TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF LANGUAGE LEARNER DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNERS' SELF-CONCEPTS: AN EXPLORATORY PRACTICE APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

This study arose out of a classroom-based approach to language teaching and learning which focused on the development of learners' L2 self-awareness through a series of Learner Development Activities (LDAs). Guided by the principles of Exploratory Practice (Allwright, 2003; 2005) the study involved the use of pedagogic procedures as the investigative tools to provide "opportunities for teachers and learners to work for their local understandings of their classroom lives" (Gieve & Miller, 2006, p. 21). Framed by sociocultural and poststructuralist theories, this study understood learners' L2 self-development as being socially, historically and culturally situated.

Specifically, this study sought to understand: 1) the ways in which the LDAs contributed to the quality of classroom life; 2) the learners' self-conceptualisations as language learners and users as they participated in learning and social contexts (past, present and imagined future); and 3) how the learners negotiated their selves along their learning trajectories. Qualitative data were collected from the learners' visual representations of their language learning experiences created during the LDAs, learning journals, follow-up interviews and the teacher-as-researcher's journal.

The results of the study indicate that the LDAs encouraged the students to reflect on and make metaphors of themselves, their learning trajectories and the significance of their experiences as language learners and users. The findings also suggest that learners' conceptualisations of their L2 selves are multifaceted, dynamic and social and contextually situated, and are formed through the learners' interactions with others and the environment and their reflections and evaluations of such interactions. As such, the learners' self-concepts can be represented as an ecology of interrelated factors, both internal and external to the learner.

The study serves to demonstrate the ways in which language teachers may seek their own understandings of the language classroom and to bring teachers' and learners' experiences to the fore. Further, it highlights the importance of employing an approach to language learner development which recognises them as agentive individuals, with unique identities, personal goals, motives and feelings, all which are reflected the complex system of social and contextual relations and experiences in which the learner is situated.

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Finally, I wish to thank my husband, Benjamin, for his love and faith in me::

> She didn't need to understand the meaning of life; it was enough to find someone who did, and then fall asleep in his arms and sleep as a child sleeps, knowing that someone stronger than you is protecting you from all evil and all danger. (Coelho, 1990)

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

Image 1.1. Extract from LDA1-Mayu

The image above comes from Mayu, a young Japanese woman studying within a degree programme in New Zealand and one of the participants in this study. Mayu presented this image during a classroom activity as a metaphor for a language learner, explaining that being a language learner is like being on a journey: at times the journey takes learners along treacherous terrain, but the journey is also one of discovery and joy.   Mayu's metaphor resonated with me. As an English as second/foreign language teacher and teacher-educator I am on my own personal and professional journey. At times the journey has been fraught with challenges and at times I have lost sight of the destination.   One of the most rewarding aspects of my journey is that I have had the privilege of being a participant in my students' learning journeys.   This study evolved from the pedagogical challenges I faced when I embarked on a new stage of my professional journey, as new member of teaching staff at the institution in which the research occurred. My journey intersected with the journeys of a group of international students, including Mayu, who themselves had entered a new learning community, having shifted from their various home

countries to enter a degree programme in New Zealand. The research presented here is an account of a series of classroom-based activities in an Academic English course with this particular group of learners. It focuses on how these activities contributed to the quality of the classroom life and reveals the learners' emerging L2 identities as they move along their particular learning trajectories.

This chapter introduces the study by providing background details, situating the investigation within a particular teaching, learning and research context. It also provides an overview of the conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of the study, followed by a detailing of the research design and an outline of the structure to the thesis.

1.2   Background to the study

This study evolved from my pedagogical approach to the curriculum goals of the Academic English course I was assigned to teach and to the institution's graduate profile statements which are aimed at developing students' capacity to be reflective, independent, self-directed, motivated and curious learners. As teachers we boldly make assumptions about the learners in front of us, and these perceptions of who our learners are impact on our approach to teaching and learning. I have long understood that each learner I have worked with is a unique and complex individual: they bring to the classroom their own experiences, attitudes, expectations, beliefs, goals and motivations, which impact on how they approach their studies and which are as diverse as the social and cultural backgrounds in which they were formed. They have their own conceptualisations of themselves as individuals and as language learners and users. These self-concepts are formed through their interactions with others in learning and social environments, and through reflection and interpretation

of such interactions (Marsh & Scalas, 2010). Learners' self-concepts include who they might become, their feelings, hopes, wishes or desires in regards to their future which act as self-guides, motivating and regulating their behaviour (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Thus self-concepts have a profound influence on the choices they make, the ways they behave, how they interpret past and present experiences, and the goals and challenges they set for themselves (Mercer, 2011).

