M.A. Thesis

"Welcome to America":
Immigrants' perceptions of welcomeness as a factor in L2 acquisition

Ian Montgomery

Supervisor: Dr. Elsa Tragant

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English Studies

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Facultat de Filologia
Departament Llengües Modernes i Estudis Anglesos

Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes, 585
08007 Barcelona, SPAIN
Tel. +34 934 035 679
Fax +34 933 171 249

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Dr/a. Elsa Tragant

Facultat de Filologia
Departament Llengües Modernes i Estudis Anglesos

Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes, 585
08007 Barcelona, SPAIN
Tel. +34 934 035 679
Fax +34 933 171 249

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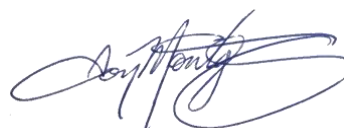| *Name and surnames:*	Ian Patrick Montgomery
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Abstract

The present study seeks to gain new insights into the L2 acquisition process of immigrants learning English in the United States by investigating the hypothesized role of a new construct in SLA: *Welcomeness*. Welcomeness refers to the L2 learner's perceptions of the L2 community's attitudes toward the learner—particularly the extent to which the L2 learner feels respected, accepted, and supported by the L2 community. Drawing on the theoretical framework of Gardner's (1985b) Integrative Motivation complex, the investigation aimed to explore whether Welcomeness is a distinct construct, whether it can be reliably measured, and what its relationship might be to other factors in L2 acquisition. Data were collected via a sociolinguistic questionnaire specifically developed for this study, which was distributed to 29 immigrant English learners in Nashville, Tennessee. Factor analysis and assessment of internal reliability found evidence that Welcomeness is a distinct, measurable construct. Further statistical analysis found a positive relationship between Welcomeness and learners' self-reported English proficiency, as well as their intention to continue residing in the United States for the foreseeable future. The directionality of these relationships, however, was unable to be assessed. The paper concludes with several caveats and ideas for future research into the impact of Welcomeness on immigrants' L2 acquisition.

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They say it takes a village to raise a child, and apparently to write a master's thesis as well.

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Last but far from least, I want to thank the people that really put me here: my family. My mom and dad have always taken it on the chin every time their little boy has slung on his backpack, seeking knowledge and experience in some faraway land. Throughout my journeyings, their love and support has been behind me every step of the way. My family has also given me a deeply personal connection to the work presented here, such that I would like to dedicate this thesis

To my great great-grandparents, Giovanni and Egidia Emmi,
who crossed oceans and language barriers to give greater opportunities
to future generations that they would never know.

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1. Introduction/background

In research on individual differences in second language acquisition (SLA), second language (L2) motivation has proven to be among the most predictive of L2 success, equaled only by language learning aptitude (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003; Lamb, 2017). Within the field of L2 motivation, Gardner's (1985b) construct of Integrative Motivation stands out as one of the most researched by far (Dörnyei, 2009). According to Gardner (2001:1), Integrative Motivation constitutes a "complex of attitudinal, goal-directed, and motivational variables". Per the label *Integrative* Motivation, these variables include the construct of Integrativeness, which refers to the learner's willingness to learn the L2 in order to relate to the L2 community. Many models of motivation in SLA recognize a significant contribution of Integrativeness or a closely related concept (Dörnyei, 2009; Gardner, 2001; Taie & Afshari, 2015).

Of course, all the attention given to Integrative Motivation includes considerable scrutiny. One of the main lines of criticism is what Taie and Afshari (2015:610) identify as an "over-emphasis on Integrativeness"—particularly as it pertains to individual learners' attitudes toward the L2 community. For instance, does Integrativeness emphasize individual learners' attitudes toward the L2 community at the expense of considering the larger societal context (Gu, 2009)? Moreover, is the notion of Integrativeness even applicable in foreign or 'global' contexts (e.g. English as a global lingua franca), where L2 learning may be decontextualized from the L2 community (Dörnyei, 2009)?

One learning situation in which integrative considerations are undoubtedly relevant is that of immigrants, who must often learn the language of the host community (i.e. the L2 community) in order to live comfortably in their new home. However, immigrants' integration into the host community, and accompanying L2 acquisition, is a two-way street: for while the immigrant learner's attitudes toward the L2 community surely matter, so too do the attitudes of the L2 community toward the learner (Schumann, 1986, 2012; cf. Berry, 1997). Despite some theoretical acknowledgement of the latter's importance, it has been little researched. The present study seeks to investigate this possible gap in the research by hypothesizing a new factor in SLA, *Welcomeness*, which seeks to consider the extent to which L2 learners feel valued, respected, and accepted by the L2 community.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Overview of immigrant English learners in the U.S.

The United States has long been characterized as a 'nation of immigrants': a moniker that has scarcely been truer than it is today. The U.S. is currently home to more immigrants than any

other country in the world, with about 45 million inhabitants who were born in another country (López, Bialik and Radford, 2018). A crucial factor in immigrants' integration into U.S. society is their proficiency in English. As Olsen (2000:197) observes, "According to formal school policy, court law, and program design, the educational task facing immigrants in order to become American is a matter of becoming English speaking". Pew Research polls found that 51% of immigrants age 5 and older report themselves to be proficient English speakers (López et al., 2018), and that among U.S. public school students, 9.5% are English language learners (ELLs) (Bialik, Scheller & Walker, 2018). Most of these school-aged ELLs are elementary school students, although in 2015 62% of U.S. school districts had at least some ELLs in high school (Bialik et al., 2018). The most represented ethnic group among immigrants, Hispanics, notably reports the lowest proportion of proficient English speakers overall, at around 32-33% (López et al., 2018).

2.2. Historical perceptions of U.S. immigrants and their acquisition of English
An indispensable aspect the United States' national mythology is its embrace of immigrants. As is proclaimed at the base of the Statue of Liberty, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free… I lift my lamp beside the golden door!" Accordingly, immigration advocacy is prominent among faith-based groups, legal organizations, social service providers, and political actors. A 2018 Gallup poll found support for immigration to be at an all-time high, with 75% of Americans answering that they found immigration to be a "good thing" for the United States today (Brennan, 2018).

Despite much 'melting pot' branding, however, nativist denunciation of immigration is about as much of an American tradition as immigration itself, with immigrants' adoption of English as a perennial point of tension between these two poles of the American psyche. As far back as 1751, before the United States had even coalesced into an independent country, Benjamin Franklin fulminated against the German-speaking population of Pennsylvania as "Palatine Boors" who "by herding together establish their Language and Manners to the Exclusion of ours" (Franklin, 1751). Nearly a century later, following the end of the Mexican-American War with the 1849 Treaty of Hidalgo, many Spanish speakers found themselves on U.S. territory. To their chagrin, Spanish language rights supposedly enshrined by the treaty were routinely ignored (Crawford, 1992). In 1879 California became one of the nation's first 'English-only' states by revising its Constitution to explicitly exclude other languages from government, to the exception of English (Crawford, 1992; Kilty & De Haymes, 2000). In the early twentieth century, a zealous program of Americanization saw the passage of several laws

that made English a requirement for civil and political participation, including U.S. citizenship (Kilty & De Haymes, 2000). It was during this period that then-president Theodore Roosevelt famously denounced "hyphenated Americanism" and in the same speech proclaimed that "an alien who remains here without learning to speak English for more than a certain number of years… should be deported" (Roosevelt, 1916:368).

Beginning in the 1980's, economic marginalization among some Americans prompted them to scapegoat a large new wave of Hispanic immigrants (Zentella, 1997). One of the most salient manifestations of this swelling xenophobia was the emergence of the so-called 'English-only movement' (also called the 'official English movement'), which sought to codify English as the sole language of official communication and governance in the United States. Public revelations of anti-Hispanic bigotry within the English-only movement vindicated concerns it promulgated what Shannon and Escamilla (1999:350) identify as a "nationalistic perspective", in which "immigrants' cultures and particularly their languages are viewed as potential threats to a united American society". Furthermore, the same authors assert that many states' subsequent passage of official English legislation "by comfortable margins" indicates that "a nationalistic ideology regarding language dominates U.S. society" (Shannon & Escamilla, 1999:350).

Anxieties over immigration and immigrants' acquisition of English had, by the early 2000s, crystallized into a full-blown moral panic among many conservative commentators and policymakers (Dowling, Ellison, & Leal, 2012). Ironically, these latest detractors of immigration contradicted the platform of their nativist forebears by popularizing the revisionist myth that in the nineteenth-century, when the proportion of immigration was at its historical watermark, immigrants typically learned English very quickly after their arrival (Dowling et al., 2012; Wilkerson & Salmons, 2008). This strategic amnesia of earlier nativist anxieties was then "exploited as part of an effort to fault contemporary immigrants for purportedly not learning English fast enough" (Wilkerson & Salmons, 2008:259). The malignment of immigrants' willingness to learn English, and an accompanying unease over English's status, have apparently gained considerable ground, with a majority or near-majority of Americans expressing the view that immigrants take an unreasonably long time to learn English (Pew Research Center, 2006). Public debate around immigration has hit a fever pitch in recent years, following the incendiary rhetoric of current U.S. President Donald Trump, both in his run for office and subsequent tenure.

