

**“What an incredible time ours is for
language learning!”**

-Dressman & Sadler (2020, p. 1)

*English
&
You*



universität
wien

*English
&
You*

**English in the lives of Austrian youth:
Second language engagement and enjoyment
in recreational, professional and educational contexts**

Lisza-Sophie Neumeier

47. ÖLT // EMERGING LINGUISTIS WORKSHOP

December 10, 2023

Informal Second Language Learning (ISLL)

(Dressman & Sadler, 2020)



language learning in the digital wild
(Jensen, 2019)

Informal digital learning of English
(Lee & Dressman, 2018)

Extramural English
(Sundqvist, 2009)

implicit language learning
(Ellis, 2010)

out-of-class learning
(e.g. Kashiwa & Benson, 2018)

online informal learning of English
(Sockett, 2014)

Informal Second Language Learning



uninstructed, primarily incidental acquisition of a second language by engaging in naturalistic recreational, professional, or educational endeavors which involve the target language

(based on Schurz, 2022, p. 48; Dressman & Sadler, 2020, p. 1)



recreational ISLL

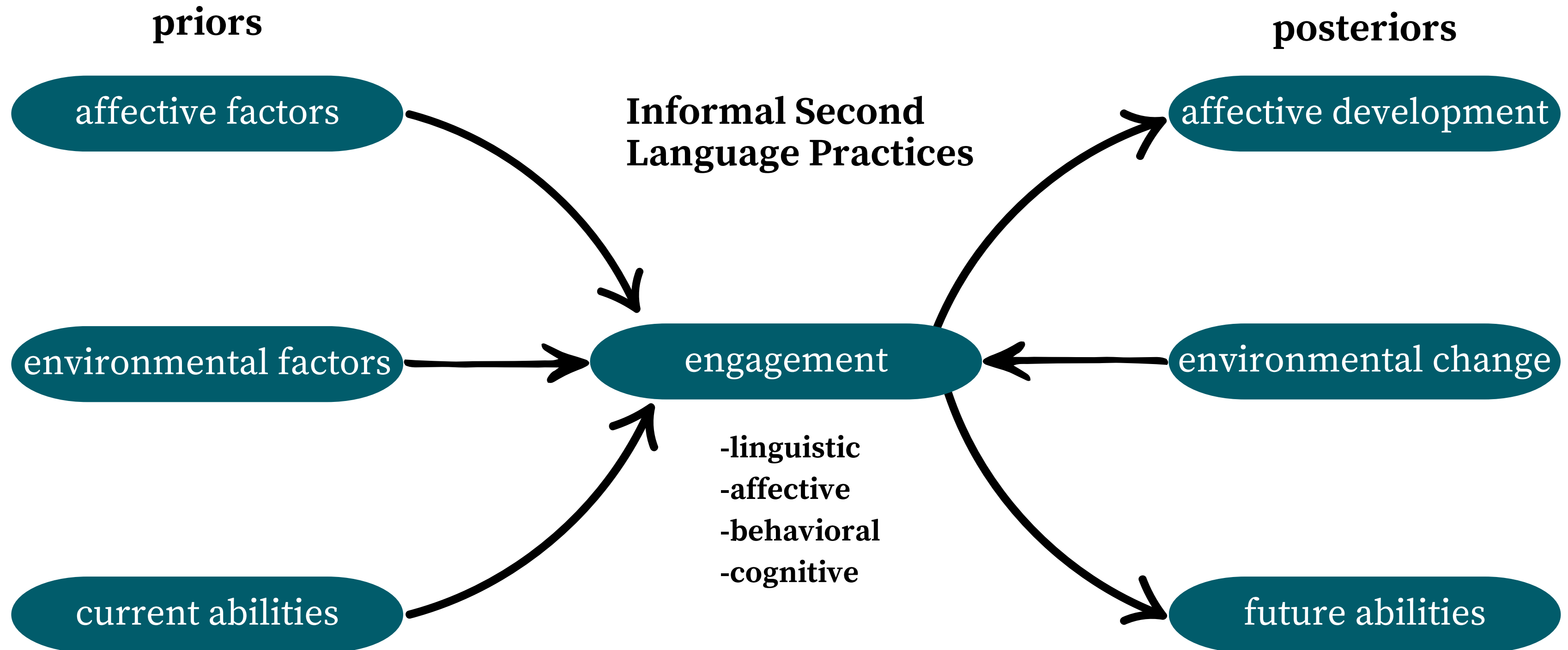


professional ISLL



educational ISLL

Informal Second Language Learning



Contextual model of engagement in informal second language practices (based on Arndt, 2023, p. 5)

Informal Second Language Learning



associations with



e.g. digital competences

(e.g., Miglbauer, 2017)



e.g. vocabulary knowledge

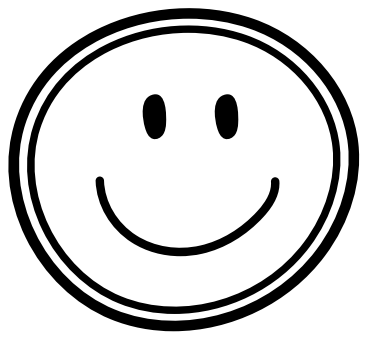
(e.g., Ghamarian-Krenn, 2023)



e.g. willingness to
communicate

(e.g., Lee & Drajati, 2019)

Foreign Language Enjoyment (FLE)

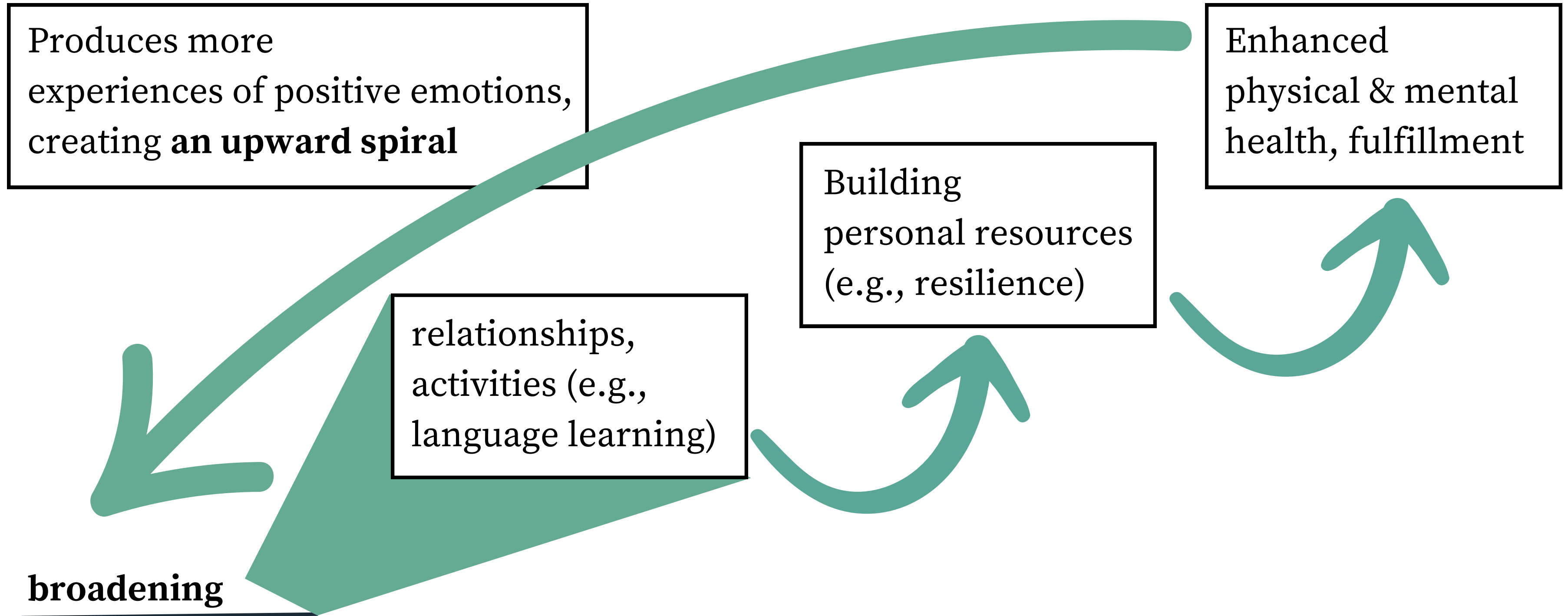
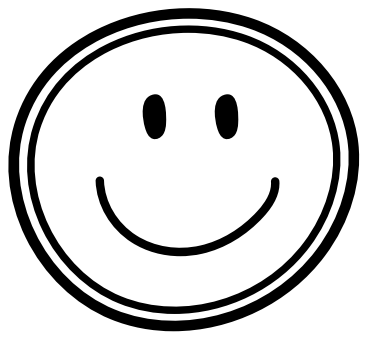


“an intense, positive emotion experienced by L2 speakers of a language when a satisfactory interplay between challenge and ability while engaging in L2 use is met.”

(Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014)

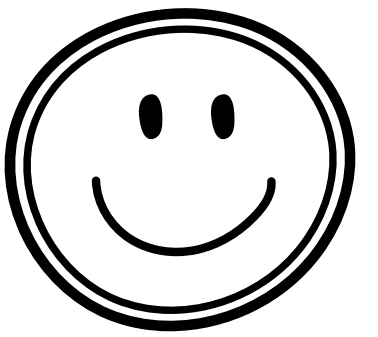
- Flow concept (cf. Csikszentmihalyi, 1990/2009)
- emerged from Positive Psychology
- first groundbreaking studies: 2010s (e.g., MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012; Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014)
- based on Fredrickson's (2013) Broaden-and-build theory

Foreign Language Enjoyment



The broaden and build theory of positive emotions (based on Fredrickson, 2013, p. 16)

Foreign Language Enjoyment



associations with

proficiency (e.g. Dewaele, 2023)

multilingualism (Botes et al., 2020)

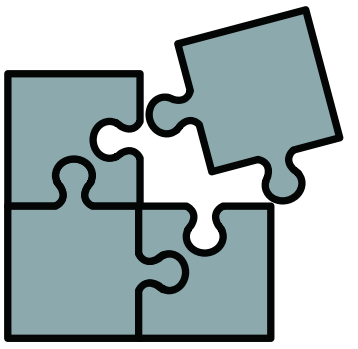
positive FL attitudes (e.g. Dewaele & MacIntyre, 2014)

learner autonomy (e.g., Resnik & Dewaele, 2021)

willingness to communicate (e.g., Barrios & Acosta-Manzano, 2021)

trait emotional intelligence (e.g., Resnik & Dewaele, 2021)

Research lacunae



relationship between ISLL and FLE (Arndt, 2023, p. 7)



recreational ISLL among people who are working (Schwarz, 2020, p. 351)



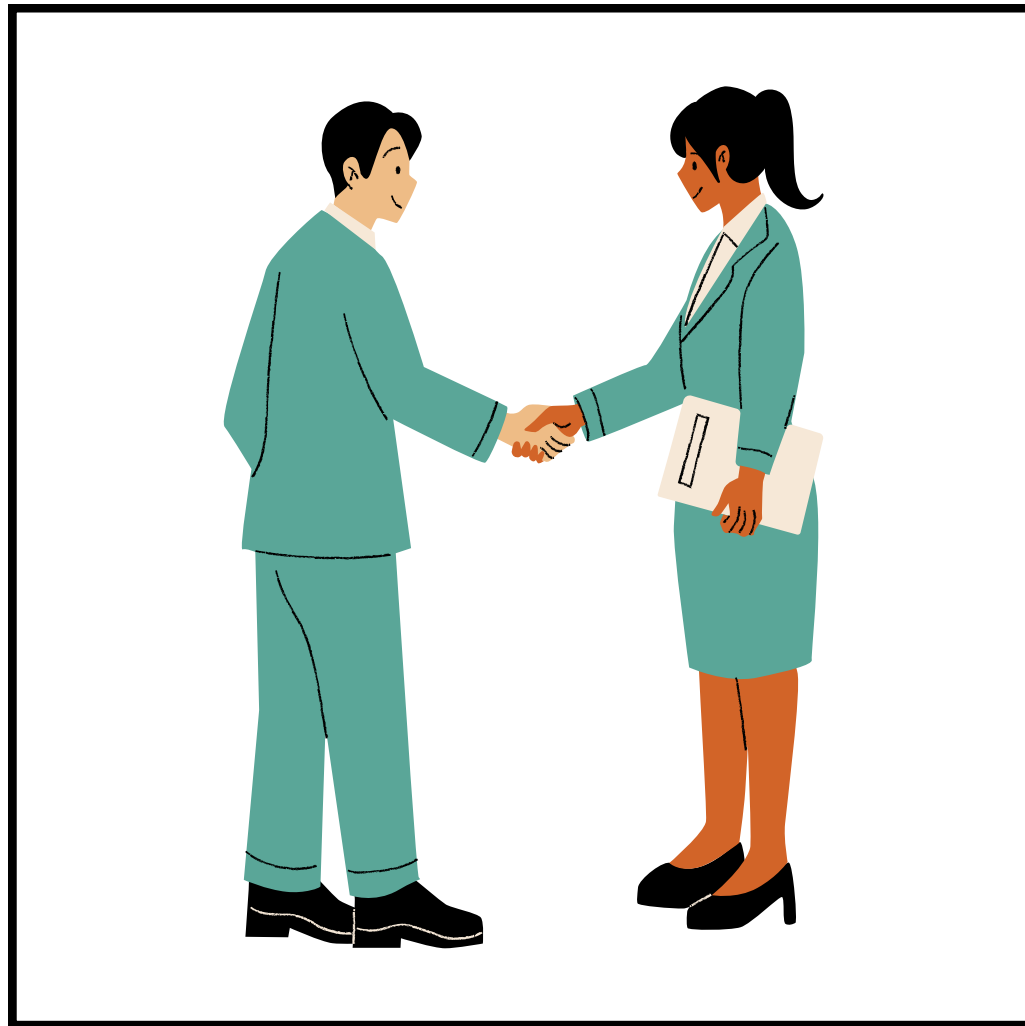
professional and educational ISLL among young adults (Sockett & Toffoli, 2020, p. 483)



FLE disconnected from formal language instruction

Participants

18 to 35 years old



**employed
young adults**



tertiary students



**employed
tertiary students**

Research question 1



1a: How do young adults in Austria engage with English in their free time?

1b: How do young adults in Austria engage with English in their professional and educational context?

1c: Are there differences in recreational informal second language learning practices between tertiary students, tertiary students who are working part-time and young adults who are working full-time?

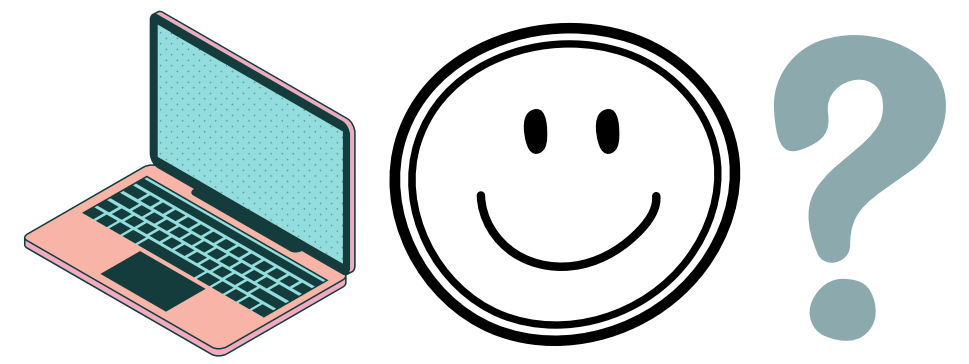
Research question 2



2a: To what extent do young adults in Austria enjoy engagement with English?

