Gamers, Surfers, Social Media Users: Unpacking the role of interest in English

# Details

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* Literacy and skills
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* Online safety and policy regulation
* Access, inequalities and vulnerabilities

## Sample

Alongside the nationwide outlier sample in the original study (n = 463), the profile was identified in a local sample (N = 5) as a case study (Brevik, 2016). ...The school administered both tests to all 280 students in 11th grade. To identify students with the outlier profile, the school admin- istration identified those who scored below the 20% intervention benchmark in the Norwegian test (n = 40) but 60% or above in the English test (n = 22).... Although one outlier declined participation, most were willing and able to participate (n = 21), comprising 7.8% of the students who par- ticipated in both tests: specifically, boys in vocational studies (n = 16), boys in general studies (n = 1), girls in vocational studies (n = 1), and girls in general studies (n = 3). (Brevik, 2019)

## Implications For Parents About

## Implications For Educators About

* Digital citizenship
* STEM Education
* Professional development

## Implications For Policy Makers About

High-quality content online for children and young people

## Implications For Stakeholders About

# Abstract

Across stages of acquisition, second language (L2) competencies are contingent on the variation among individuals learning the language, in both informal and formal learning contexts. This study investigates a group of outliers whose extreme test scores serve as a foundation to examine them as individuals. The study addresses the outliers' characteristics as good L2 readers but poor first language (L1) readers. Combining quantitative (test results, survey, and language logs) and qualitative (focus groups and interviews) data among 21 adolescents in Norway (aged 16–17 years), the study identifies dimensions of individual language use in L1 Norwegian and L2 English. Findings revealed that they explained their English proficiency by the role of interest and their extensive use of English technology and tools outside school. In‐depth anal- ysis identified three profiles: the Gamer, who spends up to 8 hr daily playing online games while using English mainly; the Surfer, who spends hours on the Internet, searching for authentic language situations, commonly involving English; and the Social Media User, who produces and consumes information in English through social media. Additionally, the Gamers read printed novels voluntarily outside the classroom. This study offers unique perspectives and new directions for future L2 research.

# Outcome

Findings indicate the importance of being proficient English readers across formal and informal contexts for the outliers. Based on their English use outside school, three language profiles were identified: the Gamer, the Surfer, and the Social Media User. ... The study involved a group of stu- dents labelled “outliers” based on their extreme scores on national reading tests. The outliers read markedly better in L2 English than L1 Norwegian, for example, they scored in the 20th percentile in L1 and in or above the 60th percentile in L2. In Norway, poor readers are identified as those who score at or beneath the pre‐set interven- tion benchmark in either reading test (i.e., in the 20th percentile). Thus, because the outliers scored in the 20th percentile in the L1 test, they are per definition considered at risk of dropout due to poor reading skills. By collecting data on L1 and L2 language use, interviewing them in groups and individually, and analysing survey and log responses, this work addresses how L2 competencies are contingent on individual variations. (Brevik, 2019)