2.3. The 'immigrant experience' and learning English in the United States

Olsen (2000:197) plainly asserts that "No other aspect of immigrant adjustment to life in the United States receives as much programmatic attention or generates as much political focus and controversy as the matter of language". Despite the potentially unwelcoming climate produced by pervasive xenophobia, however, research has shown that nativist anxieties over immigrants' unwillingness to integrate into the English-speaking sphere are largely unfounded. A survey conducted by Dowling et al. (2012) found that Spanish-speaking immigrants highly value English proficiency. Moreover, Dowling et al. (2012) found that among U.S. residents, Spanish-speakers are in fact the most likely to emphasize the importance of English. In the same vein, Mirici, Galleano, and Torres's (2013:143) survey of language attitudes among U.S. immigrant families found that "immigrant families place a high value on bilingualism and multilingualism" in general, including English. Finally, and quite significantly, recent immigrants to the U.S. are acquiring English much faster than in the past, typically within the span of a single generation (Akresh, 2007; Kilty & De Haymes, 2000; Olsen, 2000; cf. Wilkerson & Salmons, 2008).

These trends notwithstanding, immigrants' acquisition of English is typically not an easy process. It can be thwarted at many stages by social or economic barriers and generally requires considerable support from families, communities, and institutions alike. Starting in the home, Mirici et al. (2013) corroborated prior findings that immigrant parents' positive attitudes toward language learning are critical to their children's L2 acquisition. Furthermore, the authors assert that immigrant children are more likely to feel positively about English if they experience adequate cultural support from their schools or have opportunities to use English for socialization (Mirici et al., 2013). Gibson (1997) likewise observes that immigrant students exhibit better academic performance when they can identify with, and are supported by, their families, communities, and peers. Conversely, Olsen (2000) asserts how school-aged ELLs' feelings of shame, embarrassment, and rejection from their peers can constitute a considerable affective obstacle to learning English. Lucas (1997) similarly identifies the relationships between immigrants and the U.S. community—particularly the level of prejudice—as an important factor in immigrants' cultural adjustment, including their acquisition of English. Altogether, it becomes clear that immigrants' acquisition of English can be considerably impacted by the U.S. community's acceptance of immigrant identities.

Recently, the Trump administration's xenophobic posturing and policies have had a detectable effect on U.S. immigrants. More aggressive deportations, coupled with hostile rhetoric that has seeped into the popular discourse, have left many immigrants afraid and

uncertain about their future in the United States. Such anxieties have adversely impacted academic performance and attendance among immigrant students (Gándara & Ee, 2018), compromising the unique effectiveness of the education system in attuning immigrants to the language of the new culture (cf. Berry, 1997). A parallel trend has emerged among adult immigrant English learners. In the wake of President Trump's election, ESL educators in many parts of the United States noted a substantial drop in class attendance (Field, 2017). Growing fears of discrimination, violence, and deportation have led some immigrants to avoid going out in public, including English classes (Field, 2017, Yee, 2017).

2.4. Gardner's socio-educational model and the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery
One of the factors best able to predict successful L2 acquisition is L2 motivation (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003; Lamb, 2017). In L2 motivation research, by far the most examined concept has been that of Integrative Motivation: the central component of Gardner's (1979) seminal socio-educational model of SLA. The preeminent position of Integrative Motivation within the socio-educational model reflects Gardner's (2001:2) assumption that successful L2 acquisition "requires identification with the second language community". This premise has unsurprisingly led some researchers to call into question the applicability of the socio-educational model across all learning situations, particularly those in which L2 learners have no contact with or affinity for the L2 community (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009; Taie & Afshani, 2016). Other models of L2 motivation, such as Dörnyei's (2009) L2 Motivational Self System, have been proposed to address this perceived shortcoming. However, as concerns immigrant L2 learners in particular, the socio-educational model's focus on integration into an L2 community emerges as a particularly appropriate analytical perspective (cf. Bernaus, Masgoret, Gardner & Reyes, 2010; Ianos, Huguet, Janés & Lapresta, 2017; Madariaga, Huguet & Lapresta 2013).

The concept of Integrative Motivation was formulated based upon a plethora of factor analytic studies, many of which returned either a single factor or a complex of three interrelated factors (Gardner, 1985b). Taking this into account, the socio-educational model thus posits that there exists the unitary 'supraconstruct' of Integrative Motivation, which in turn comprises the distinct yet interconnecting constructs of (1) Motivation, (2) Integrativeness, and (3) Attitudes Toward the Learning Situation. In accordance with other research (Dörnyei & Skehan, 2003; Lamb, 2017), the socio-educational model asserts that Motivation is one of two primary predictors of L2 achievement, equaled in importance only by language aptitude (Gardner, 1985b, 2001). Crucially, however, Motivation is influenced by the correlated attitudinal variables of Integrativeness and Attitudes Toward the Learning Situation (Gardner, 2001,

2010), and possibly by other supporting factors as well, such as instrumental motivation (Dörnyei, 2009; Gardner, 2001, 2010). The impact of Integrativeness, according to Gardner (2001:5) derives from the extent to which the L2 learner has "a genuine interest in learning the second language in order to come closer to the language community". Attitudes Toward the Learning Situation theoretically refer to "attitudes toward any aspect of the situation in which the language is learned" (Gardner, 2001:5), although it bears mentioning that this variable is almost exclusively explored in a formal classroom context (Gardner, 1985a, 1985b, 2001, 2010).

The three constructs comprising Integrative Motivation within the socio-educational model were taken from the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), a sociolinguistic questionnaire originally developed by Gardner and Smythe (1975). The AMTB construes Motivation, Integrativeness, and Attitudes Toward the Learning Situation as indices comprised of two or three subconstructs, which all correspond to scales on the AMTB (Gardner, 1985a). **Figure 1** provides a complete schema of the socio-educational model, including these subconstructs. Notably, the AMTB has become one of the most popular and established instruments in the field of language attitudes and L2 motivation, serving as a basis for other sociolinguistic questionnaires that may not even be grounded in the socio-educational model (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010; Ryan, 2009).
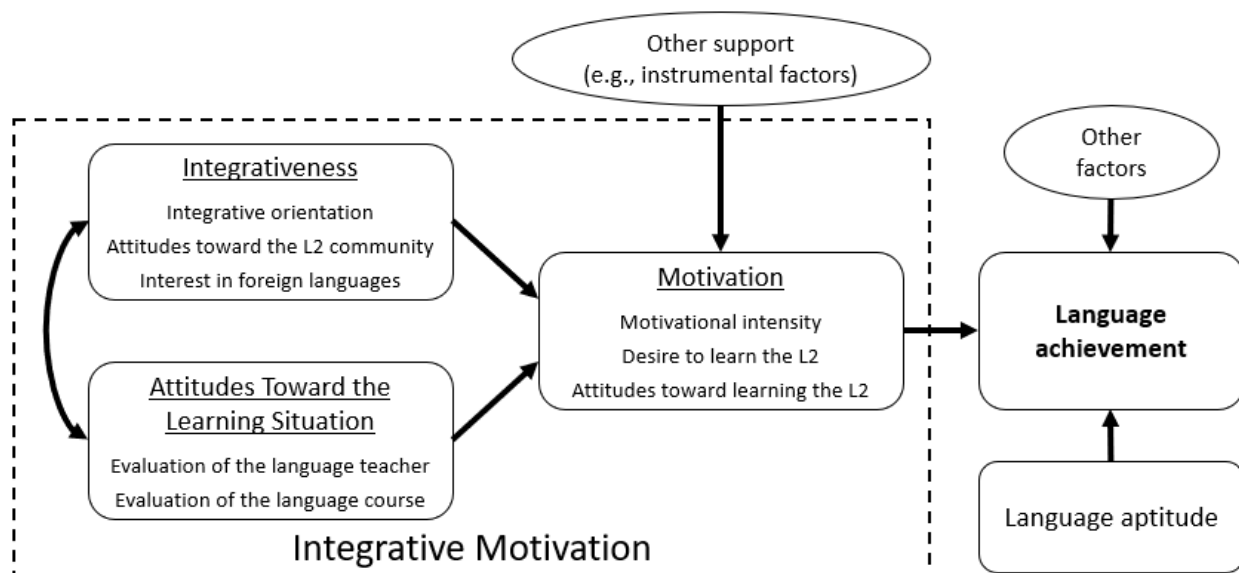

Figure 1 Gardner's socio-educational model of second language acquisition (adapted from Gardner, 2001).
NOTE: 'Language achievement' is an analogous term to 'L2 proficiency'

2.5. Acculturation, language use, and L2 proficiency

A main hypothesis of Gardner's (2010) socio-educational model is that the L2 learner's willingness to adapt to the norms of the L2 community is a leading factor in L2 acquisition: hence the construct of Integrativeness. Gardner (1985b) states that the socio-educational model shares this key concept with Schumann's (1978) acculturation model of SLA, whose construct of *ego permeability* also takes into account the L2 learner's ability to identify and empathize with others, such as the L2 community. This important similarity notwithstanding, a noteworthy difference between Gardner's socio-educational model and acculturation theory is the latter's attention to the fact that integration is not just a question of the acculturating individual's (i.e. the L2 learner's) attitudes, but is rather a two-way street involving the L2 community as well (Schumann, 1986, 2012; cf. Berry, 1997). This is a key point to consider in studying immigrants' L2 acquisition within the L2 (i.e. host) community.