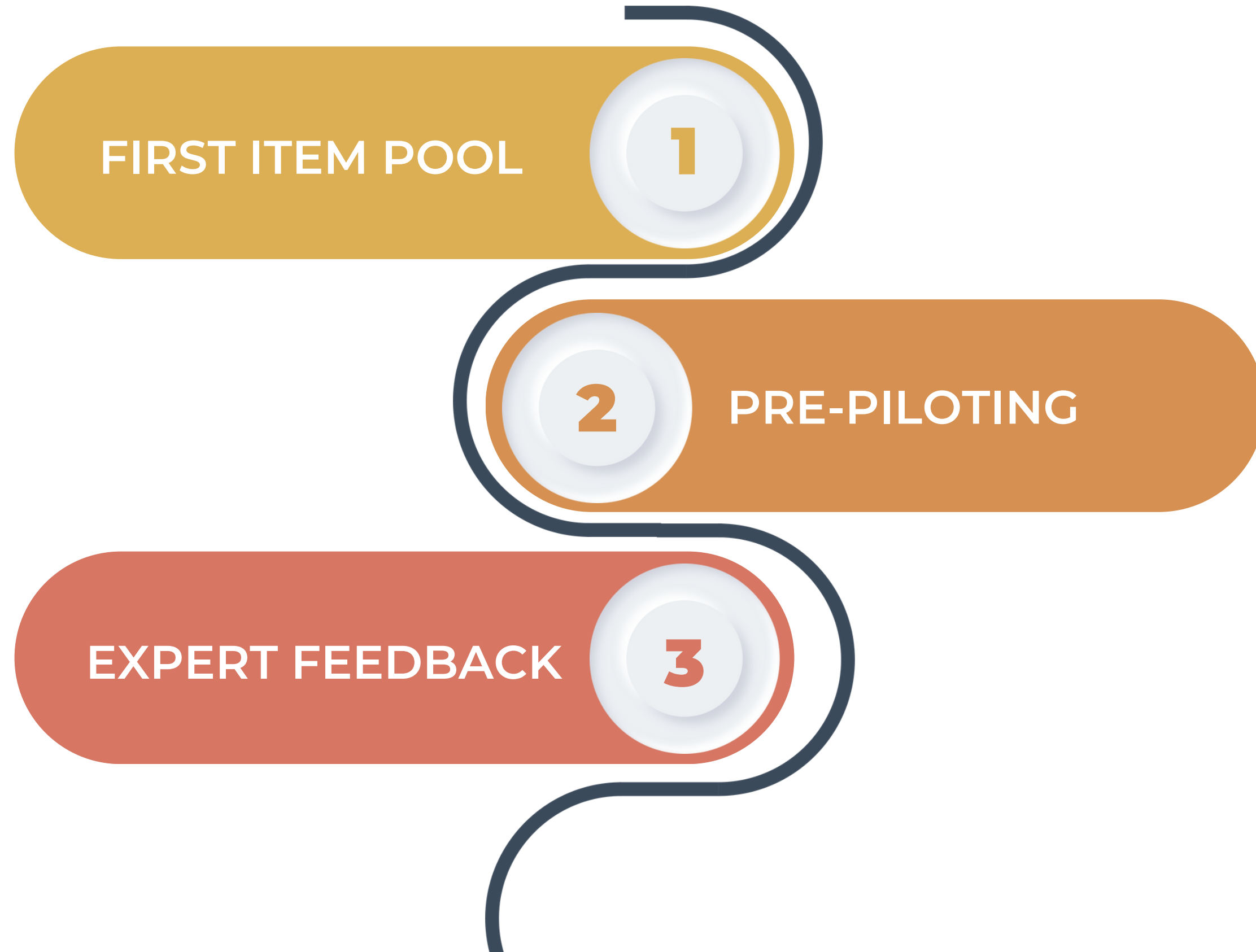
2b: Are there differences in foreign language enjoyment between tertiary students, tertiary students who are working part-time and young adults who are working full-time?

Research question 3



3: What is the relationship between informal second language engagement and foreign language enjoyment among young adults in Austria?

