

10 November



Léargas Research Forum 2020

The Impact & Experience
of European Programmes in Ireland



www.leargas.ie



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



The Impact of Erasmus+ on Modern Foreign Languages in Ireland

**Dr. Britta C. Jung,
Irish Research Council Post-Doctoral Fellow**

Léargas Research Forum 2020



Introducing the Study

- “The Impact and Experience of Foreign Languages in the Context of Erasmus+ in All Education Sectors in Ireland”
- Commissioned by Léargas and the Higher Education Authority
- Launched in May 2020, freely available in the Léargas Resource Section



Introducing the Study

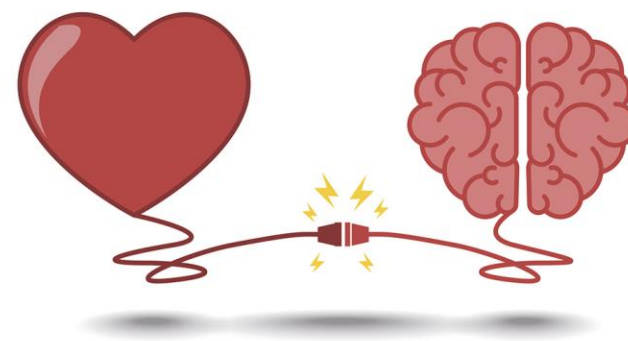
- Conducted in the context of the Government's *Action Plan for Education 2016-2019* and the subsequent strategy for foreign languages in education, *Languages Connect, Ireland's Strategy for Foreign Languages in Education 2017-2026*
- Based on a nationwide online survey across all education sectors and 19 in-depth interviews with Erasmus+ participants and administrators

Léargas Research Forum 2020



Key Findings highlight the importance of...

- the emotional dimension of language learning!



aptx4869 / iStock / Getty Images Plus

“[O]ne of the reasons I stopped studying French is because I did it for four years but I felt like we were just forced to regurgitate a lot of information that was given to us nine months prior and we had to learn it off.”



Key Findings highlight the importance of...

- Encouragement and positive role models
 - ✓ parents, friends, neighbours, teachers, etc.
- Learner agency and attitude
 - ✓ personal connections, diversification of languages in education, previous experience with language learning
- Perceived accessibility of the language
 - ✓ how complicated is the language perceived to be?

Léargas Research Forum 2020



Key Findings highlight the importance of...

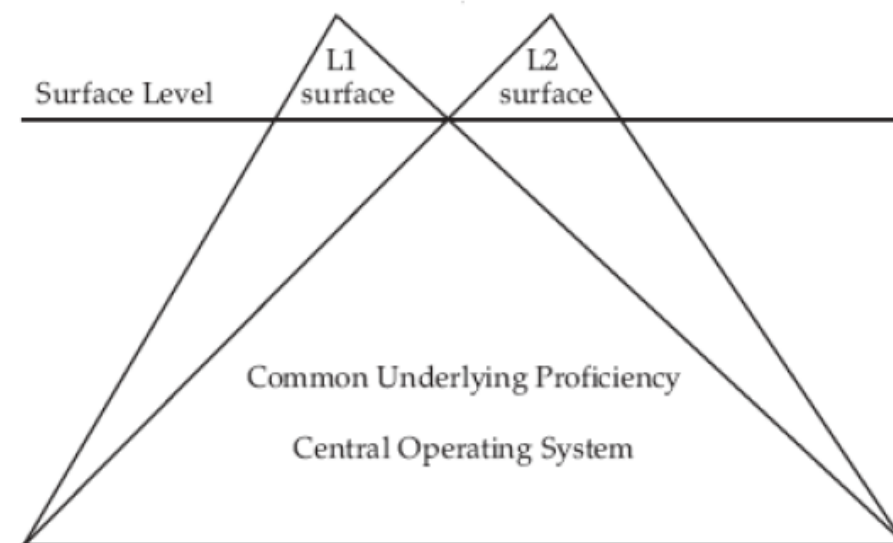
- Consistent provision and (perceived) quality of language education
- Provision of speaking opportunities and creating opportunities
 - ✓ Communicative approach to language teaching, 'living/lived language'
 - ✓ Mobility programmes, virtual partnerships
 - ✓ English as the *Lingua Franca*?
 - ✓ Linguistic Empathy
- Holistic approach
 - ✓ Language and (cultural) content
 - ✓ Different languages (e.g. English, Irish, L3)

Léargas Research Forum 2020



James Cummins' *Iceberg analogy for language learning*

- Signifies that proficiencies involving more complex tasks (i.e. literacy, content learning, abstract thinking and problem-solving) are common across languages
- Learning different languages reinforces the learning process of each language through the shared, underlying proficiencies
 - ✓ Vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation
 - ✓ Analysis, synthesis, evaluation
 - ✓ (Inter)cultural knowledge



Léargas Research Forum 2020



Most importantly, however, Realise the impact you have on others!

“It’s a journey that never ends, really. I do now accept that some people are just not on that journey and you can’t change that. I’m sad for the situation that some people can stop your journey, or negatively influence your journey and maybe they don’t realise they’re doing it. Like stopping the offering of a language module in this context is just terrible, or other things have happened where people offer a language but only on five programmes, and it’s three hours on a Friday afternoon, so you can do languages while everybody else goes down to the pub. That’s like offering your violin lessons to a child but it’s on a Sunday morning when they want to sleep in.

And painting languages in a bad light, or saying it’s hard like German is so hard and Spanish is so easy. You hear all this stuff and you know it’s wrong but people are so willing to believe it.”