Berry (1997) outlines how the attitudes of the host community play a crucial role in determining the trajectory of an outgroup's acculturation. The most successful acculturation strategy, integration, is characterized by the "presence of *mutual* [emphasis added] positive attitudes" and the "absence of prejudice and discrimination [by the host community]" (Berry, 1997:24). Conversely, Berry (1997:24) affirms that the least successful acculturation strategy, marginalization, involves "rejection by the dominant society", engendering "hostility and much reduced social support". These dynamics have clear consequences for acculturating groups' acquisition of the host community's language. Schumann's acculturation model (1986, 2012) attempts to account for this fact by including the variable of *attitudes*: the idea that if the acculturating group and the host community have positive attitudes toward one another, then interaction is more likely, thus affording L2 learners greater opportunities to acquire the target language. Ellis and Shintani (2013:14) expound on this point of Schumann's acculturation model, stating that L2 learners' interlanguage partly develops according to the "social distance between the learners' social group and the target language community". That said, while many studies examine the impact of L2 learners' attitudes toward the L2 community, there is a dearth of literature examining how the reverse might affect L2 learners' acculturation and L2 acquisition.

Studies involving acculturation by Hammer (2017), Hammer and Dewaele (2015), and Clément, Noels, and Deneault (2001) underline the important relationship between immigrants' acculturation, L2 use, and L2 proficiency. Hammer's (2017) study of Polish immigrants to the United Kingdom revealed that individuals with higher levels of acculturation reported higher frequencies of L2 English use. Hammer and Dewaele (2015) found that among the same

population, acculturation was highly predictive of L2 English proficiency. These studies echo Clément, Noels, and Deneault's (2001) suggestion of a complementary relationship among acculturation, L2 use, and L2 proficiency. Within the context of U.S. immigration, Jia et al. (2002) touched on this relationship with their conclusion that more frequent use of L2 English was associated with higher L2 proficiency. All in all, the literature points to a strong possibility that the interplay of attitudes between L2 learners and the L2 community affects the frequency and nature of their interactions, impacting learners' language use and L2 proficiency.

3. Aim of the Study and Research Questions

The present study seeks to investigate the hypothesized role of a new construct in SLA: *Welcomeness*. Welcomeness refers to the L2 learner's perceptions of the L2 community's attitudes toward the learner: particularly the extent to which the L2 learner feels respected, accepted, and supported by the L2 community. In short, and as its name suggests, Welcomeness seeks to gauge how welcomed the L2 learner feels within the L2 community. A fundamental hypothesis of the Welcomeness factor is that it is particularly important for learning the L2 in situ, as is invariably the case for immigrant L2 learners.

The rationale behind the development of Welcomeness is rooted in many personal observations and conversations that juxtaposed my (the author's) L2 learning experiences against those of fellow learners who were somehow marginalized by the L2 community (c.f. Berry, 1997). I have never sought to acquire a language without living for an extended period within the L2 community, where I have (almost) always been warmly received and given copious praise for my efforts to learn and use the local language. The kindness and encouragement I always felt from the L2 community was, I believe, crucial to bolstering my language learning efforts. However, while living and learning French in France in 2011-2012, I couldn't help but notice how much more of this encouragement I received than my friend from Nigeria. During my 2015-2016 sojourn in Turkey, it was impossible to miss the difference between locals' vocal appreciation of my Turkish versus the indifference or even hostility regularly reported by the Syrian refugees I knew. After my subsequent return to the United States in 2016, I worked with many recent Hispanic immigrants who remarked that Trumpian rhetoric was prompting their communities to turn inward, away from the anglophone mainstream. All in all, it became clear to me that an important driver of my own L2 learning experiences—feeling welcomed and encouraged by the L2 community—could be quite variable across learning situations.

The personal experience that sparked the idea of Welcomeness also finds support in the existing literature. Berry (1997), Schumann (1986, 2012), and Ellis and Shintani (2013) all affirm that acculturation, which necessarily implicates learning the host community's language, is a reciprocal process between the acculturating group and the host community. Berry (1997) and Schumann (1986, 2012) accordingly conclude that the host community's attitudes toward assimilating outgroups is an important factor in the latter's acculturation. Likewise, Ellis and Shintani's (2013) review of sociocultural approaches to SLA takes due account of the L2 community's importance in shaping social conditions that are favorable to L2 learning. Indeed, it is quite intuitive to imagine how an unwelcoming L2 community could demotivate immigrant L2 learners and deprive them of opportunities to use the target language. Olsen (2000) substantiates this idea by referring to Krashen's (1981) conclusion that feelings of fear and shame can stunt L2 acquisition. Hence Olsen's (2000:197) trenchant assertion that "In unwelcoming environments, learning English is painful". On the other hand, Mirici et al. (2013) observe how an L2 community's support and sociability can help immigrant learners to feel more positively about the L2 itself. Based on this established research, Welcomeness presents itself as a theoretically viable construct.

As further indication of its theoretical viability, Welcomeness runs tangential to Gardner's concept of Integrativeness: specifically, its subconstruct of Attitudes toward the L2 community, which refers to how favorably the learner perceives the L2 community. There thus exists an obvious parallel between Attitudes toward the L2 community and Welcomeness, which considers how the learner perceives the L2 community's attitudes toward him- or herself. According to Gardner's measurement criteria for Attitudes toward the L2 community, there may even exist an overlap between the two constructs. On the AMTB, the Attitudes toward the L2 community scale has included items such as "[Members of the L2 community] are considerate of the feelings of others" and "[The L2 community] are a very kind and generous people" (Gardner, 1985a:18; cf. Gardner, 2004a, 2004b). These items closely reflect the concept of Welcomeness, as they consider how the L2 learner perceives the L2 community's disposition toward other people, which naturally includes the learner. Despite an intuitive relationship between Attitudes toward the L2 community and Welcomeness, however, there remains a clear and important difference: feeling welcomed by a community does not necessarily engender positive attitudes toward it, nor do positive attitudes toward a community necessarily translate into a warm welcome therein. As such, any apparent overlap might not represent a conceptual redundancy so much as a confoundment, such that the recognition of Welcomeness as a distinct factor in SLA may constitute a refinement of Attitudes toward the

L2 community. However, no study to date has specifically considered a construct such as Welcomeness, nor used a questionnaire to delimit and measure it.

The purpose of the present study, therefore, is to investigate whether Welcomeness emerges as a distinct construct that can be reliably measured, and to determine its relationship (if any) to other established factors within SLA. To do so, immigrant English learners in the United States were asked to fill out a sociolinguistic questionnaire that included a hypothesized Welcomeness scale among other quantitative measures of motivation, attitudes, language use, and language proficiency, as well as various categories of biodata. As such, the present study seeks to explore the following research questions:

1. Is the construct of Welcomeness distinct from Gardner's construct of Attitudes toward the L2 community, and if so, can it be reliably measured by the questionnaire developed for this study?

2. How is Welcomeness related to other factors in L2 acquisition that were quantified by the questionnaire (Motivation, Integrativeness, Instrumental – prevention orientation, L2 use, L1 use, L2 proficiency, Level of bilingualism, Length of residence in the L2 community, and Age of arrival in the L2 community)?

3. Do categorical differences assessed by the questionnaire (in Previous L2 learning experience and Intention to stay in the L2 community) correspond to significantly different levels of reported Welcomeness?

4. Methodology

4.1. Instrument

The sole data collection instrument in this study was a sociolinguistic questionnaire, composed of four parts: (1) Likert-type scales relating to Welcomeness and several other constructs in L2 motivation, (2) frequency of English and first language (L1) use, (3) self-rated proficiency in English and L1(s), and (4) biodata. **Table 1** provides a breakdown of the questionnaire's components, while the English version of the questionnaire can be found in its entirety in **Appendix A**.

The questionnaire was developed specifically for this study in several stages, largely in accordance with the parameters and advice given by Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010). Once deciding to use a sociolinguistic questionnaire to investigate the hypothesized construct of

Part and focus	Scales/indices and items	Type of scale/item

Part 1: Motivation, Attitudes, and Welcomeness	• 7 scales, comprising 36 items total:
	
	Welcomeness (8 items)
	
	Integrativeness index (Gardner, 2004a, 2004b):
	   Attitudes toward the L2 community (8 items)
	   Integrative orientation (4 items)
	
	Motivation index (Gardner, 2004a, 2004b):
	   Motivational intensity (4 items)
	   Desire to learn English (4 items)
	   Attitudes toward learning English (4 items)
	
	Instrumentality – prevention (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010) (4 items)
		5-point Likert-type scale measuring agreement

Part 2: Language use	• 2 scales: *Frequency of English use* and *Frequency of L1(s) use* • 10 items (modelled after Hammer, 2010) describing different, routine social contexts. For each item/context, participants indicated their frequency of English use and their frequency of L1(s) use.	5-point scale measuring frequency
Part 3: Self-rated language proficiency	• 2 scales: *Proficiency in English* and *Proficiency in L1(s)* • 2 items: one self-rating for each scale	10-point scale measuring proficiency
Part 4: Biodata	• 8 items	Questions on age, sex, occupation, country of origin, etc.