Study design



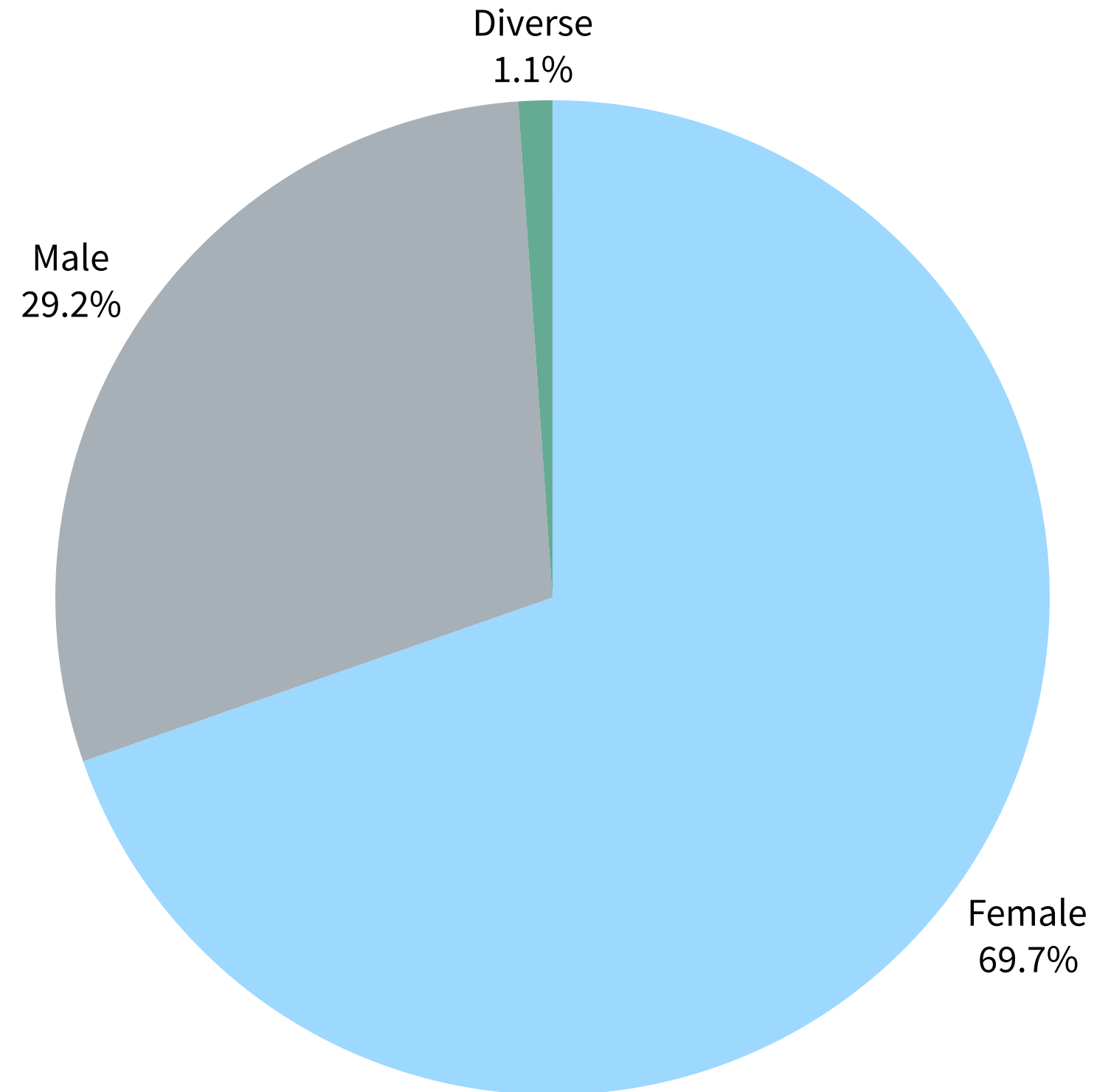
Study design



The sample



N = 636 young adults

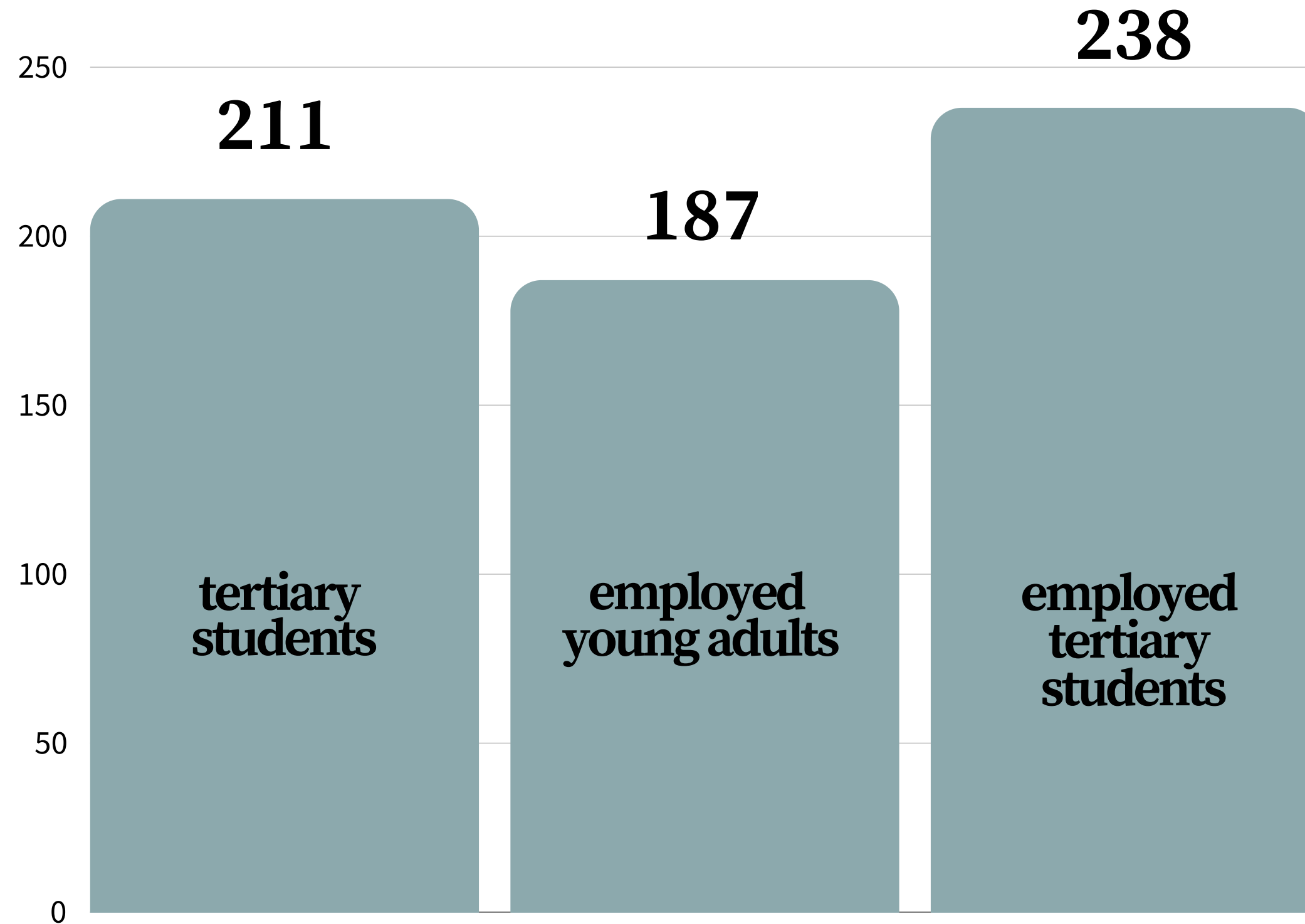


Distribution of gender in the sample

The sample



N = 636 young adults

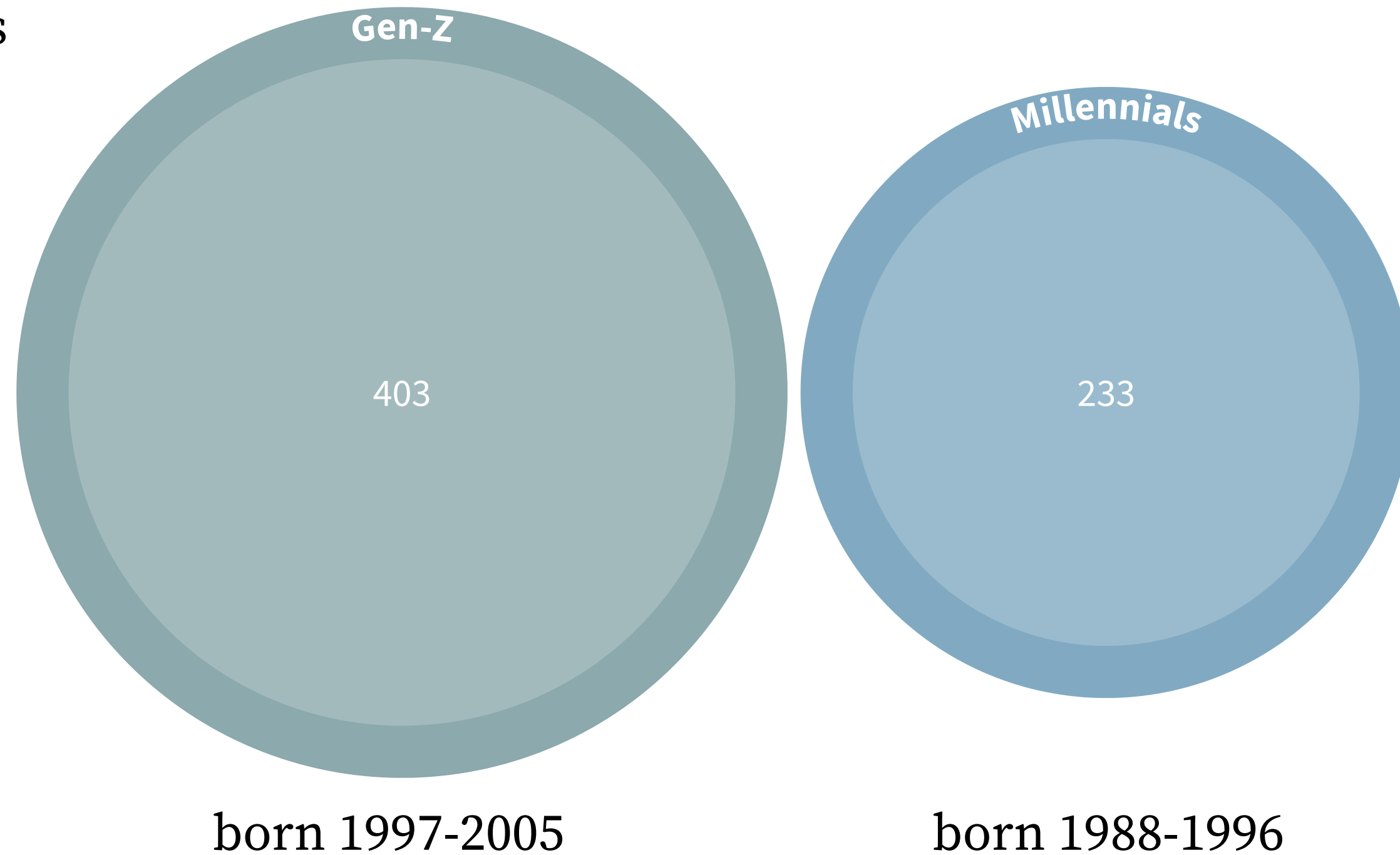


Distribution of the three participant subgroups in the sample

The sample

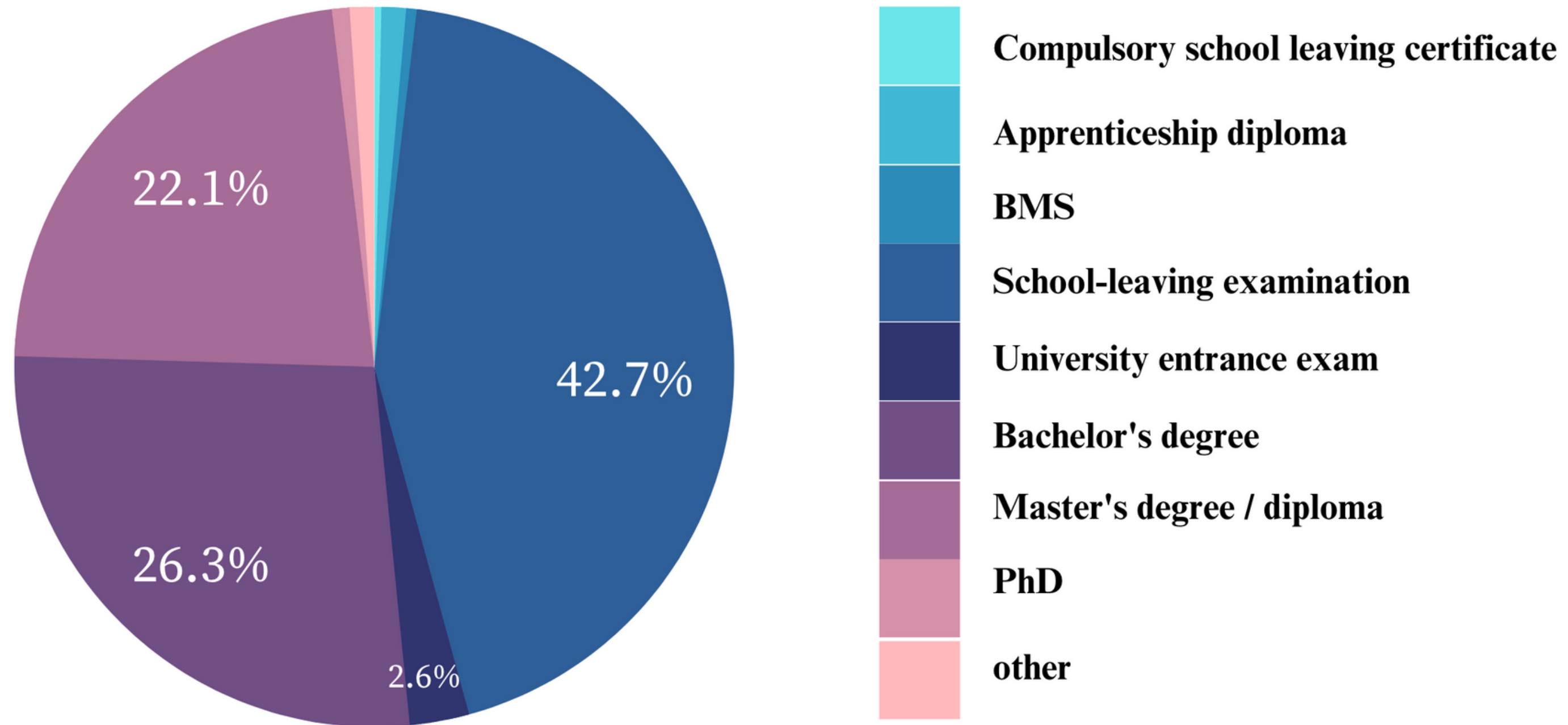


N = 636 young adults



Distribution of members of the two generations in the sample

The sample



Highest level of education

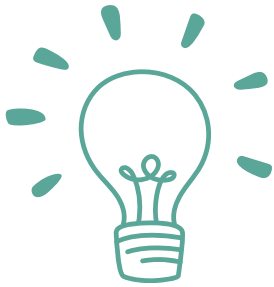
Recreational ISLL (RQ 1a)



Almost all young adults used English
almost every day in their free time

daily recreational ISLL engagement by 95.3% of all participants
(i.e., 622 out of 653 young adults)