In developing my approach to the curriculum goals for the group in this study I went through a process of critical reflection, in which I engaged in conversations with my teaching peers, reflected on my experiences and beliefs about teaching and learning, and reviewed current literature. The outcome was the creation of a series of Learner Development Activities (LDAs) which took place throughout my Academic English course. These activities were premised on the belief that in order to develop students' capacity to be reflective, independent, self-directed, motivated and curious learners, time must be dedicated to raising learners' awareness of themselves as language learners and users: their learning goals and objectives, the resources and strategies needed to achieve their goals, the language learning process and their motivations and attitudes toward language learning (Sheerin, 1997). They became the meditational means for learners to make visible, to understand and to share their language learning experiences and their conceptualisations of themselves as language learners and users. The LDAs gave voice to the learners' emotions, their beliefs about language learning and their goals and motivations.

1.3   Purpose and research questions

The purpose of this study was two-fold. First, it aimed to investigate classroom-based activities which were integrated into the curriculum to foster

learners' understandings of themselves as language learners and users. Within the framework of Exploratory Practice, the study integrated pedagogy and research to help classroom participants develop their own understandings of what they are doing as learners and teachers. Drawing on qualitative methods in the form of learners' stories, the study used everyday pedagogical tools, the LDAs, to understand the quality of the classroom life from a sociocultural perspective. What was understood as quality of the classroom life was subjectively determined by the classroom participants in the ways in which they engaged in tasks and interacted with each other, and was discursively constructed within classroom practice. By engaging in critical conversations about their language learning experiences, the learners were afforded opportunities to make sense of themselves and the contexts in which they participated. The secondary purpose of the study was to explore the learners' self-conceptualisations as language learners and users, as revealed in the narratives developed through the LDAs. Underpinned by sociocultural understandings of language and learner development, the study examined the learners' sense of self within the various social, historical and cultural contexts in which they participate, and in which their conceptualisations of self were embedded and at times constrained. To summarise, this study sought to address the following research questions:

> 1) How, within an Exploratory Approach, did the LDAs contribute to the quality of the classroom life?
>
> 2) What are the learners' conceptualisations of themselves as language learners and users as they participate in learning and social communities (past, present and future)?

3) How did the learners negotiate their selves along their learning trajectories?

1.4 Conceptual and theoretical framework

The study was guided by the key principles of Exploratory Practice: put the quality of the language classroom first; work to understand language classroom life; involve everyone; work to bring people together; work for mutual development; integrate the work for understanding into everyday classroom practice; make the work for understanding a continuous process (Allwright, 2003; 2006). In this study everyday practice involved the use of the LDAs as investigative tools to interpret the teaching and learning process, ultimately providing "opportunities for teachers and learners to work for their local understandings of their classroom lives" (Gieve & Miller, 2006, p. 21).

Framed by sociocultural and poststructuralist theories of language and learning, the current study understood the learners' development as being socially, historically and culturally situated.   This approach allowed me, as the teacher-researcher to extend the focus on the individual learners by taking "into account the complex interactions between the individual acting with meditational means in the sociocultural context" (Swain & Deters, 2007, p. 821).   These contexts were the physical and social spaces where actions and activities took place, for example family life, peer group interaction and participation in institutional contexts such as schooling, organised sports activities and workplaces to be examined (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007).

1.5   Research design

Designed as a qualitative, collective case study, this study sought to explore how the LDAs mediated learner development and contributed to the quality of the classroom life. The collective cases consisted of the language classroom in which the LDAs took place, the LDAs themselves and the individual learners who participated in the LDAs. Learners' narratives were used to explore their conceptualisations of themselves as language learners and to explore how they negotiated their identities along their learning trajectories.   These narratives were discursively created through the LDAs, during which they created visual representations of their language learning histories, their goals and motivations, their strengths and weaknesses as language learners and their beliefs about language learning and teaching. Learners' journals and interviews with the participants also contributed to the creation of their narratives.   Other sources of data included the teacher-as-researcher's journal and information on the teaching and learning context in which the study took place and collected through a variety of source documents, such as course and promotional materials.

