

From vision to action: Inquiring into the conditions for the motivational capacity of ideal second language selves.

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# From vision to action: Inquiring into the conditions for the motivational capacity of ideal second language selves

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## Abstract

Although the ideal L2 self as the proposed key driver of self-motivation in L2 learning has received considerable scholarly attention over the past ten years, the conditions for its motivational capacity remain largely unexplored in empirical studies. This article details a quantitative measure that operationalizes the ideal L2 self in terms of specific properties that have been associated with its motivating capacity and links these with effort expended towards its attainment. The results of a study into the properties of the ideal L2 selves of 97 German upper-intermediate to advanced learners of English are discussed, in which levels of self-motivation to attain a specific ideal L2 self were most strongly associated with how frequently the ideal L2 self was envisioned, followed by the perceived present-future self-discrepancy and the extent to which this ideal L2 self was desired. Although the perceived plausibility of a specific ideal L2 self was also positively

associated with effort expended towards its attainment, its unique contribution to predicting effort did not reach significance when the variance explained by the other properties was controlled for. The implications of these findings for researchers and language educators are discussed.



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## Keywords

L2 motivation; Ideal L2 self; L2 motivational self system; Self-discrepancy; Self-motivation; Possible selves

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From vision to action: Inquiring into the conditions for the motivational capacity of ideal second language selves, it is obvious that the artistic mentality illustrates the method of market research, even if the direct observation of this phenomenon is difficult.