Recreational ISLL (RQ 1a)



DAILY ENGAGEMENT

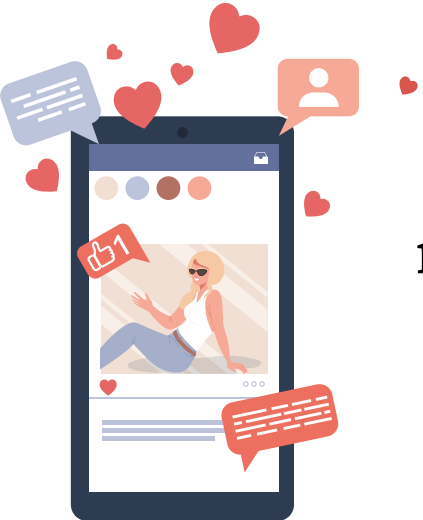
listening to music (85%)



watching TikToks/Reels (53%)

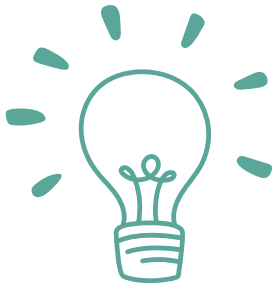


reading social media postings or comments (52%)



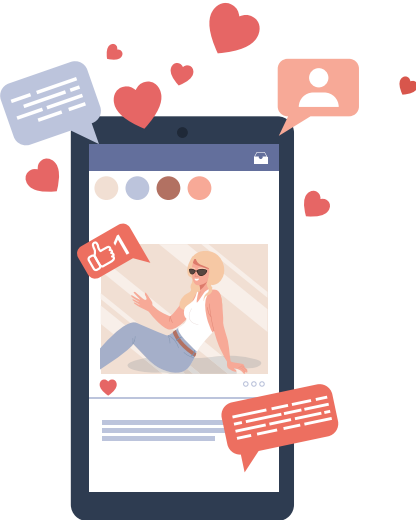
Top 3 activities

Recreational ISLL (RQ 1a)



A FEW TIMES A WEEK OR DAILY ENGAGEMENT

listening to music (96%)



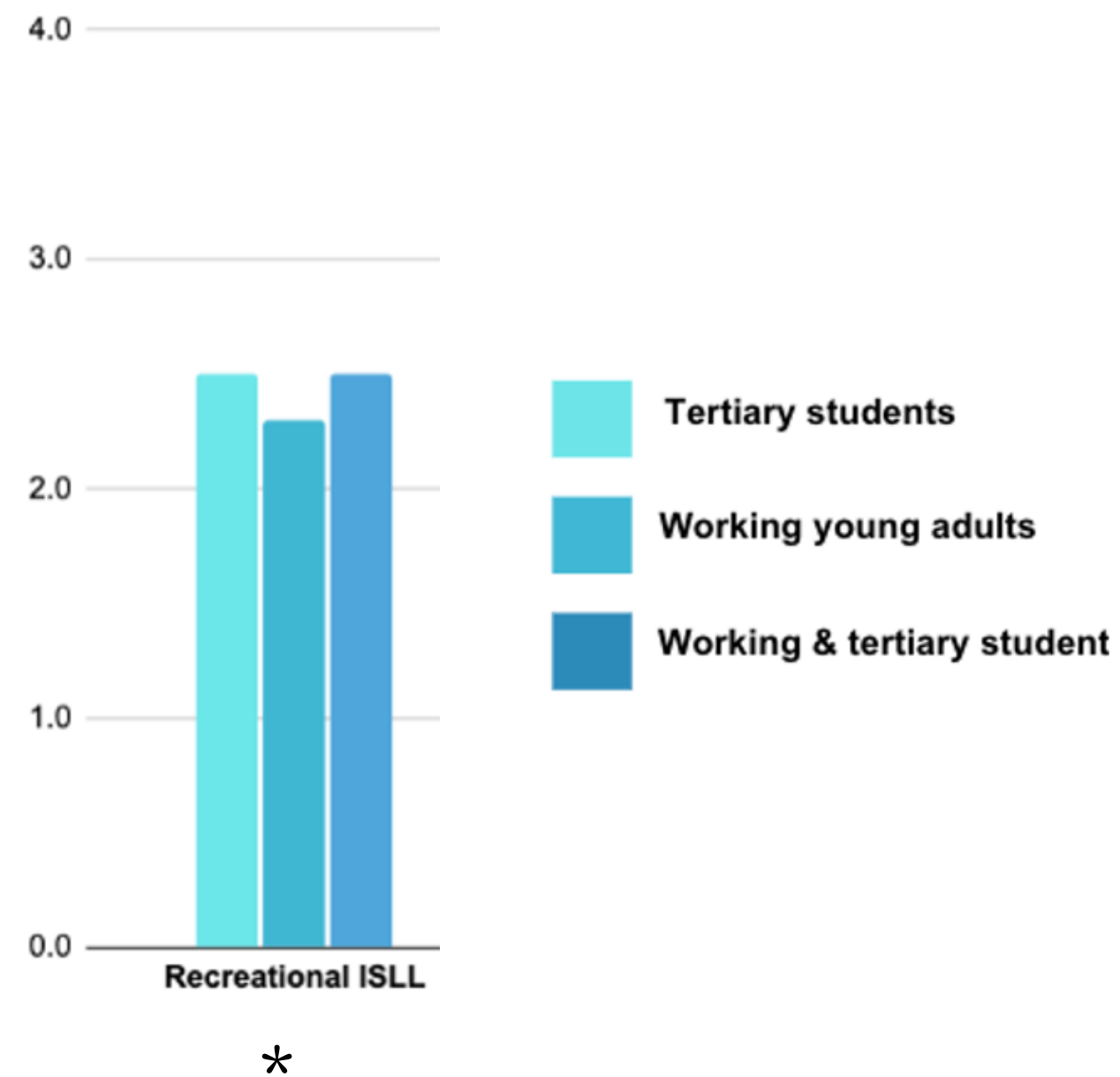
singing English songs (79%)

reading social media postings or comments (75%)



Top 3 activities

Differences in recreational ISLL (RQ 1a&c)



Mean values of recreational ISLL

- Gen-Z show significantly higher recreational ISLL levels
- Possible reason: Gen-Z already grew up as digital natives in a globalized world



