it is written, that is to say that it is, it allows us to reflect, to modify certain sentences, to return to them. That's the point, I find.

**Jodi** [00:05:07] Do you find it less academic? Than to submit on paper?

**Evelyne** [00:05:13] I don’t know if it’s from that angle. Now, I can’t answer that, because I actually find that the interactive aspect is less academic. I find, generally speaking, after returning homework on paper, I don’t know. Yes, it’s more rigid. So there you go. But on the work itself, I think it changes little. Except that we can make something cleaner. It also encourages us to go back to what we did, when we have already written something on paper, if we want to correct it, we
have to re-do everything, so it encourages us to leave everything, and that. But here, what is good is that we can still revisit what we have done permanently. So this is quite interesting.

**Jodi [00:06:10]** And when you write, do you look at what other people have written before, after? Does it bring anything?

**Evelyne [00:06:21]** Yes, it’s true that every time I went there, I looked to see if anyone had already written anything. And sometimes, indeed, it makes it possible to answer not necessarily, but at least to be inspired by it. It is true that sometimes there was a dialogue that could be established with people who had already written or others who came and did the same thing. So it is this interactive aspect that is also interesting.

**Jodi [00:07:01]** You didn’t play the game for this activity?

**Evelyne [00:07:05]** No, because I don’t think I understood that at all. And then, I don’t know. Afterwards, because there were other things, I tried anyway, but in that image, I was so surprised.

**Jodi [00:07:23]** You know what it’s all about?

**Evelyne [00:07:26]** Wasn’t it an apple stalk? That’s it, but really. Had I run out of time because, in general, I say to myself the idea is to participate and even write a little something, anything. But I don’t know why I didn’t answer that picture? There were other things that day, I think maybe I had answered something else and that I had left it.

**Jodi [00:08:04]** The questions? I think you answered. No. There you started, but I think you answered. On one. Someone?

**Evelyne [00:09:05]** It’s true that sometimes, yes, yes, you had to spot the system because you either write something up front or if not in response to someone, and that’s true sometimes I got a little tangled up in the pencils.

**Jodi [00:09:20]** Sometimes it’s like you say. The goal is to participate. If it’s not in the right place, it’s okay. And then, the last year when we used it. I made the corrections on the texts. Is that interesting?

**Evelyne [00:09:40]** Oh, that’s super interesting because, yes, it’s always a question. I this the order in which we should put the words and to see the corrections appear in red like that, that’s good. Yes, because it’s very telling. That’s very, very telling.

**Jodi [00:09:55]** Isn’t that demotivating because other people can see mistakes?

**Evelyne [00:10:01]** No, we’re here to learn. I think we’re also learning from other people’s mistakes. So personally, I don’t mind at all, on the contrary. And even when I see the corrections, for others, it’s the same. We all have our own kind of hesitation and problems. So we often make the same mistakes, but for others, it’s the same. So I think it isn’t, we’re here to learn. So I think we haven’t seen, it’s not confidential. I mean. At the course level, what is important is this. Precisely because even this type of error, others can also learn something. So no, no, I think it is.
Jodi [00:10:50] Do you find that the site, since there is a password, is quite secure? Do you feel safe?

Evelyne [00:11:02] Yes

Jodi [00:11:03] What happens in class, it stays in class.

Evelyne [00:11:06] Yes, that’s right, of course. It’s good that it’s secure. I’m not worried about the level of security, as much as when it comes to the bank where I’m more worried about my credit card numbers and other things, but because there might be more delicate things. But here I say to myself, even if someone sees that I attend classes, that I make mistakes. Well, that’s how it is, and that’s why I continue to learn English. I have a lot to learn, but even if sometimes, between us, we can discuss personal, family issues. It never goes very far, even if someone was spying on us and taking back data or information that we were able to give earlier. It doesn’t bother me.

Jodi [00:11:59] Do you know each other, the other people in the class?

Evelyne [00:12:03] Yes, it is true, there are people who come back from one year to the next. There are always new people. Yes, we know each other a little bit. So I think we are a little bit on an even playing field here.

Jodi [00:12:24] And now we’re talking about adverts.

Evelyne [00:12:27] The famous adverts

Jodi [00:12:29] It was just after Christmas. So you looked at the others? There was a lot of participation. Sometimes, there was very little. Yes, everybody played along. And you found this advert?