Table 1 Breakdown of the questionnaire's components.

Welcomeness, it was then necessary to select several other relevant constructs with established scales for use on questionnaires. Five constructs/scales were thus chosen from Gardner's (1985b, 2001, 2010) Integrative Motivation complex: (1) *Attitudes toward the L2 community*, (2) *Integrative orientation*, (3) *Motivational intensity*, (4) *Desire to learn English*, and (5) *Attitudes toward learning English*. The reason for choosing these constructs is twofold. First, it is theoretically valuable to situate Welcomeness within the established framework of Integrative Motivation, as it holds an especial theoretical relevance to immigrant L2 learners. Attitudes toward the L2 community and Integrative orientation both index to the construct of Integrativeness, while the other three constructs index to Motivation (see **Figure 1**). Second,

and on a more practical level, the constructs comprising Integrative Motivation all correspond to established scales on the AMTB (1985a, 2004a, 2004b), thus allowing for easy adaptation to the current questionnaire. In addition to these constructs, the *Instrumentality – prevention* scale was also adapted from Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010). The purpose of including Instrumentality – prevention was to represent an instrumental factor, which is a possible, albeit peripheral, contributor to Motivation within in the socio-educational model (see **Figure 1**). Furthermore, in notable contrast to Gardner's own (2004a, 2004b) Instrumental orientation scale, the items adapted from Dörnyei and Taguchi's (2010) Instrumental – prevention scale consider other people's attitudes toward the learner. It is therefore particularly appropriate to explore the relationship between Instrumental – prevention and Welcomeness, as they both consider other people's attitudes toward the learner.

Based on the fundamental hypothesis that Welcomeness is a theoretically viable construct, a hypothesized Welcomeness scale was developed to measure it. Items on the hypothesized Welcomeness scale were inspired by the author's personal experience as well as the experiences of other L2 learners known to author, thus echoing Dörnyei and Taguchi's (2010:40) remark that "The best items are often the ones that sound as if they had been said by someone". Length considerations did not allow most scales to be adapted to the questionnaire in their entirety. Instead, individual items were selected from these scales based on their relevance to immigrant L2 learners, sometimes with slightly modified wording (e.g. changing "study English" to "learn English" to allow for the possibility that some participants may be acquiring English without a deliberate study regimen). In keeping with Dörnyei and Taguchi's (2010) guidelines, each scale nevertheless includes a minimum of 4 items. Only the Attitudes toward the L2 community scale was adapted in full, so as to maximize comparability between it and the hypothesized Welcomeness scale: both scales have 8 items each. Of the 36 total items in part one, 8 are negatively worded. See **Appendix B** for a list of items organized by scale/index, including the original version of items whose wording was modified. Finally, items were carefully ordered on the questionnaire to engage the participant at the beginning and then alternate among the various scales and negatively-worded items.

Parts two and three of the questionnaire ask participants about their language use and proficiency, respectively. Both the rationale and the format for the section on language use derived from Hammer (2017), who found a relationship between acculturation levels and L2 use. Per Hammer's model, the questionnaire presents participants with a variety of routine social situations and asks them to separately indicate their frequency of using English in such situations as well as their frequency of using their L1(s). Part three asks participants to self-rate

both their English proficiency and proficiency in their L1(s). Gollan, Weissberger, Runnquist, Montoya, and Cera (2012) affirm the validity of self-ratings of proficiency, which also lend themselves quite handily to a questionnaire format. That said, the proficiency scale in part three is original to this questionnaire. Finally, part four of the questionnaire closes with a short section on participants' biodata, which include age, sex, occupation, country of origin, length of residence (LoR) in the U.S., whether the respondent intends to stay in the U.S. for the foreseeable future, languages spoken and the order of their acquisition, and household composition.

The original English version of the questionnaire was also translated into Spanish, as the likely majority of participants would be L1 Spanish speakers. This process was done in several steps, again in accordance with the recommendations provided by Dörnyei and Taguchi (2010). First, a native speaker of Spanish produced a translation of the questionnaire, which the researcher then presented to two different L1 Spanish speakers who grew up in immigrant households in the United States. The questionnaire language was revised according to their input, with the goal of ensuring maximal comprehensibility across Latin American dialects of Spanish. Next, a native English speaker back translated the revised Spanish version of the questionnaire into English. The researcher compared the original English questionnaire with this back translated version and judged them to be substantively similar. Finally, the English and Spanish versions were piloted among a total of nine L2 English speakers who had lived in the United States. Due to the author's limited ability to recruit participants, piloting was not able to be conducted among immigrants currently learning English in the U.S. That said, the pilot group did not report any issues with questionnaire's comprehensibility and indicated that it took between twenty and twenty-five minutes to complete.

4.2. Context and participants

Data collection took place in Nashville, the capital of the state of Tennessee, and one of the largest cities in the southeastern United States. Several relatively large immigrant communities have established themselves there, the most prominent of which are Hispanic (mostly Mexican and Central American), Kurdish, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laotian, Arab, and Somali. Because of this, there are a number of organizations in the area that offer aid and advocacy services specifically for immigrants. In July 2019, Nashville made national headlines for community efforts, led by immigrants and native-born Americans alike, to thwart deportation raids ordered by the Trump administration (Farzan, 2019). The mostly pro-immigrant attitudes on display in Nashville are reflective of the city's political leanings. While Tennessee overwhelmingly voted

for Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential election, he received only 36% of the vote in Davidson County, which is analogous to metropolitan Nashville ("Tennessee election results 2016", 2017). Nevertheless, the xenophobic attitudes that characterize most areas of Tennessee can still be readily found within its capital.

The questionnaire was completed by 29 adults (17 females and 12 males) who have immigrated to Nashville, Tennessee in the United States. Participants were recruited from two local community organizations: the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition (TIRRC) and YWCA Nashville. Participants at TIRRC were enrolled in English classes, while those from the YWCA were studying for the HiSET (High School Equivalency Test), an exam for individuals pursuing a high school equivalency diploma.

Participants were from fourteen different countries, representing four broad geocultural regions: Latin America (Mexico, Honduras, Peru, Guatemala, Ecuador, El Salvador, Venezuela, and Colombia), the Middle East (Kurdistan, Iraq, Egypt, and Syria), Sub-Saharan Africa (Somalia), and East Asia (Vietnam). The overwhelming majority of participants, however, were from Latin America. Participants' ages ranged from 21 to 63 and had spent anywhere from four months to thirty years in the U.S. Participants' ages of arrival (AoA) to the U.S. were calculated post hoc by subtracting LoR from their current age, yielding a range between 8 and 58. See **Table 2** for a summary of participant characteristics.

Geocultural group	N	Gender		Age		AoA		LoR (years)	
		Female	Male	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Latin American	22	13	9	39.5	10.1	28.5	12.0	11.0	8.8
Middle Eastern	4	3	1	38.0	16.7	34.3	16.5	3.6	2.8
Sub-Saharan African	2	1	1	41.5	9.8	24.1	2.3	17.3	7.6
East Asian	1	1	0	21.0	0	17.0	0	4.0	0
Total	*29*	*18*	*11*	*39.5*	*11.0*	*25.9*	*12.2*	*8.9*	*8.5*

Table 2 Participant characteristics.
NOTE: AoA = Age of arrival [to the U.S], LoR = Length of residence [in the U.S.]

Participants worked in a wide variety of professions, which mostly involved services or a stay-at-home function, but also included student, faith leader, civil engineer, musician, and others. Participants reported many different types of household compositions, including

multigenerational homes, parent-child families, living with roommates, and living alone. Very few participants had had any kind of previous language learning experience before immigrating to the United States (n = 4).

4.3. Procedure

The researcher, who is based in Catalonia, made contact with two teachers (hereafter *collaborators*) at TIRRC and YWCA Nashville, who agreed to distribute the questionnaire among their students. Because limited class time could not be spared to complete the questionnaire, it was distributed on a voluntary basis for students to take home and fill out. The collaborators were asked to give the Spanish version of the questionnaire to L1 Spanish speakers in order to assure maximum comprehension among participants; all other participants filled out the English version. Finally, the researcher also requested that collaborators try to have participants fill out the questionnaire a second time (T2), at least two weeks after the first time (T1), in order to ascertain test-retest reliability.

Upon volunteering for the study, participants thus received from collaborators both a copy of the questionnaire and a consent form (see **Appendix D** for the English version of the consent form), either in Spanish (n = 17) or English (n = 12), to fill out on their own time. Participants then returned the completed questionnaires and consent forms to the collaborators, who finally scanned them to the researcher. Approximately one month after T1, the collaborator at YWCA Nashville was able to collect 7 T2 questionnaires, representing roughly one quarter of the total sample size.