Professional ISLL (RQ 1b)



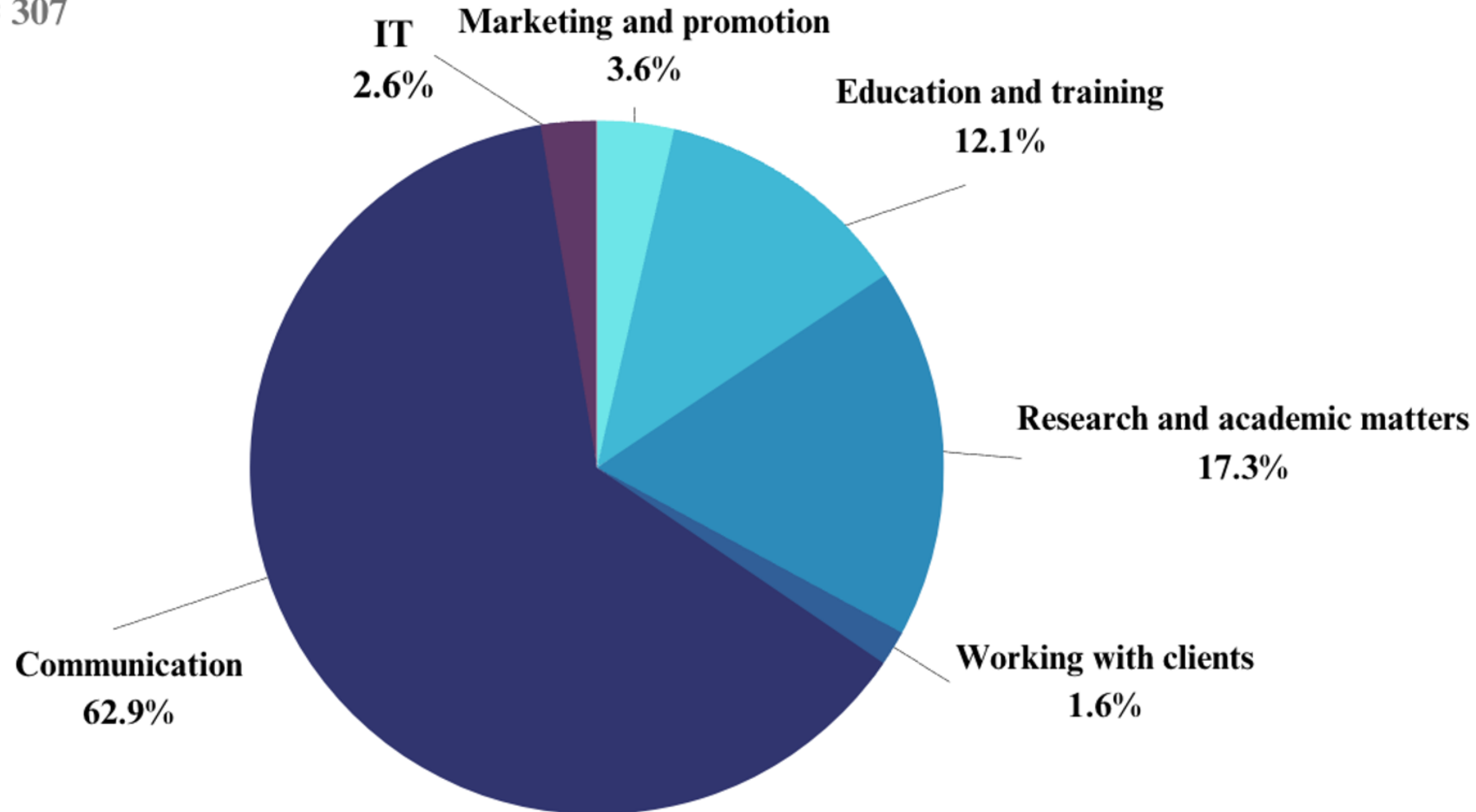
30.1% of young adults who have a job used English daily in the context of their work

daily professional ISLL engagement (i.e., 126 out of 419 young adults who have a job)

Professional ISLL (RQ 1b)



N = 307



Domains of further professional ISLL activities

Professional ISLL (RQ 1b)



Word cloud depicting professional ISLL activities

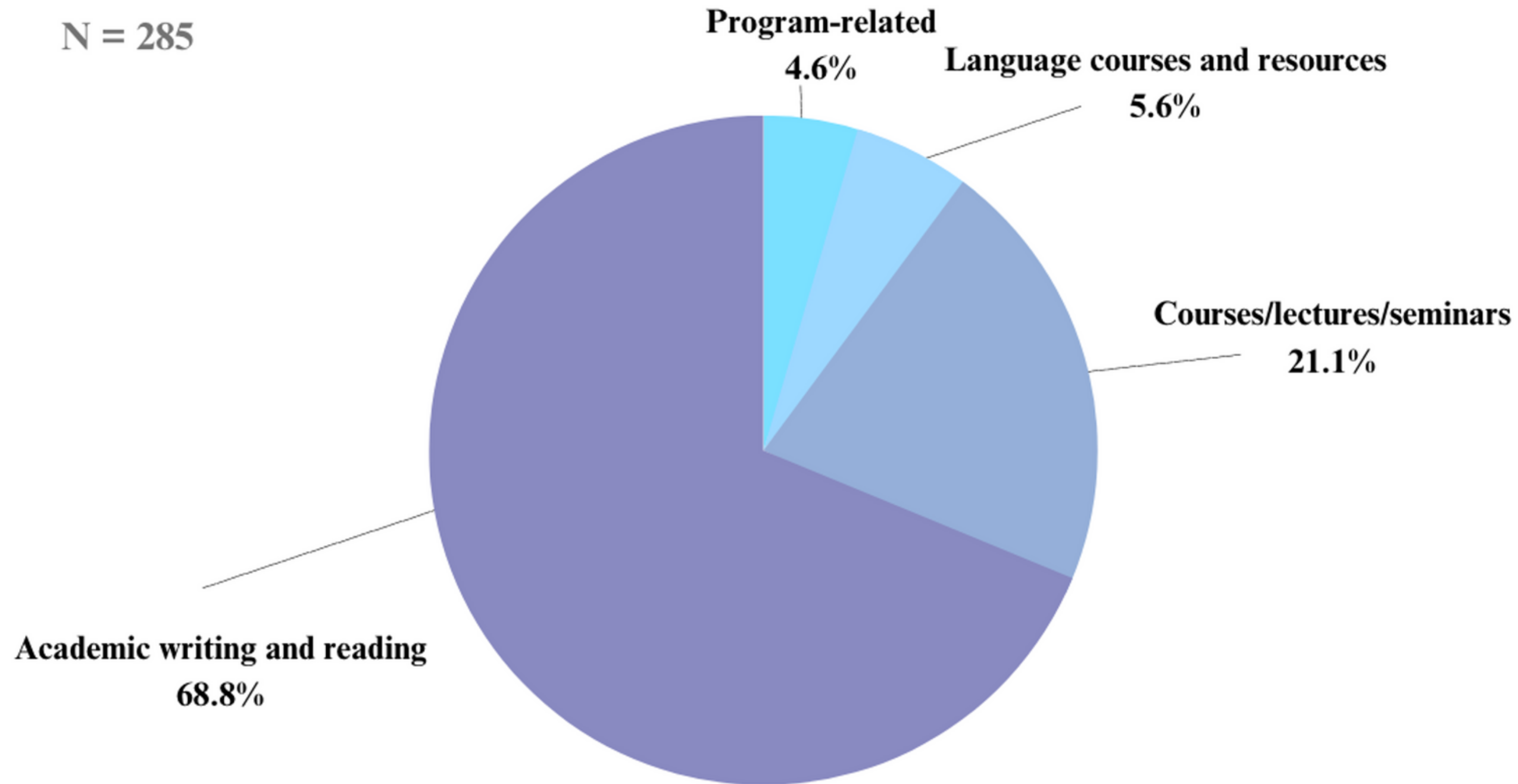
Educational ISLL (RQ 1b)



25.3% of young adults who study used English daily in the context of their study program

daily educational ISLL engagement (i.e., 122 out of 443 young adults who study)

Educational ISLL (RQ 1b)



Domains of educational ISLL activities

Educational ISLL (RQ 1b)