Evelyne [00:12:50] Oh yes, that was it? Yes, this one, yes, I thought it was very funny.

Jodi [00:12:58] And how did you find it?

Evelyne [00:13:00] Well, I don’t know. I think you gave us a link to go and get adverts.

Jodi [00:13:08] It was YouTube.

Evelyne [00:13:09] Yes, so then I must have gone from there and at some point I came across this one and I remember that there were several versions in different languages. So I don’t know anymore. This is also the Internet, we’re on something, it’s takes us on something else. So, it’s true that it allows to stir up a lot of information.

Jodi [00:13:31] You answered Kate’s video? With the mouse.

Evelyne [00:13:38] Yes, that’s it. Yes, yes, yes, yes, yes.

Jodi [00:13:46] Using Moodle, you can have dialogues between you?

Evelyne [00:13:49] So of course, yes, that’s interesting.

Jodi [00:14:05] This activity was to put something for sale. Describe the object.

In fact, what I tried to do is to do the activities related to what we did in class, either with language or with a theme, the subject. But to go further.

And also, every time, it gives a very practical dimension because the interest is to master some knowledge to exchange on topics that are ultimately very common. And so, it allowed this kind of thing, yes.

Is this something that is impossible or very difficult to do in class. To write, to create texts, to share texts.

Yes, of course. Yes, you have to step back a little. You have to have extra time. It is true that it takes that time between two courses to actually be able to find things out, look at what the programme is, what we write, the others possibly answer, so it takes a little more time. I mean just the (F2F) class is not enough. So that's how it is, that's what's interesting. It's that we can come back to it afterwards. Okay, but that's also a bit of the advantage of the Internet. We go to something. There is always this playful side that, in the end, it brings us a lot of information which we are not always looking for, but already in a general way, which we are being fed. And now it's interesting. In addition, what was good was that, yes, we could come back if we had time on weekends. And then after coming back a little later, if we were not inspired, in particular, between two connections, we could say to each other I know a little bit about what it is, or what I want to say. So that's interesting too. There isn't a set time, so we're not always available at the same time either.

It gives flexibility.

That's exactly right, yes.

Is that because you're still working and there are others who aren't working? Did you feel a difference in free time, investment?

I don't know because in the end, I think it wasn't that different, between those who are already retired, who, in principle, have more time. But I notice that retirees have less time than I do. It is true that this is a general observation. We see them more difficult because they are always taken by a lot of things and they are really over booked. So sometimes I feel like I have more time. So I don't think it was significant, right? Well, yes, it's another kind of organisation.

There's never enough time.

That's it. And so, I think it wasn't. And the work itself wasn't an alibi. No, because sometimes I thought it was important to move on to something else after work. Well, in the evening, sometimes it changed my thinking. And no, I don't think it was a handicap.

Do you know about how long you connect for? In the week, after, a class and before the next one? Do you have a routine?

Actually 2018-2019 it was just the beginning. I don't know, it had to be around 30 minutes. I don't know. I will say 30 minutes, an hour, an hour and a half maximum, but I feel that the more I practice, the more I connect more easily. That was the start-up. We discovered a lot of
things but with annoyances too, because I remember sometimes, we didn’t know where to write this text. I wonder if sometimes there were things that I couldn’t submit because it was, we didn’t really know how to connect. So, and I think that with more practice, it seems to me that I connect a little more now, more easily. I mean, I feel less, less frozen. At first, it was, will I succeed? And it is true that at beginning, the connections were not simple. I remember there were things.

**Jodi [00:18:52]** Is this at a technical level or a language level?

**Evelyne [00:18:58]** It was technical understanding, but as always on the Internet. But it seems to me that the system was not as simple as that. I remember we talked about it. We talked about it in class. Sometimes to connect. We didn’t know where to click to validate I don’t remember any more, and there were some failures. So that could be a little annoying. And it is true that understanding the system is indeed, it facilitates the connection and, above all, it makes you want to go back. It is true that at the beginning, it was simple. We sometimes had all of this going on. You went back to the way of connecting, etc. And that was sometimes a little bit, it was a hindrance. Okay, but it’s true that this system is actually good when you get there, it's interesting even to exchange.