1.6   Significance of the study

This study represents a highly situated approach to language learner development.   While the approach employed in the study and the findings cannot be applied to a wider context, the study may serve as a model to inspire teachers to seek their own understandings of language teaching and learning and to bring their stories and those of their learners to the fore by providing opportunities for classroom participants to engage fully with their identities.

How learners engage in language learning activities, both inside and outside of the classroom, depends not only on what they think about the activities, but also how they think about themselves, that is, their self-concepts (Mercer, 2011). This study applied a sociocultural lens to explore the dynamic and ecological nature of the learners' L2 self-concepts. It aimed to reveal how learners' L2 self-concepts were formed through the internalisation of interactions and relationships across a number of different contexts, and how these self-concepts can be seen as trajectories of self as the learner moves through time along his or her particular language learning journey. The study and the findings suggest that in order to both understand and encourage the development of language learners, it is important to employ an approach which recognises learners as agentive individuals, with unique identities, personal goals, motives and feelings, all which reflect the complex system of social and contextual relations and experiences in which the learner is situated. In this way the study contributes to the growing discussion of the significance of learners' L2 self-concepts, which remains a relatively new avenue of enquiry in the field of second language learning.

1.7   Overview to thesis

Chapter Two presents the setting in which the study took place and aims to situate the study, the LDAs and three student cases which follow. The details presented in this chapter represent the teacher-as-researcher's interpretations of data drawn from promotional and course related materials, interviews with teaching peers, observations of classroom teaching and learning and the teacher-as-researcher's journal. Chapter Three provides a synthesis of the literature related to the key concepts under investigation, namely learner development and learners' self-

concepts. This chapter concludes by discussing the implications of the literature for the research questions. Chapter Four describes the research paradigm underpinning the study and the methodological choices. Data collection and data analysis techniques are also explained. This chapter concludes by discussing some key considerations for the research design, focusing on ethical issues and issues of data trustworthiness. Chapter Five examines the ways in which the LDAs contributed to the quality of the classroom life. In doing so it presents an account of LDAs as they took place, including details of how the learners participated and engaged in the activities and the teacher-as-researchers reflections on the themes which emerged through the activities. Chapter Six is divided into three parts, with each part presenting the research findings related to the three student cases. Through the cases the learners' conceptualisations of themselves as language learners and users are presented. The cases are situated in the learning and social communities (past, present and future imagined) in which the learners participated. The chapter also explores how the learners negotiated their L2 selves along their learning trajectories. Chapter Seven draws together the findings from Chapter Five and Chapter Six and presents an overall discussion of the findings as they relate to the research questions. Chapter Eight concludes with a summary of the key findings and implications of the study for theory, research and teaching practice.

CHAPTER TWO: TEACHING AND LEARNING CONTEXT

2.1   Introduction

This chapter details the teaching and learning setting in which the study took place and aims to situate the conceptualisation of the Learner Development Activities (LDAs). Given the theoretical framework that underpins this study, which takes into account the mediating role of personal and contextual factors in the (re)construction of knowledge, meaning and self, it is appropriate to explore the teaching and learning environment in which the learner-participants and I, the teacher-researcher participated. Focusing on elements within this particular environment will highlight the significance of the conceptualisation of the LDAs.

Exploratory Practice is an approach to practitioner research which emphasises teachers and learners working together to develop local understandings of their classroom life (Allwright, 2003). Consistent with Exploratory Practice, the details presented in this chapter represent my interpretations of data drawn from several sources: 1) promotional materials and course related materials, which provide a brief history and insights into the educational philosophies of the Institute; 2) conversations with teaching peers and observations of classroom teaching and learning, which give insights into teachers' attitudes and approaches to teaching and learning in this particular context; and 3) my reflections and thoughts which led to the development of the LDAs. As such, this chapter also captures elements of my learning trajectory as a reflective practitioner and researcher.

This chapter also serves to set the scene for exploration the mediating role of the LDAs through which the learners were able to make visible, to understand and to share their language learning experiences within the particular language classroom

setting (Chapter 5) and for a deeper analysis of the data in the presentation of student

case, which serve to highlight how this classroom-based approach to learner

development revealed the learners' self-conceptualisations as language learners and

how they negotiated the L2 selves along their learner trajectories (Chapter 6).