5. Data analysis and results

5.1. Data preparation and descriptive statistics

Questionnaire data were first optically read and then entered into SPSS, excluding ambiguous responses. Responses to negatively-worded items were subsequently inverted. On part one, there were no more than three missing responses for any given item, indicating that none of the items were problematic. Part one was completed in its entirety for 29 of the 36 total cases (29 questionnaires at T1, 7 at T2). Data for part two, on language use, suffered considerably from missing values, with 25 cases completing the section in its entirety. Notably, the participants from TIRRC filled out this section much more successfully (13 cases out of 15 cases were complete) than their counterparts at the YWCA (only 12 out of 23 cases were complete). This curious disparity aside, the number of missing values on part two suggests that the directions and/or examples were inadequate. Part three, on language proficiency, was completely filled

out in 35 of 36 total cases. Only questionnaires completed at T1 were used in analysis, except for the assessment of test-retest reliability in section 5.2.

All items were examined for response frequencies, means, and standard deviations. Items indexing to Motivation and Integrativeness tended to elicit responses on the high end of the 5-point scale (Motivation mean = 4.59, Integrativeness mean = 4.38), but the responses tended more toward the upper-middle for the items comprising the Instrumentality – prevention (M = 3.49) and hypothesized Welcomeness (M = 3.50) scales. Reponses also tended toward the middle of the 5-point scale for English use (M = 3.08) and L1 use (M = 3.55). On the 10-point scale of language proficiency, responses were fairly centrical for English (M = 5.66) and predictably high for participants' L1(s) (M = 9.51). See **Appendix B** for by-item as well as scale/index descriptives for parts one, two, and three of the questionnaire.

5.2 Research Question 1: Is the construct of Welcomeness distinct from Gardner's construct of Attitudes toward the L2 community, and if so, can it be reliably measured by the questionnaire developed for this study?

Pursuant to Research Question 1, the first analytical task was to determine whether the construct of Welcomeness is distinct from Gardner's construct of Attitudes toward the L2 community, and if so, whether Welcomeness can be reliably measured by the instrument developed for this study. To this end, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted using the hypothesized Welcomeness scale and the Attitudes toward the L2 community scale. More variables could not be justifiably included in the EFA because of the small sample size. According to Comrey and Lee (1992), less than 50 cases is a very poor sample size for factor analysis; however, the current sample of 29 cases and the limitation to two variables at least conforms to the same authors' 'bare minimum' standard of 10 cases per variable. Factors were extracted via principal component analysis (PCA) and rotated using varimax.

Prior to analysis, the factorability of the 16 items was confirmed by a Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin value of .583 (above the acceptable threshold of .5) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, which proved statistically significant ($p < .001$). The items thus underwent PCA. Subsequent interpretation of the scree plot and the corresponding factors pointed to a two-factor solution, according to which a second iteration of PCA was run. The results showed low factor loadings ($< .4$) for items 17 and 20 from the hypothesized Welcomeness scale and item 28 from the Attitudes toward the L2 community scale, so they were dropped from further analysis. Next, both factors' internal reliability was assessed. An analysis of Cronbach's alpha suggested that

item 16 from the Attitudes toward the L2 community scale should also be deleted from further analysis.

A third iteration of PCA was thus carried out with the remaining 12 items, resulting in two neatly distinct factors that together explained 58.5% of the common variance. Item groupings were largely reflective of their original scales: Factor 1 was composed of 6 items from the hypothesized Welcomeness scale (items 1, 7, 14, 24, 31 and 36) and 2 items from the Attitudes toward the L2 community scale (items 2 and 34), while Factor 2 was composed of 4 items from the Attitudes toward the L2 community scale (items 9, 11, 22, and 26). **Table 3** illustrates factor loadings. Additionally, both factors demonstrated internal reliability: Factor 1 obtained an alpha level of .86 (well above the acceptable threshold of .7) and Factor 2 obtained an alpha level of .78.

The composition of the factors aligns with the theoretical rationale for this study. Factor 1 mostly corresponded to the hypothesized Welcomeness scale and Factor 2 corresponded to Gardner's original Attitudes toward the L2 community scale. Moreover, the two items from the Attitudes toward the L2 community scale that figured into Factor 1 appropriately conform to the concept of Welcomeness, as they refer to the L2 learner's perception of how the L2 community treats others (item 2 states that "People from the U.S. are very sociable and kind" and item 34 states that "Most Americans are so friendly and easy to get along with, we are fortunate to have them friends"). Factor 1 can thus be regarded as a refined version of the hypothesized Welcomeness scale and will hereafter be referred to as the *refined Welcomeness* scale. Correspondingly, Factor 2 will henceforth be referred to as the *refined Attitudes toward the L2 community* scale. All subsequent analyses will use these refined scales rather than the hypothesized Welcomeness scale or the original Attitudes toward the L2 community scale adapted from Gardner (2004a, 2004b).

A final measure of the refined Welcomeness scale's internal reliability was taken by checking test-retest reliability. To do this, a total Welcomeness score was calculated for each participant by adding together values for each item on the refined Welcomeness scale, producing a possible score range of 0 to 40. For the participants who completed the questionnaire twice (n = 7), total Welcomeness scores at T1 and T2 were then correlated so as to obtain a test-retest reliability coefficient. The resultant correlation coefficient indicated excellent test-retest reliability (Pearson's r = .915). To confirm this result, an independent samples t-test was then conducted to compare mean Welcomeness scores at T1 and T2. The test failed to reveal a significant difference, $t(9)$ = .028, $p > .05$. It can therefore be said that the refined Welcomeness scale displays high test-retest reliability.

Item	Factor 1 (refined Welcomeness)	Factor 2 (refined Attitudes toward the L2 community)
36. I feel like the U.S. values me. (**WEL**)	.831	
14. People from the U.S. have been helpful as I adjust to life here. (**WEL**)	.814	
24. People from the U.S. respect me as an equal. (**WEL**)	.755	
2. People from the U.S. are very sociable and kind. (**L2COM**)	.742	
34. Most Americans are so friendly and easy to get along with, we are fortunate to have them friends. (**L2COM**)	.680	
31. It is difficult to form relationships with people who are from the U.S. (**WEL**)	.657	
7. I feel like people from the U.S. look down on my culture. (**WEL**)	.601	
1. The U.S. is a welcoming place for immigrants. (**WEL**)	.587	
22. I would like to know more people from the U.S. (**L2COM**)		.944
9. I wish I could have many friends from the U.S. (**L2COM**)		.891
26. The more I get to know people from the U.S., the more I like them. (**L2COM**)		.771
11. If I had no contact with English-speaking Americans, it would be a pity. (**L2COM**)		.561

Table 3 Factor loadings (Pattern Matrix) for items comprising the Welcomeness (WEL) and Attitudes toward the L2 community (L2COM) scales, based on exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation ($n = 29$).
NOTE: Factor loadings < .4 are not shown.

In sum, the results of the preceding analyses provide an affirmative answer to Research Question 1. EFA revealed a distinct factor mostly comprised of items hypothesized to measure Welcomeness, along with two more items that conceptually conform to Welcomeness. The resultant refined Welcomeness scale also demonstrated an adequate alpha level as well as high test-retest reliability, establishing an overall robust internal reliability. Thus, it can be concluded that Welcomeness is a distinct construct from Gardner's Attitudes toward the L2 community, and that Welcomeness can also be reliably measured by the questionnaire used in this study.

5.3 Research Question 2: How is Welcomeness related to other factors in L2 acquisition that were quantified by the questionnaire (Motivation, Integrativeness, Instrumental – prevention orientation, L2 use, L1 use, L2 proficiency, Level of bilingualism, Length of residence in the L2 community, and Age of arrival in the L2 community)?

To answer Research Question 2, the next phase of analysis aimed to determine whether Welcomeness bears any relationship to other factors in L2 acquisition that were quantitatively measured on the questionnaire: Motivation, Integrativeness, Instrumental – prevention, English use, L1 use, self-rated English proficiency, Level of bilingualism, Length of residence in the L2 community, and Age of arrival to the L2 community.

To begin, it was first necessary to assess the reliability of the other Likert-type scales/indices to be used in analysis, namely the Integrativeness index (comprised of the refined Attitudes toward the L2 community and Integrative orientation scales), the Motivation index (comprised of the Motivational intensity, Attitudes toward learning English, and Desire to learn English scales), and the Instrumental – prevention scale. After excluding item 4 from the Integrativeness index due to zero variance in the responses, an alpha of .76 was obtained. A more reliable version of the Motivation index was attained by deleting items 5, 12, 21, and 35, thus yielding an alpha level of .72. Finally, the Instrumental – prevention scale proved adequately reliable in its original form with an alpha level of .70. These improvements to internal reliability yielded the final version of each scale/index to be used in further analysis, alongside the refined Welcomeness scale. **Appendix C** shows alpha levels, descriptives, and component items for the final version of each scale/index.

Next, several new variables for analysis were computed. Total scores for Motivation, Integrativeness, Instrumental – prevention, English use, and L1(s) use were all calculated by adding up the values of each component item. Each participant's Level of bilingualism was also calculated from the difference between their self-rated English proficiency and self-rated L1(s) proficiency, which was then converted into a 1 to 10 scale (with 1 indicating total L1(s) dominance and 10 indicating perfectly balanced bilingualism: see **Appendix B** for more information). Finally, each participant's AoA to the United States was calculated by subtracting their LoR from their age.