**Jodi [00:20:05]** Did you buy the sweater or not? For your daughter.

**Evelyne [00:20:11]** Yeah, yeah, that's right. Yeah, yeah, she's allergic. Plus, that's right, she can't wear a wool sweater.

**Jodi [00:20:23]** That's true too?

**Evelyne [00:20:23]** Yes, it's true, it's true. I could have invented, of course.

**Jodi [00:20:29]** But that’s it, sometimes you can use the truth or you can talk about anything. You can, you can say things that are not true just to participate or to have another identity.

**Jodi [00:21:11]** It was the beginning of lockdown. There, you are the only one to participate, which is good.

**Evelyne [00:21:28]** I don’t know what it was anymore.

**Jodi [00:21:31]** They postponed the Olympics. Who’s Teddy Ryner?

**Evelyne [00:21:50]** He is a French judo champion and he is a multi-medallist in judo, so he is a world champion. He was several times world champion in the heavyweight category and thus several times Olympic medallist also.

**Jodi [00:22:09]** So he’s supposed to participate this year?

**Evelyne [00:22:11]** Yes, because yes, there was that question. It is true that he has a fairly long career, so I think that, like all these high-level athletes, at some point, there is the question of continuing. And for how long? And yes. And in addition, he is very famous in France because he seems very charismatic. And he’s a really nice big black guy. He really seems like he’s very open, so it also contributes to his celebrity status.

**Jodi [00:22:57]** And then, it was in 2020, we started doing the classes by video conferencing system. So it wasn’t easy at first. Do you have any memories?
Evelyne [00:23:12] No, not really. Because I know that I bought a wireless headset in autumn for this year, I bought it because it was a bit complicated otherwise. And so, then, it works very well. However, it is definitely in autumn that I equipped myself and I have no memory of this.

Jodi [00:23:34] We did two.

Evelyne [00:23:37] There were 2?

Jodi [00:23:40] 3, 3, 3, 3 and we did three

Evelyne [00:23:43] So.

Jodi [00:23:48] No memories?

Evelyne [00:23:51] I wonder if I attended these three classes, because I don’t have any memories, but maybe I did.

Jodi [00:24:01] Or maybe you were working?

Evelyne [00:24:05] Anyway. Yes, because I didn’t stop working. Anyway, despite the lockdown. And yes, it’s true that we were in a group, yes. Oh yes, it’s amazing. Because yes, yet. Yeah, but yes, all that. But then, how did I do if I got equipped then?

Jodi [00:24:32] Yes, but this year, you’re used to it. And how is it different than in the classroom? Do you like it, there are positives, negatives?

Evelyne [00:24:49] Yes, which means I’m pretty well connected. Fortunately, I don’t know. As for me, it works fine since I have this wireless headset. It’s impeccable. I always have the image. I always have the sound and the image, but for the other participants, this is not always the case. So, sometimes, some of them, yes, we no longer see them. We no longer hear them. It’s a little complicated. So the advantage is that we are in a very small group. So we are what 6/7 in the class and so we can exchange a lot more. But the unfortunate part is, yes, some of them have connection problems, obviously, more than I do. I feel that way. Of course, I don’t know how others hear me, but I don’t have any comments about not seeing or not hearing. But for some, it’s a bit difficult, with a lot of parasites, a sound that is very, sometimes the exchanges are not facilitated, conversely, as we are really in small groups, it’s quite easy to exchange anyway. And you have to get used to it? At first, I found it tedious. I think we all have to get used to it. There’s also thinking about turning off the microphone when you’re not talking to avoid loud noises. It’s really another culture, and I get the impression that over time, over the course of the year, it’s better, it’s more, it’s easier.

Jodi [00:26:13] Do you know if there are people who have not re-registered because of the video conferencing system?

Evelyne [00:26:20] So yes, I think so, since yes, there is Barbara* who had registered because it was even her in September who told me then we have to go back and while I didn’t know, lockdown, not lockdown, I wasn’t very enthusiastic. In fact, she doesn’t come to class anymore and she was the one who even gave me the advice for the wireless headset. And she gave up completely, which is a bit of a shame. I tried to persuade her. It was still interesting. We still
manage to work. And with the Internet system, we can go and watch the video conferencing systems. And that’s good. Because when you have to soak up both the accent and the vocabulary, you can do that several times. And in total, now that I have a little more control over the tool, I spend more time there. When I told you maybe between half an hour and an hour and a half at the start of 2018-2019, I think I can easily spend two hours in the week when I’m not counting. But here, I find that there is an ease of use.