Word cloud depicting educational ISLL activities

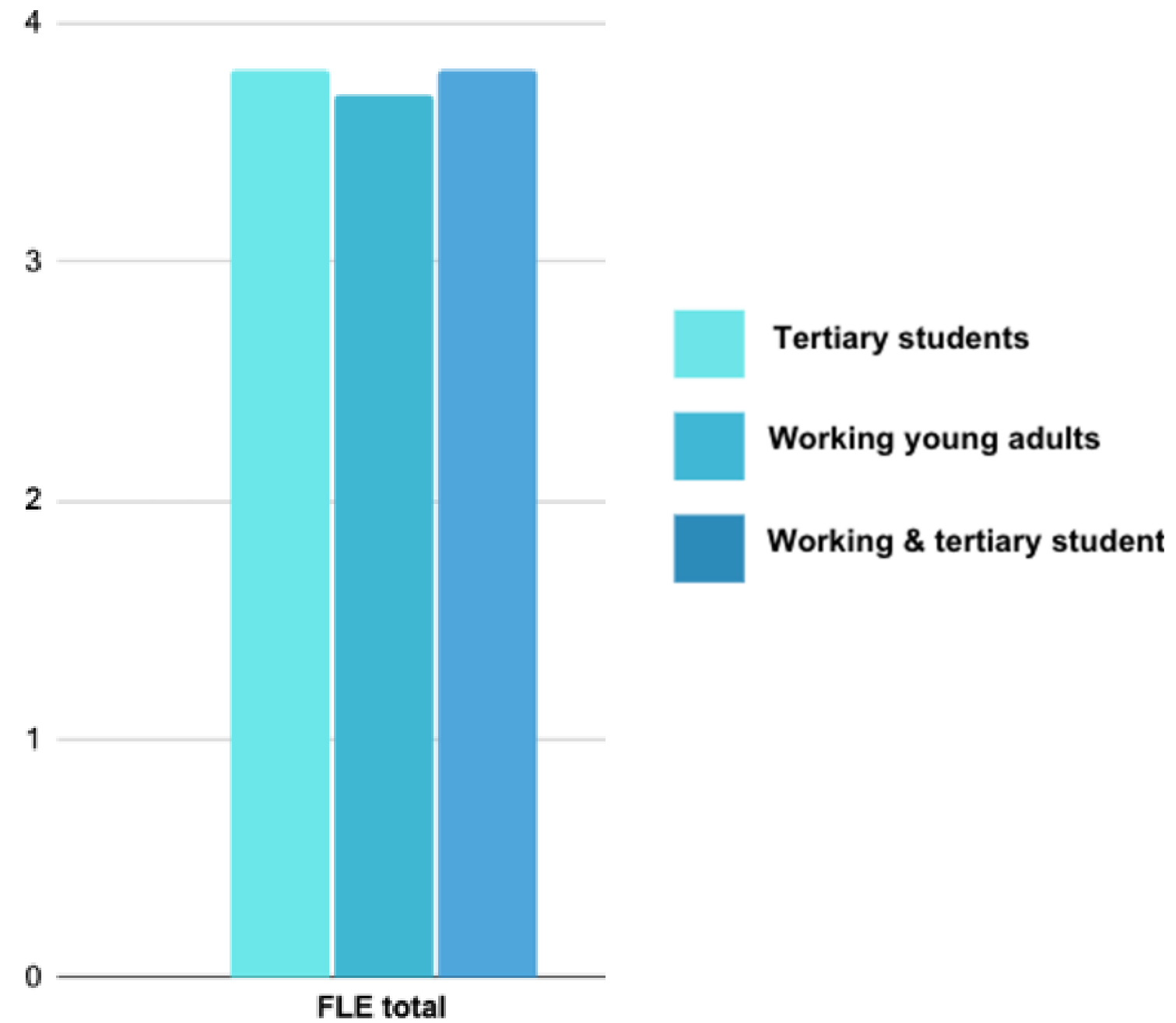
FLE (RQ 2a&b)



Austrian youth in the sample show strong affinity for English

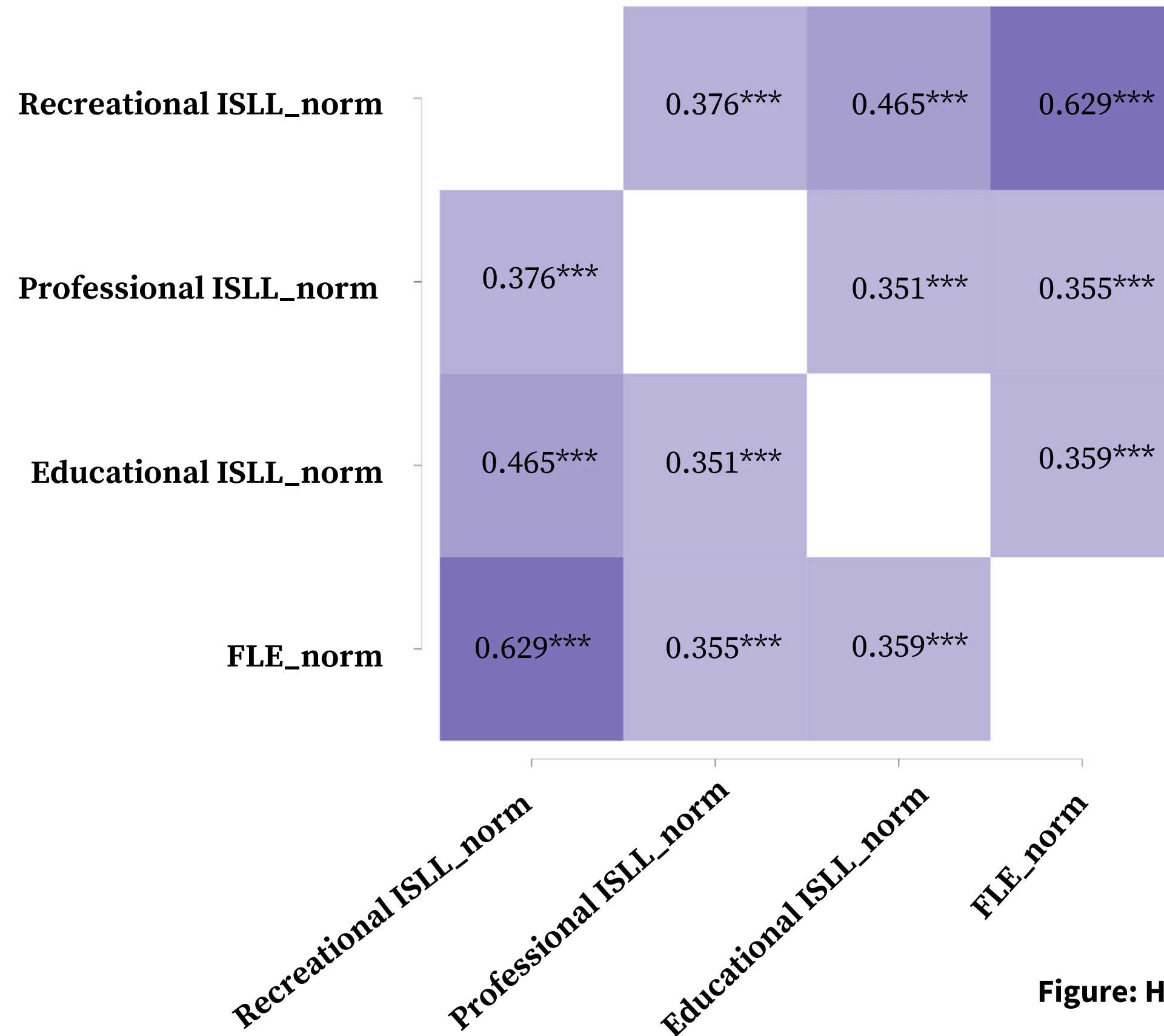
FLE (M = 3.75, SD = .7), low dispersion (IQR=.837)

FLE (RQ 2a&b)