To test whether any relationship exists between Welcomeness and other factors in L2 acquisition, a Spearman correlation was run between them, the results of which are shown in **Table 4**. The nonparametric Spearman correlation was chosen because several of the variables under analysis were not normally distributed (i.e. Welcomeness, Motivation, Integrativeness, and LoR). Moreover, the rank-based Spearman correlation also holds the advantage of being

	WEL	MOT	INT	INSTR	EnUSE	L1USE	EnPRO	BILNG	LoR	AoA
WEL	1	-.277	.199	.194	.106	-.331	.416*	.312	.066	-.130
MOT		1	.289	.228	.092	.129	-.222	-.262	.020	-.065
INT			1	.611**	.061	-.153	.255	.200	.174	.101
INSTR				1	.010	.080	.212	.163	.342	-.201
EnUSE					1	-.340	.597**	.618**	.417*	-.372
L1USE						1	-.362	-.417	-.256	.175
EnPRO							1	.954**	.624**	-.464*
BILNG								1	.661**	-.433*
LoR									1	-.543**
AoA										1

Table 4 Spearman correlation coefficients between Welcomeness (WEL), Motivation (MOT), Integrativeness (INT), Instrumental – prevention (INSTR), English use (EnUSE), L1 use (L1USE), self-rated English proficiency (EnPRO), Level of bilingualism (BILNG), Length of residence in the U.S. (LoR), and Age of arrival to the U.S. (AoA).
NOTE: $* p \le .05$, $** p \le .01$

able to identify any monotonic relationship, which may not be strictly linear. The results of the Spearman correlation showed that Welcomeness has a moderately positive relationship to self-rated English proficiency ($r_s = .416$, p < .05), but not to any other factors in L2 acquisition.

To further substantiate the relationship between Welcomeness and self-rated English proficiency, an independent samples t-test was next conducted in order to compare mean English proficiency between participants who reported relatively higher versus relatively lower levels of Welcomeness. To compare groups with differential levels of reported Welcomeness, participants' mean Welcomeness scores were calculated and then used to perform a median split (Mdn = 3.62). To provide a higher contrast between groups, the five cases scoring at median were excluded from analysis, and three additional cases had to be excluded due to missing values for Welcomeness. This yielded a High Welcomeness group (n = 11) and a Low Welcomeness group (n =10). The independent samples t-test supported the results of the Spearman correlation, showing that the High Welcomeness group reported higher levels of English proficiency (M = 6.45, SD = 2.29) than the Low Welcomeness group (M = 4.30, SD = 1.99), $t(19) = -2.33$, $p < .05$.

Thus, of the nine L2 acquisition factors under analysis, it appears that Welcomeness is related only to self-rated English proficiency.

5.4 Research Question 3: Do categorical differences assessed by the questionnaire (in Previous L2 learning experience and Intention to stay in the L2 community) correspond to significantly different levels of reported Welcomeness?

Research Question 3 sought to determine if participants' categorical differences, as assessed by the questionnaire, correspond to significantly different levels of Welcomeness. As such, the

first preanalytical task was to examine biodata from part four of the questionnaire and create binary categorical variables for Intention to stay in the U.S. for the foreseeable future (yes/no, maybe) and Previous L2 learning experience (yes/no). Three participants had to be excluded from analysis due to a missing value for Welcomeness, yielding 26 total cases for analysis.

To compare group differences in levels of reported Welcomeness, two nonparametric Mann-Whitney U-tests were conducted with mean Welcomeness scores as the test variable versus two categorical differences as grouping variables: Previous L2 learning experience and Intention to stay. **Table 5** shows a summary of results.

Grouping Variable	Categories	N	Mean rank	Mdn	U	z	p
Previous L2 learning experience	Yes	4	20.00	4.37	18.00	-1.85	.063
	No	22	12.32	3.62			
Intention to stay	Yes	19	15.74	3.75	24.00	-2.46	.014*
	No/maybe	7	7.43	3.25			

Table 5 Summary of results for Mann-Whitney U-tests comparing mean Welcomeness scores among categorical differences in Previous L2 learning experience and Intention to stay.
NOTE: * $p \leq .05$

The Mann-Whitney U-tests showed that categorical differences in Intention to stay corresponded to significantly different levels of reported Welcomeness. Participants intending to stay in the U.S. for the foreseeable future reported significantly higher levels of Welcomeness (Mdn = 3.75) than those who did not plan to continue living in the U.S. (Mdn = 3.25), $U = 24.00$, $p = .014$.

Research Question 3 therefore garners an affirmative answer. Higher levels of Welcomeness also correspond to an intention to stay in the L2 community for the foreseeable future.

6. Discussion of limitations, conclusions, and considerations for future research

The overarching goal of this study was to gain new insights into the L2 acquisition process of a group of immigrants learning English in the United States by evaluating the existence and nature of a new, hypothesized construct in SLA: Welcomeness. The investigation aimed to explore whether Welcomeness is distinct from Gardner's (2004a, 2004b) construct of Attitudes toward the L2 community, whether Welcomeness can be reliably measured by the questionnaire developed for this study, and finally to explore the relationship of Welcomeness to other factors in L2 acquisition.

The present study has uncovered compelling statistical evidence to support the theoretical basis of Welcomeness. Pursuant to Research Question 1, EFA of a hypothesized Welcomeness scale and Gardner's (2004a, 2004b) Attitudes toward the L2 community scale showed that these two constructs are in fact distinct from one another. Although considerable limitations in the sample size precluded the optimal inclusion of more variables in EFA, the contrast between the present pair of factors is the most theoretically meaningful. This is because, among the factors included in this study, Attitudes toward the L2 community is the most theoretically similar construct to Welcomeness, as both exemplify an affective factor having to do with interpersonal attitudes. It is therefore probable that Welcomeness is distinct not only from Attitudes toward the L2 community, but distinct from all other constructs in the socio-educational model, although further research with a much larger sample size would be required to definitively confirm this.

The distinctiveness of Welcomeness from Attitudes toward the L2 community (Gardner, 2004a, 2004b) could be questioned by the fact that EFA showed that items 2 and 34 loaded alongside items pertaining to Welcomeness. However, what is notable it that these two items are the only ones on the Attitudes toward the L2 community scale which explicitly mention the L2 community's disposition toward the learner (i.e. being "sociable", "kind", and "friendly"), which wholly conforms to the concept of Welcomeness. Thus, it appears that Welcomeness does not overlap with Attitudes toward the L2 community so much as it represents a refinement thereof. The implication of this finding is that future versions of the Attitudes toward the L2 community scale may be more reliable if they do not include items that assess the learner's perceptions of the L2 community's disposition toward others. The results of this study suggest that such items might instead appear on a distinct Welcomeness scale.

The last important finding regarding the Welcomeness scale is that it can reliably measured by the questionnaire developed for this study. Although EFA and assessment of internal reliability prompted the addition or removal of several items, the refined Welcomeness scale's alpha levels and test-retest reliability offer strong evidence for the scale's overall high internal reliability. As such, the final version of the Welcomeness scale produced by this study would be methodologically suitable for inclusion on other sociolinguistic questionnaires.

However, the results of Research Question 2 call into question the theoretical value of including Welcomeness in future sociolinguistic questionnaires, as it did not appear to be related to any other construct within Gardner's (1985b) Integrative Motivation complex, nor any of the other factors examined, with the lone exception of self-rated English proficiency. This finding is still compatible with the socio-educational model if one then places

Welcomeness in the category of 'other factors' that directly impact language achievement (see **Figure 1**). That said, it is also worth noting that none of the constructs comprising Integrative Motivation correlated with one another, as should be the case (see **Table 4**), thus casting doubt on any conclusions involving Gardner's theoretical framework. This surprising aspect of the results could be attributable to the fact that not all items from Gardner's (2004a, 2004b) original scales were included in the questionnaire.

This limitation notwithstanding, the positive relationship of self-rated English proficiency to Welcomeness is a promising indicator of its relevance to SLA. L2 proficiency is, after all, the ultimate goal of L2 acquisition. However, a major limitation of this study is that the sample size was not sufficient to run more sophisticated statistical tests, such as might assess the causality of this relationship. It may therefore be the case that Welcomeness does not impact L2 proficiency so much as L2 proficiency allows the learner to have more accepting, respectful, and supportive relationships with members of the L2 community. Moreover, the fact that participants self-rated their English proficiency could have a confounding effect on its relationship to Welcomeness, as more supportive interactions with the L2 community might give an L2 learner a more positive impression of their L2 proficiency. All in all, the results of Research Question 2 further underscore the fact that future studies on Welcomeness would do well to include a larger sample, in addition to a more objective measure of L2 proficiency.

The finding of Research Question 3—that higher levels of Welcomeness correspond to an intention to stay in the L2 community for the foreseeable future—is unsurprising, yet not inconsequential. As Schumann (2012) observes, immigrants intending to reside in the L2 community either long-term or permanently are more likely to acquire the L2 than those who believe that their stay is only temporary. As with self-rated L2 proficiency, however, further investigation would be necessary to determine the causality of this relationship.