**Jodi** [00:27:34] And you’re talking about the Internet when you connect to Moodle and you’re going to do something else, is it Moodle that encourages you to go further?

**Evelyne** [00:27:46] Well, yes, because now I’m trying more to understand what I hear. When I hear English. Sometimes even a film. It seems to me that I’m much more willing. It seems to me that I am, I don’t know, but I feel like I am getting somewhere. In other words, it seemed completely impossible for me to understand a conversation. So I still don’t understand it now, but at least I’m trying. And that was something I didn’t do, that I didn’t allow myself. But with this kind of habit that we take to listen to these people who speak in these video conferencing systems with all their accents. That speed, then. But since we can come back to it. Let’s say that it encourages me to go on other things. Whether it’s the Internet, radio or TV. And when I do hear English, then I feel like I’m forcing myself more to try to understand. Well, even if the result remains very, but anyway, I am more attentive to what I hear and I try more to understand. And I’m wondering if this habit we’re taking…. Yes. Watch a video conferencing system and be able to pick it up at our own pace. But I remember that we were already doing it in class before the big boom of Internet and video conferencing systems, since we were already doing that. But yes, we had a look during the class and that was all. And it’s true that we still have to come back.

**Jodi** [00:29:46] Do you find it more individualized because you listen at your own pace? And how many times you need to. On the other hand, in class, if it’s once, twice, three times, everyone listens to the same.

**Evelyne** [00:30:00] Yes, it’s true that it’s more individualized, so that’s an advantage. I think that both are interesting because indeed only the video conferencing as currently, there is no longer the group effect that is energizing. Of course, but ultimately, there is compensation that is not neutral, that is interesting. I mean to be at one’s own pace, yes, we individualise more. Well, I find that motivating. As much as Barbara* doesn’t come to class anymore, I think that’s something that discouraged her.

**Jodi** [00:30:35] Yeah, it depends. I think. It depends on what they do in their lives. You work, you still see people.

**Evelyne** [00:30:47] Yes, that’s right. It’s true that I, yes, to meet people I have this compensation. I did not experience lockdown at all because I continued my activities almost as before. So for me it was not cumbersome. It is true that around me, there are many people who are in search of contact and who tend to flee everything that is now individual and therefore distant. Yes, of course.

**Jodi** [00:31:12] We use computers to talk to the family. Maybe that’s enough. Yeah, that’s enough, that’s pretty tiring. And if we do it every day with everyone.

213
Evelyne [00:31:26] Yeah, that's it. Whereas I, in the end, don't use the computer for my family. Well, sometimes, and even during lockdown as I was able to visit some of my family members, my mother being in an EPHAD. So, despite the lockdown, I still had the opportunity to go out and meet my family. So I was certainly more privileged than others. That is important. I understand that after all, those who have always been at distance for everything are really fed up with all these approaches.

Jodi [00:32:04] It's a good tool, but not 24/7.

Evelyne [00:32:10] Yes, yes, that's it. Yes, it's often interesting when you can mix the different processes.

Jodi [00:32:24] Here in 2018-19. If I ask you again about something and it's in front of everyone. Can it be awkward? Or is it easier to say things on Moodle? Because you are alone, you, as you say, can think. Are you more open?

Evelyne [00:32:58] This is true on Moodle. The advantage is that you can give something that is more refined. The advantage of exchanging in class is that we are much more spontaneous. After all, I'm not afraid to screw up, whether it's in a twist, misuse, or yourself on an idea, that's what we're here for. So I understand that people who are a little inhibited, who can feel that way, it's bad. But I think that's an approach we have to courses in general. It's true that it's not for me. That's not a problem. I'm already so used to being in touch with a lot of people that if I pay attention to what I say all the time, I won't say anything. I don't mind, but yes, I have always noticed and even now we are working at distance, and there are still people who speak very, very little about the whole course, so there are connection problems. Of course, etc. But we get the impression that there are people who find it more difficult to express themselves. Me, I'll give it a go and see.

Jodi [00:34:13] It depends on the person.