2.2   Entering a new professional community

I began teaching at the Institute[1] toward the end of 2007 after having worked for

almost seven years in Japan for a number of different education institutions as an

English as a Foreign Language teacher, materials developer and teacher trainer. I

had spent about the same number of years teaching English as a Second Language

and English for Academic Purposes, and lecturing in Applied Linguistics in

Australian post-secondary institutions. In my first few weeks with the Institute I was

immediately struck by the fusion of values dominant in the Japanese education

system with a tertiary provider operating within the New Zealand education system.

Table 2.1
Graduate profile

Students will graduate from [the Institute] who:
1. are confident and independent and are able to set their own goals;
2. contribute to the society they live in;
3. think critically and solve problems in creative ways;
4. know how to access and evaluate information in a range of ways;
5. are curious and excited about learning;
6. have the ability to listen to others from different countries and to communicate cross-culturally and inter-culturally;
7. are able to use at least two languages accurately in a range of social settings, content areas and in their work at a high level of fluency;
8. will be able to apply what has been learned in a range of vocational settings.

(Source: InstituteWeb)

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[1] 'Institute' is a pseudonym for the institution in which the study took place

These values, as seen through the promotional materials, graduate profile (Table 2.1, above) and course outlines (see Appendix 1, for example), focused on the holistic development of learners, emphasising independence, inter-student and intercultural relationships and understanding at the same time as academic achievement and preparedness for the workplace.

While there was certainly nothing wrong with such values, and in fact I personally support such an approach to education, I was nonetheless quite cynical. My experience teaching in Japan, particularly with one education provider which espoused similar values and goals, had left me wary. In this previous context it seemed that such values were operationalised in a very autocratic manner, driven by the vision of the founder and supported by a feudal organisational structure, which tended to focus on society (at a macro and micro level) over the individual and ultimately took away autonomy from the teacher and the learner. I had to admit that in my first few months of teaching at the Institute the feeling of *déjà-vu* became stronger and I wondered what exactly was I doing and how I got there!

Nonetheless, there was an overlap with the philosophy espoused by the Institute and my own personal approach to teaching and learning, which values both teacher and learner autonomy, and my research interests related to the individual language learner, learners' identities and motivations and their emic accounts of their learning experience. The intention here is not to critically evaluate the Japanese education system or the values and politics of the Institute. Rather, it is to set the scene for the pedagogical challenge I had set myself which was to address the curriculum goals by fostering the development of learners' self-awareness through the LDAs.

2.3   The Institute

Established a little over two decades ago as a charitable trust by its Japanese founders, the Institute was a New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) approved, private tertiary institution.   Taking a holistic approach to education, the Institute's mission was to prepare students for future participation in a modern, international environment and to promote the development of close relationships between students through the Asia-Pacific rim. Through its English Preparatory Programme (EPP)[2], undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, the Institute purported to equip its graduates with the knowledge, language skills and intercultural and interpersonal experiences to be successful in an international work context. Further, as stated in its graduate profile (Table 2.1, above), graduating students would be confident, independent and critical-thinking bilinguals, and who are curious about and reflective of their learning.

To focus on the academic and personal development of its students, the Institute provided tuition in small classes (15-20 students per class), allowing for individualised attention and support for students.   The library employed senior students as library buddies who would roam the library and make themselves available to students seeking support with their academic writing and research skills. It was also expected that students would individually meet several times a semester with each of their course lecturers outside of class time to discuss their progress in their coursework and discuss and deal with any issues that had arisen.

To offer students intercultural and international experiences the Institute recruited its student body from over twenty different countries, including New Zealand, Australia, Japan, Korea, South-East Asian countries, the Pacific islands and

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[2] Pseudonyms are used for all course names and programme names

small numbers of students from even further abroad, such as, India, Russia and Kazakhstan. In addition, the Institute recruited qualified academic staff and administrative staff from an equally broad base.

In an attempt to create an international environment within the New Zealand context, the Institute was designed (both physically and in its policies) to envelope and immerse students in each other's culture.   First-year students are required (and all others are encouraged) to live on campus in one of the non-segregated (in terms of nationality/race and gender) halls of residence. Students dined together in the on-site cafeteria, which provided three meals a day for students, and shared recreation and other facilities, such as the gym, library and computer laboratory. The intent of this design was to facilitate the development of relationships between students of different nationalities.