In addition to the aforementioned limitations, several other important caveats remain. A perennial issue in questionnaire-based research among L2 learners is that participants' limited language skills may prevent them from fully comprehending the instrument (c.f. Mirici et al., 2013). The present study sought to minimize this limitation by providing a version of the questionnaire in Spanish, which was the first language of 22 of the 29 participants. However, given that some of the participants who completed the English version of the questionnaire also self-reported relatively low English proficiency, their answers may not have been informed by a full understanding of the questionnaire's content.

Regardless of the questionnaire's language version, there is no question that part two's instructions and/or examples suffered from limited comprehensibility, as indicated by the

substantial number of missing values. The reason that the piloting stage did not detect this issue is probably because the pilot group was uniformly composed of university-educated individuals, whose experience helped them to process the instructions better than some of the participants. This methodological shortcoming throws into relief the importance of a pilot group which is congruous with the sample. Future versions of the questionnaire used in the present study would need to correct this issue.

Finally, although this paper has used the terms 'L2' and 'L2 community' largely interchangeably with 'English' and 'the United States', and 'U.S. immigrants' have been treated unitarily, the generalizability of this study's results may not extend beyond English acquisition in the United States, or even beyond the populations of Hispanic immigrants that constituted the overwhelming majority of this study's sample. Even then, the monolithic classification of 'Hispanic' can be problematically reductive of the vast cultural diversity present in Latin America. Thus, the importance of Welcomeness, if indeed it is important at all, could vary greatly depending on the immigrant populations and the host community under study: cultures, community structures, and socioeconomic factors are just a few additional variables that could plausibly interact with Welcomeness. It is hardly disqualifying that this small inaugural study would be unable to address such complexities, but the trajectory of future research should certainly aim to consider the sociocultural dependencies of Welcomeness.

As an inaugural study, it is of ultimate importance to note that the hypothesized construct of Welcomeness, as well as the instrument specifically developed to explore it, have both offered compelling evidence of their relevance to research in SLA. Although any potential connection to Integrative Motivation remains dubious, the relationship of Welcomeness to L2 learners' Intention to stay and especially to L2 proficiency strongly suggests the value of further study. To this end, several prospective lines of research present themselves. First, further research using a sociolinguistic questionnaire should involve a much more numerous and more culturally varied sample, and in several different geographic locations. Qualitative and ethnographic studies on Welcomeness among immigrant L2 learners could also offer a more nuanced understanding of its role in SLA. Regardless of whether these possibilities might be fulfilled, it is the hope the author that research in SLA will continue to consider the unique factors affecting one of the most numerous and embattled classes of L2 learners in the world: immigrants.

(Words: 9,595)

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Appendix A: English version of the questionnaire

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Questionnaire: Living and Learning English in the U.S.

This survey is conducted by the Faculty of Philology of the University of Barcelona. Its purpose is to better understand the perspectives and experiences of immigrants living and learning English in the United States.

This questionnaire contains four parts. Please read the instructions for each part and write your answers. This is not a test, so there are no right or wrong answers. You do not even have to write your name on this paper. This survey will only be used for research, so please answer honestly.

Thank you very much for your help!

Part 1

In this part, we would like for you to tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements by simply circling a number from 1 to 5. Please don't skip any items.

1 Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5 Strongly agree

Example: *If you strongly agree with the following statement, mark your answer like this:*

Lionel Messi is one of the greatest footballers of all time.	1 2 3 4 (5)

1. The U.S. is a welcoming place for immigrants.	1 2 3 4 5
2. People from the U.S. are very sociable and kind.	1 2 3 4 5
3. I really work hard to learn English.	1 2 3 4 5
4. Learning English is important because it will allow me to meet and converse with more and varied people.	1 2 3 4 5
5. Knowing English isn't really an important goal in my life.	1 2 3 4 5
6. Learning English is important to me because, if I don't have knowledge of English, I'll be considered lazy.	1 2 3 4 5
7. I feel like people from the U.S. look down on my culture.	1 2 3 4 5
8. I plan to learn as much English as possible.	1 2 3 4 5
9. I wish I could have many friends from the U.S.	1 2 3 4 5
10. I need to learn English; otherwise people will respect me less.	1 2 3 4 5

Appendix A (*continued*)

1 Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5 Strongly agree			

11. If I had no contact with English-speaking Americans, it would be a pity.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I can't be bothered trying to understand the more complex aspects of English.	1	2	3	4	5
13. Learning English is important because it will allow me to be more at ease with people who speak English.	1	2	3	4	5
14. People from the U.S. have been helpful as I adjust to life here.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I really enjoy learning English.	1	2	3	4	5
16. People from the U.S. have much to be proud of because they have given the world much of value.	1	2	3	4	5
17. The way people from the U.S. treat immigrants is unfair.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I want to learn English so well that it will become natural to me.	1	2	3	4	5
19. Learning English is important because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate the American way of life.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I feel like I have a place in U.S. society.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I hate English.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I would like to know more people from the U.S.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I make a point of trying to understand all the English I see and hear.	1	2	3	4	5
24. People from the U.S. respect me as an equal.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I have to learn English; otherwise, I think I cannot be successful in my future career.	1	2	3	4	5
26. The more I get to know people from the U.S., the more I like them.	1	2	3	4	5
27. I haven't any great wish to learn more than the basics of English.	1	2	3	4	5
28. You can always trust people from the U.S.	1	2	3	4	5
29. When I have a problem understanding something in English, I try to figure it out.	1	2	3	4	5
30. Learning English is important because I will be able to interact more easily with speakers of English.	1	2	3	4	5
31. It is difficult to form relationships with people who are from the U.S.	1	2	3	4	5
32. Learning English is important to me because I don't like to be considered a poorly educated person.	1	2	3	4	5
33. I have a strong desire to know all aspects of English.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix A (*continued*)

1 Strongly disagree	2	3	4	5 Strongly agree

34. Most Americans are so friendly and easy to get along with, we are fortunate to have them friends.	1	2	3	4	5
35. Learning English is a waste of time.	1	2	3	4	5
36. I feel like the U.S. values me.	1	2	3	4	5

Part 2

*In this part, we'd like for you to tell us how likely you are to use English or your first language(s) in the following situations by circling a number from 1 to 5. Circle a number for **both English and your first language(s)**. Please answer all the items.*

1 Never	2	3	4	5 Always

Example: If you would mainly use English in the following situation, but never your first language(s), mark your answer like this:

	English	First language(s)
Singing in the shower	1 2 3 (4) 5	(1) 2 3 4 5

	English	First language(s)
1. Talking while at work/school	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
2. Talking with an employee in a store	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
3. Talking with people in your hobby groups or community activities (*for example:* at a weekly soccer game, in a dance class, in a faith community)	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
4. Speaking with family members your age	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
5. Speaking at home	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
6. Posting on social media	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
7. Speaking with older family members	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
8. Talking with neighbors	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

Appendix A (*continued*)

1 Never	2	3	4	5 Always

	English	First language(s)
9. Chatting with your friends	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5
10. Speaking with family members younger than you	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

Part 3

*In this part, we'd like for you to tell us how well you feel like you know English and your first language(s) by circling a number from 1 to 10. Please circle a number for **English and your first language(s)**.*

English	1 Not at all 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Perfectly
First language(s)	1 Not at all 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Perfectly

Part 4

Finally, please tell us a little bit about yourself, although we don't need your name. Remember that we will be sure to keep all your information confidential.

Age:_____   **Sex:**_____

Occupation:_____   **Country of origin:**_____

How long have you lived in the U.S.? (*for example:* 2 years and 2 months) _____

Do you plan on living mostly in the U.S. for the foreseeable future? _____

What languages do you speak? (list in the order you learned them) _____

_____

Who do you live with? (*for example:* mom, dad, and older sister / with two Mexican roommates / I live alone)

_____

_____

Thank you so much! We really appreciate your help.