Mean values of FLE total

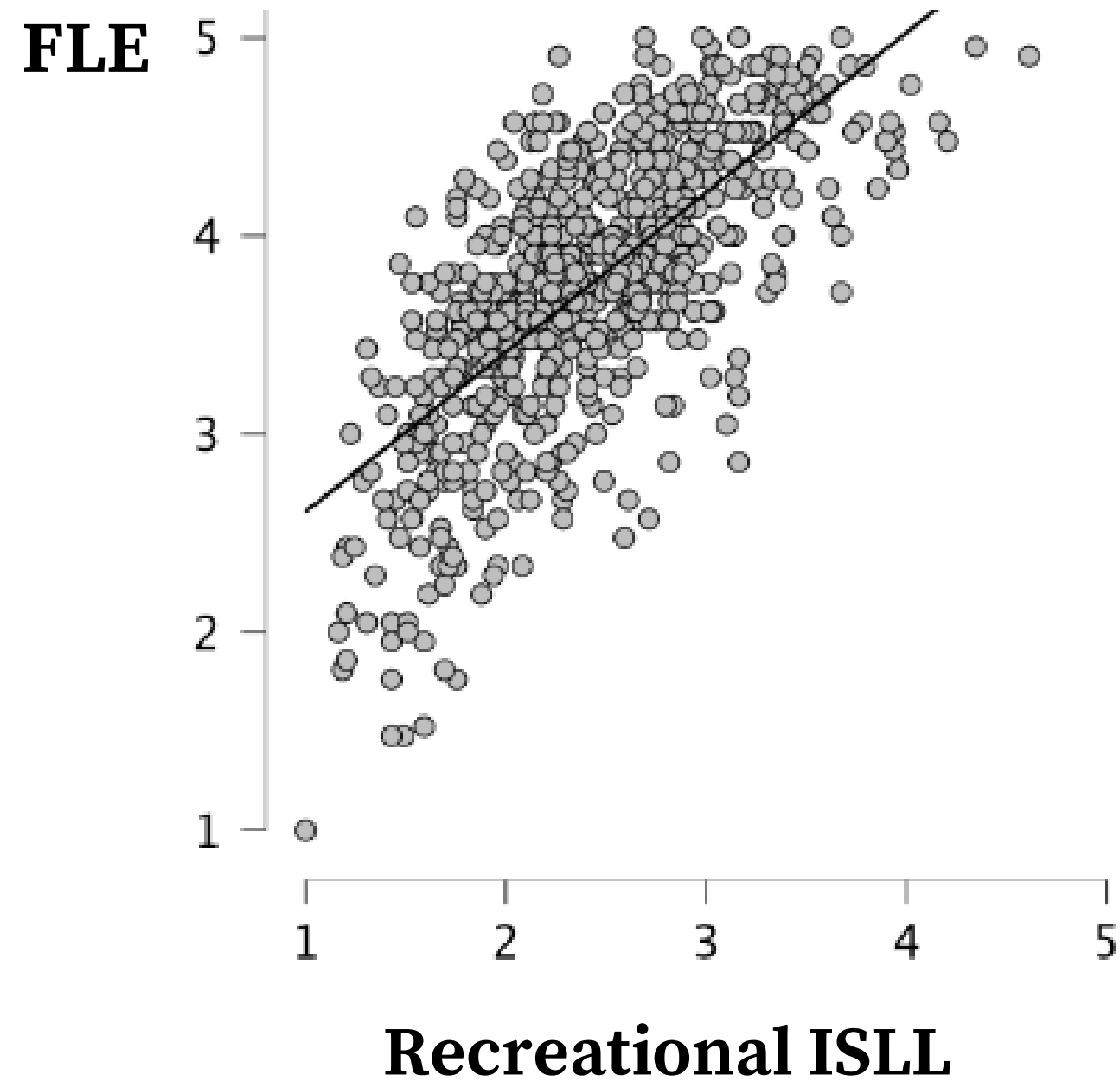
Relationship between ISLL and FLE (RQ 3)



*** <.001

Figure: Heatmap of Spearman correlation coefficients of the scales

Relationship between ISLL and FLE (RQ 3)



Correlation plot of FLE and recreational ISLL



results of univariate regression model

$F(1)=58$
 $p < .001$
 $R^2 = .48$
 $\beta = .8$

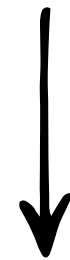


recreational ISLL predicts higher FLE

Relationship between ISLL and FLE (RQ 3)



- professional and educational ISLL also predict FLE



$$F(1)=64.6$$

$$p < .001$$

$$R^2 = .13$$

$$\beta = .18$$

results of univariate
regression model

$$F(1)=69.7$$

$$p < .001$$

$$R^2 = .136$$

$$\beta = .21$$

results of univariate
regression model

- multiple linear regression: only recreational ISLL remained a predictor



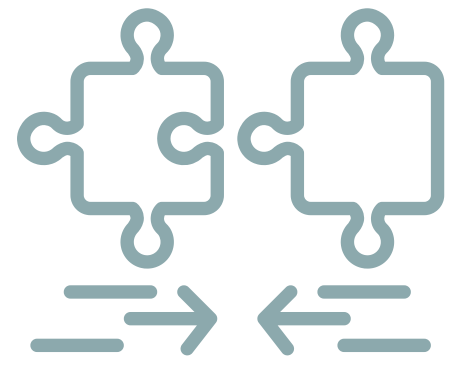
$$F(3) = 61.4$$

$$p < .001$$

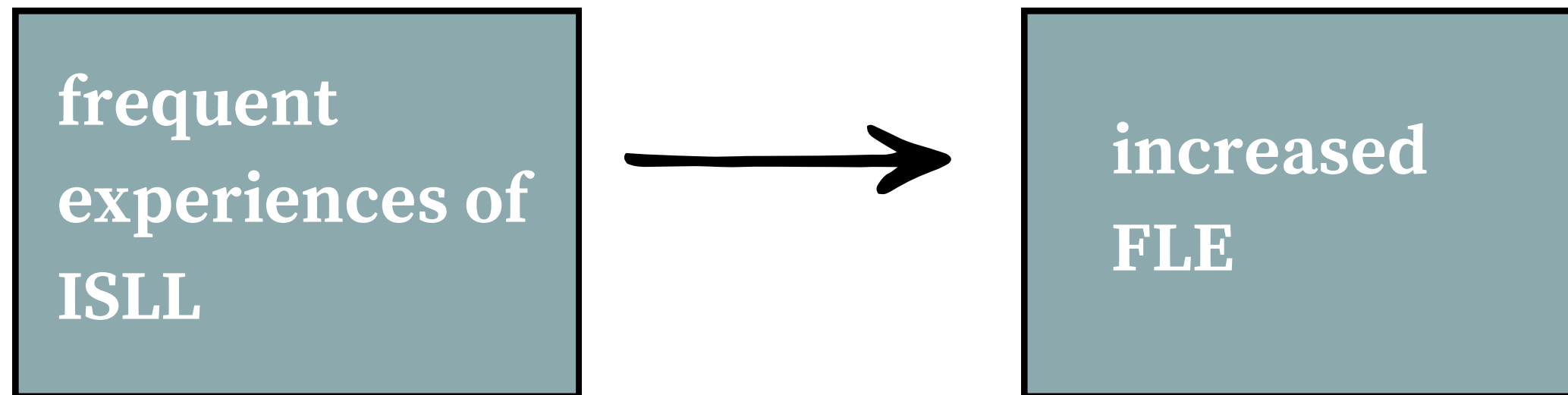
$$R^2 = .48$$

$$\beta = .74$$

Discussion & implications

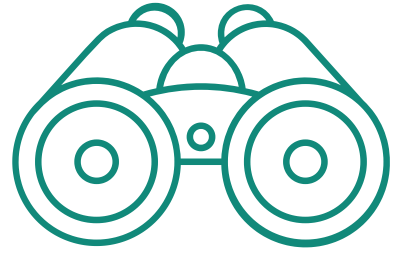


- in accordance with Arndt's (2023) and Fredrickson's (2013) models
- FLE can be added to the list of variables associated with ISLL



- circular relationship between ISLL and FLE?
- high English language engagement \longrightarrow English can be considered as “default additional language” in Austria (Smit & Schwarz, 2019, p. 309)

Limitations & challenges



participants in the sample had higher educational attainment than the Austrian population → self-selection bias?



CFA resulted in mediocre model fits (Brown, 2015)



design and validation of an FLE scale disconnected from EFL

Future research “shopping list”



More qualitative research in both ISLL and FLE:
Interviews, observations, (digital) ethnography

Longitudinal study on ISLL and FLE

Understudied age cohorts, such as pensioners

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Thank you for your attention! 😊

The study



liza.neumeier@gmail.com



[@LiszaNeumeier](https://twitter.com/LiszaNeumeier)



[Lisza-Sophie Neumeier](https://www.linkedin.com/in/Lisza-Sophie-Neumeier)



My contact details