Evelyne [00:34:15] Yeah, that's right. No, I don't mind. But indeed, whatever the modalities, for that matter, be it in face to face. I always saw that there were people who did not dare to say something because they were afraid, perhaps to say something stupid. But even in video conferencing system. When you are in a group to talk, there are people who speak with more difficulty. So yes, that's not a problem for me, but I see that it's probably a problem for some.

Jodi [00:35:15] I asked what was happening in the world to share news. Yes, you talked about elections. Do you know why you chose this story?

Evelyne [00:35:42] Because I had just heard it on the radio, I think we were talking about something of the moment. So, it seemed to me an interesting element, especially since I think I had to answer after the others and some had already looked for other stories. So some had already discussed other things, then, and it seemed to me like an interesting piece of information.

Jodi [00:36:15] You didn't want to do the same news story as someone else?

Evelyne [00:36:20] Well, yeah, I don't know what the others were talking about, but it was kind of like that. I did not want to be in a repetition. Compared to them, and then on top of that, it's a piece of information that was, as it were, interesting to me.
Jodi [00:36:45] I asked you what you prefer to do online or in real life. There, Margaret* said that I prefer to be in contact with people, it’s like it’s today, but even if it was 2019.

Evelyne [00:37:03] Absolutely. Yes, there was already the whole issue of the Internet, online ordering: Amazon. Yes, we were already on it, of course.

Jodi [00:37:15] Do you use the internet or the computer to do a lot of things? Or does it depend?

Evelyne [00:37:26] It’s still quite selective, I’m from a generation where we picked it up late. So I still don’t find a lot of information. It’s true that I find it very pleasant. When I watch a film, or I hear a piece of music, I can immediately get information on the Internet about I don’t know, the director, the singer or whatever. And that, I find it instantly, it’s interesting. However, I do order things on the Internet because it is true that, in the end, a lot of businesses are now going through there. You can’t find everything you want in the stores. It’s more and more selective, and I find that annoying. I love reading, I try to go to FNAC or Cultura. I can find books, but I have to order them from there because I have my habits. But if not, then the solution is to go on the Internet. I still prefer to order from FNAC or Cultura. I go through them, but it is true that now, indeed all facilities are on the Internet. So, I also do a lot of things and everything that is administrative since everything is now digital, for example the tax returns. And all of that, I think it’s convenient.

Jodi [00:38:54] Did you learn to do things on Moodle that you couldn’t have done otherwise. To add a video: is this something you knew how to do before?

Evelyne [00:39:14] Yes, it’s true it has showed me how to do other tasks. Of course, because in the long run, I still manage to do a lot of little things on the Internet. But it did open up more information about that. To log in, yes, to get a video conferencing system or something. Yes, of course, every time it’s a source of learning. Yes, and the more you learn, the more comfortable you are.

Jodi [00:40:49] Here, we did a wiki, so it was the first time, nobody answered, but this time, there were a lot of answers. You created a document together? Instead of each commenting, you edited the same document.

Evelyne [00:41:17] I remember how did we do it? I don’t know.

Jodi [00:41:20] You wrote about Agnes Varda, that’s the part you wrote about?

Evelyne [00:41:30] Yes, okay.

Jodi [00:41:32] Obviously, I think I showed you how to do it.

Evelyne [00:41:39] Yes, that’s right. Well, I had to have succeeded because I did, but I forgot that procedure like that. Yes, that too, it is interesting to have what others are writing live, to add something. That is yes. It went well. Yes, that’s it. But this interactive system, that’s also what’s very, very nice. Sometimes, we don’t know how to start, but we will start on what the other may have said, reply. It’s true.

Jodi [00:42:17] Sometimes I put a PowerPoint with a quiz, for example? Have you had the opportunity to reuse these?
Evelyne [00:42:28] No, because, in fact, I’m still pretty in the moment. It is true that I am already trying to work a little bit between classes, but it is true that I did not go back. However, I’m thinking that this could be something I could come back to later?

Jodi [00:42:50] It depends and even I think they close the access at the end of the year.

Evelyne [00:42:57] It’s too bad because when I retire. I think that if I have more time, I will do as all retirees do, I will have less time to devote to English, so I don’t know. It is true that I am trying to come back for a while, but on the current course. It is true that it is a bit complicated to go back to the other courses.

Jodi [00:43:21] What you can do, for example, for this year, you can save the links. In favourites or download the documents.