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Appendix B: Descriptives for original scales/indices (i.e. prior to EFA and improvement of internal reliability) and component items for parts one, two, and three of the questionnaire

Questionnaire part one: Original scale/index and component items	Valid N	Missing	M	SD
Hypothesized Welcomeness scale	26	3	3.50	.74
1. The U.S. is a welcoming place for immigrants.	28	1	3.57	1.10
7. I feel like people from the U.S. look down on my culture.*	29	0	3.31	1.39
14. People from the U.S. have been helpful as I adjust to life here.	29	0	4.14	1.09
*17. The way people from the U.S. treat immigrants is unfair.**	28	1	2.82	1.27
20. I feel like I have a place in U.S. society.	29	0	4.34	1.11
24. People from the U.S. respect me as an equal.	29	0	3.34	1.07
31. It is difficult to form relationships with people who are from the U.S.*	29	0	3.52	1.29
36. I feel like the U.S. values me.	28	1	3.39	1.10
Integrativeness index (adapted from Gardner, 2004a, 2004b)	26	3	4.42	.26
Attitudes toward the L2 community scale	27	2	3.92	.49
2. People from the U.S. are very sociable and kind. [Native English speakers are very sociable and kind.]	29	0	3.79	.861
9. I wish I could have many friends from the U.S. [I wish I could have many native English speaking friends.]	29	0	4.28	.99
11. If I had no contact with English-speaking Americans, it would be a pity. [If Japan had no contact with English-speaking countries, it would be a great loss.]	29	0	3.45	1.35
16. People from the U.S. have much to be proud of because they have given the world much of value. [Native English speakers have much to be proud about because they have given the world much of value.]	29	0	3.90	1.23
22. I would like to know more people from the U.S. [I would like to know more native English speakers.]	29	0	4.41	.86
26. The more I get to know people from the U.S., the more I like them. [The more I get to know native English speakers, the more I like them.]	29	0	4.17	.92
28. You can always trust people from the U.S. [You can always trust native English Speakers.]	29	0	2.69	1.28
34. Most Americans are so friendly and easy to get along with, we are fortunate to have them friends. [Most native English speakers are so friendly and easy to get along with, we are fortunate to have them as friends.]	27	2	3.96	.98

Appendix B (*continued*)

Questionnaire part one: Original scale/index and component items	Valid N	Missing	M	SD
Integrative orientation scale	28	1	4.84	.32
4. Learning English is important because it will allow me to meet and converse with more and varied people. [Studying English is important because it will allow me to meet and converse with more and varied people.]	29	0	5.00	.00
13. Learning English is important because it will allow me to be more at ease with people who speak English. [Studying English is important because it will allow me to be more at ease with people who speak English.]	29	0	4.93	.25
19. Learning English is important because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate the American way of life. [Studying English is important because it will enable me to better understand and appreciate the English way of life.]	29	0	4.59	.90
30. Learning English is important because I will be able to interact more easily with speakers of English. [Studying English is important because I will be able to interact more easily with speakers of English.]	28	1	4.89	.41
Motivation index (adapted from Gardner, 2004a, 2004b)	25	4	4.64	.29
Motivational intensity scale	26	3	4.40	.49
3. I really work hard to learn English.	29	0	4.41	.78
12. I can't be bothered trying to understand the more complex aspects of English. *	28	1	3.86	1.32
23. I make a point of trying to understand all the English I see and hear.	27	2	4.74	.44
29. When I have a problem understanding something in English, I try to figure it out. [When I have a problem understanding something in my English class, I always ask my teacher for help.]	29	0	4.45	.73
Attitudes toward learning English scale	28	1	4.89	.27
8. I plan to learn as much English as possible.	29	0	4.76	.51
15. I really enjoy learning English.	29	0	4.76	.51
21. I hate English. *	29	0	5.00	.00
35. Learning English is a waste of time. *	28	1	5.00	.00
Desire to learn English scale	28	1	4.56	.55
5. Knowing English isn't really an important goal in my life. *	28	1	4.50	1.26
18. I want to learn English so well that it will become natural to me.	29	0	4.79	.77
27. I haven't any great wish to learn more than the basics of English.*	29	0	4.41	.82
33. I have a strong desire to know all aspects of English.	29	0	4.41	.82

Appendix B (*continued*)

Questionnaire part one: Original scale/index and component items	Valid N	Missing	M	SD
Instrumental – prevention scale (adapted from Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010)	29	0	3.51	1.10
6. Studying English is important to me because, if I don't have knowledge of English, I'll be considered lazy. [Studying English is important to me because, if I don't have knowledge of English, I'll be considered a bad student.]	29	0	3.45	1.68
10. I need to learn English; otherwise people will respect me less.	29	0	2.97	1.72
25. I have to study English; otherwise, I think I cannot be successful in my future career.	29	0	4.31	1.00
32. Studying English is important to me because I don't like to be considered a poorly educated person.	29	0	3.34	1.54

NOTES: All descriptives are based on questionnaires completed at T1.

Items in part one were measured on a 5-point scale.

Italicized items were removed from analysis due to low factor loadings or for the improvement of the scale's internal reliability.

Brackets indicate the original version of items whose wording was modified.

* Item negatively worded: statistics shown are after reverse coding

Questionnaire part two: Overall language use and component items	Valid N		Missing		M		SD	
	En	L1(s)	En	L1(s)	En	L1(s)	En	L1(s)
Overall use	24	23	5	6	3.09	3.54	1.08	.77
1. Talking while at work/school	28	26	1	3	3.89	2.92	1.22	1.54
2. Talking with an employee in a store	27	26	2	3	4.30	2.46	.99	1.36
3. Talking with people in your hobby groups or community activities (*for example:* at a weekly soccer game, in a dance class, in a faith community)	27	25	2	4	3.30	3.28	1.51	1.59
4. Speaking with family members your age	26	26	3	3	2.42	4.04	1.44	1.42
5. Speaking at home	26	26	3	3	2.62	4.15	1.41	1.40
6. Posting on social media	26	25	3	4	2.92	3.72	1.49	1.37
7. Speaking with older family members	26	25	3	4	1.92	4.28	1.32	1.30
8. Talking with neighbors	28	24	1	5	3.71	2.75	1.56	1.59
9. Chatting with your friends	28	28	1	1	3.00	4.04	1.56	1.31
10. Speaking with family members younger than you	27	28	2	1	3.22	3.82	1.34	1.02

NOTES: All descriptives are based on questionnaires completed at T1.

Items in part two were measured on a 5-point scale.

Appendix B (*continued*)

Questionnaire part three: Self-ratings of language proficiency	Valid N	Missing	M	SD
English	28	1	5.43	2.39
L1(s)	28	1	9.54	.92
Level of bilingualism[†]	28	1	5.89	2.75

NOTES: All descriptives are based on questionnaires completed at T1

Items in part three were measured on a 10-point scale

[†] Level of bilingualism did not appear on the questionnaire: it was calculated post-hoc by taking the difference between English proficiency and L1(s) proficiency and reverse-coding the absolute value thereof, such that a low difference in English and L1(s) proficiency would be reflected by a high value for Level of bilingualism (e.g. $|8 – 8| = 0 \rightarrow 10$, $|9 – 10| = 1 \rightarrow 9$, $|9 – 2| = 7 \rightarrow 8$, etc.).

Appendix C: Alpha levels, descriptives, and component items for the final versions of scales/indices (used in analysis for Research Questions 2 and 3)

Scale/index	Alpha	Valid N	Missing	M	SD
Welcomeness • Items: 1, 2[†] 7, 14, 24, 31, 34[†], 36	.86	26	3	3.61	.81
Motivation • Items: 3, 8, 15, 18, 23, 27, 29, 33	.72	26	3	4.50	.35
Integrativeness • Items: 9, 11, 13, 19, 22, 26, 30	.76	28	1	4.36	.57
Instrumental – prevention • Items: 6, 10, 25, 32	.70	29	0	3.51	1.10

NOTES: All descriptives are based on questionnaires completed at T1.

      Above scales/indices were measured on a 5-point scale.

      [†] Item originating from Gardner's (2004a, 2004b) Attitudes toward the L2 community scale, moved to refined Welcomeness pursuant to EFA

Appendix D: English version of participant consent form

Consent Form for
Participation in Research

Faculty of Philology

Researchers: *Dr. Elsa Tragant (Faculty Advisor)*
and Ian Montgomery

We are researchers in the University of Barcelona Faculty of Philology and we are currently conducting a study on the perspectives and experiences of immigrants living and learning English in the United States. We invite you to participate in our study and therefore ask that you carefully read the following information before giving your consent.to participate.

1. TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY IS VOLUNTARY
You may choose to not take part in the study, or you may choose to leave the study at any time. Deciding to not participate, or later deciding to withdraw from the study, will not result in any penalty nor affect your English classes.

If at any point during the study you wish to terminate participation, we will do so.

2. WHY IS THIS STUDY BEING DONE?
Ina political climate that involves much discussion about immigration, the aim of this study is to allow immigrants to voice their opinions and experiences of living in the U.S. and learning English.

3. WHAT WILL I DO?
Your will fill out a short, **anonymous** questionnaire, which will also include some basic personal information: gender, age, country of origin, languages spoken, time spent in the U.S., and your relation to other members of your household. **No part of the questionnaire will ask you for any kind of personally identifying information**, such as names, home addresses, or official ID numbers. Finally, you will fill out the same questionnaire a second time, two weeks or more after the original session.

4. RISKS
There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts for participating in this study.

5. BENEFITS FOR PARTICIPATION
While there are no immediate material benefits for participation, the study will have the important social benefit of giving U.S. immigrants an opportunity to voice their opinions and feelings about their experiences in the United States.

6. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY
All records are kept confidential and will only be available to researchers and staff at the University of Barcelona. If the results of the study are published, the data will be presented anonymously.

7. QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

If you have any questions about the research or participation in it, please feel free to contact researcher Ian Montgomery at imontgo7@alumnes.ub.edu, or at +34 658 064 328 via WhatsApp. The researcher speaks English, Spanish, and French, and will be very happy to speak with you.

<u>CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE</u>

With the above in mind, I give my consent to participate in the study described.

_____

Name of participant (printed)

_____   _____

Participant's signature   **Date**

_____   _____

Researcher's signature   **Date**

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