Evelyne [00:43:30] It can be interesting, yes. That’s probably what I’m going to do because, yes, after that, if not, we also lose them. That’s the problem with all these digital links. The textbooks we can keep, but links you have to save them. Yes, I think I’ll probably do that for later, maybe try to come back to it. Yes, it is interesting,

Jodi [00:44:04] Do you have any other comments on the use of Moodle or the balance between face-to-face courses with Moodle support? What does it add?

Evelyne [00:44:18] Well, I find it an enrichment. It is true that I had not measured it because we were only informed that it existed a few years ago and I absolutely never went on the Internet for English. So, and it is true that this has become increasingly important, and I think it is rather practical. It is true that this individualisation of information, of the rhythm of the course that can be resumed, is good. So it makes it easier, so I don’t know what the question was. So yes, the balance between face-to-face and then? It is true that I think it is interesting to maintain both, because it is also true that I find that right now, I still have this habit. It is quite comfortable. Yes, it’s true that all these humorous images about people who are working at distance and who are, for example, in their pants at home. Yes, that’s right. So what? It’s true that there is a kind of letting go when you no longer have this type of contact. Fortunately, I still have work. But yes, I think you could end up living in your bubble, completely. So that’s a little bit. However, the face-to-face advantage is that we have the whole group together and there is another form of interaction. It is true that I think it is important to be able to mix the two. Of course, because I believe that you can become a real savage after if you don’t have any face-to-face contact at all. And then even the idea of leaving home afterwards, that’s it. There, yes, I come home, I arrive directly here instead of going to the centre and I still, fortunately, I went to the centre directly from work, but I understand for those who were at home leaving is already an effort. So that’s something. I think we’re losing certain habits. Yes, there is that advantage when we’re in a group, in a face-to-face setting. Yes, it’s another form of interaction as well, we can have them, and with these systems that perform well. It can be interesting in video conferencing system. But it is true that confrontation, we still have attitudes that we do not have because we see the person’s face, we hear his voice, but so it is not the same thing as having someone who is there in the flesh. So, yes, I think it’s still interesting to mix the two.
Appendix K: Inductive thematic analysis per learner

Learner 1

Figure 27: Themes for Learner 1

Learner 2

Figure 29: Themes for Learner 2

Learner 1

Figure 28: Three dimensions for Learner 1

Learner 2

Figure 30: Three dimensions for Learner 2
Figure 31: Themes for Learner 3

Figure 32: Three dimensions for Learner 3

Figure 33: Themes for Learner 4

Figure 34: Three dimensions for Learner 4
Figure 35: Themes for Learner 5

Figure 36: Three dimensions for Learner 5

Figure 37: Themes for Learner 6

Figure 38: Three dimensions for Learner 6
Figure 39: Themes for Learner 7

Figure 40: Three dimensions for Learner 7

Figure 41: Themes for Learner 8

Figure 42: Three dimensions for Learner 8
Figure 43: Themes for Learner 9

Figure 44: Three dimensions for Learner 9

Figure 45: Themes for Learner 10

Figure 46: Three dimensions for Learner 10
Learner 11

Figure 47: Themes for Learner 11

Figure 48: Three dimensions for Learner 11

Learner 12

Figure 49: Themes for Learner 12

Figure 50: Three dimensions for Learner 12
Figure 51: Themes for Learner 13

Figure 52: Three dimensions for Learner 13

Figure 53: Themes for Learner 14

Figure 54: Three dimensions for Learner 14
Figure 55: Themes for Learner 15

Figure 56: Three dimensions for Learner 15

Figure 57: Themes for Learner 16

Figure 58: Three dimensions for Learner 16
Figure 59: Themes for Learner 17

Figure 60: Three dimensions for Learner 17

Figure 61: Themes for Learner 18

Figure 62: Three dimensions for Learner 18
Figure 67: Themes for Learner 21

Figure 68: Three dimensions for Learner 21

Figure 69: Themes for Learner 22

Figure 70: Three dimensions for Learner 22
Appendix L: Inductive thematic analysis by CEFRL level

Figure 71: Three dimensions for A1 learners

Figure 72: Three dimensions for A2 learners

Figure 73: Three dimensions for B2 learners
Appendix M: Inductive analysis per gender

Figure 74: Three dimensions for male learners

Figure 75: Three dimensions for female learners
Appendix N: ‘How to’ upload a video