The park-like campus, with its beautifully landscaped gardens and lawns, was a sprawling site built on the outskirts of a regional New Zealand city. It was close enough that students can access the local shops and services (a fifteen minute bus ride); yet out of the way enough that students would not be distracted from their studies or their 'international enclave' by access to those same local facilities.   The choice of the town by the Institute's founders was strategic in another sense. The city was a hub for a large number of educational and research institutions (including a state funded university and polytechnic, private TESOL providers and state and private primary and secondary schools), making it a very student friendly city. The Institute promoted extracurricular activities aimed at providing students with opportunities to mix with the local and broader New Zealand communities, particularly through sporting and volunteer activities. The Institute's commitment to

the quality of the learning experience and the care its student body is reflected in its being a signatory to the Code of Practice for Pastoral Care of International Students.

2.4   Bachelor of Global Studies

After teaching for several months in the EPP, I was assigned to teach Academic English in the Bachelor of Global Studies (BGS) programme. Reflecting the Institute's graduate profile to develop students' knowledge, language skills and experience to be successful in an international work context, the BGS was an interdisciplinary qualification offering majors in business, environmental studies, international relations, Japanese studies or language studies. In addition to teaching Academic English Levels 1 and 6, I taught electives in the language studies major, focusing on second language teaching methodology and teaching second languages to young learners.

The BGS, as with most undergraduate programmes in New Zealand, was three years in duration and consisted of a number of compulsory and elective courses as detailed in Table 2.2, below. Students whose first language was not English were required to study Academic English courses to meet the language/culture requirements of the programme. Students whose first language was English were required to study Japanese as a foreign language (JFL) and/or Culture courses. In their third year of study, all students were required to undertake an interdisciplinary research project.

Table 2.2
BGS programme structure

Year	Course	Course	Course	Course
Year 1 **Term 1**	Academic English 1, or Language 1, or Culture 1	Principles of Economics	Introduction to Environmental Studies	Introduction to International Relations
Year 1 **Term 2**	Academic English 2, or Language 2, or Culture 2	Research and Study Skills 1	Elective	Elective
Year 2 **Term 3**	Academic English 3, or Language 3, or Culture 3	Internationalism	Elective	Elective
Year 2 **Term 4**	Academic English 4, or Language 4, or Culture 4	Research and Study Skills 2	Elective	Elective
Year 3 **Term 5**	Academic English 5, or Language 5, or Culture 5	Interdisciplinary Project	Elective	Elective
Year 3 **Term 6**	Academic English 6, or Language 6, or Culture 6	Interdisciplinary Project	Elective	Elective

For international students to gain entry into the BGS they had to be eligible for university-level study in New Zealand and have achieved a minimum overall score of IELTS 6.0 (or equivalent) or have proof that either their secondary school studies were conducted in English or that their first language is English. While many students entered the BGS directly, a large percentage of the students, particularly the Japanese students, where required to undertake the EPP prior to their entry. For the Japanese students, having studied for one year in EPP and followed by three years in the degree programme was significant as it represented four years of tertiary level study. When applying for jobs on their return to Japan, prospective employers would be looking to see four years of tertiary study, which is the standard duration in Japan (and a number of other Asian countries as well).

2.5   Academic English

The Academic English (AE) courses which formed part of the BGS were compulsory for students whose first language was not English. As detailed in Table

2.3, below, the courses were levelled AE1 to AE6. International students enrolled in

the BGS studied the AE courses concurrent to their content courses. The purpose of

the AE courses was to continue the development of the students' English language

skills throughout their programme of study and to provide support for the increasing

linguistic demands of their content courses. In the final year of the BGS the focus of

the AE courses shifted to preparing students for their impending entry into the

workforce. With the exception of AE1 course which met for six, fifty minute lessons

per week, all the AE courses were scheduled for four, fifty minute lessons per week.

Table 2.3
Broad focus of Academic English (AE) courses

Course	Broad focus
AE1	academic essay structure, paragraph development, critical reading, academic vocabulary, listening comprehension, note-taking skills, reading and summarising academic text
AE2	academic writing (such as division & classification, compare/contrast, cause/effect, process analysis), critical reading, academic vocabulary and listening and note-taking skills
AE3	academic writing (such as description, argumentation, narration), discussions and group presentations, listening comprehension , note-taking skills, reading and summarising academic text, paraphrasing, citations/referencing, academic vocabulary
AE4	language and literature, report writing
AE5	language and society, media studies
AE6	workplace written and oral communication skills (such as business report writing, funding proposal development and curriculum vitae and cover letter writing)

2.5.1   Academic English 1 (AE1) curriculum

At the beginning of 2008, I was reassigned to teach Academic English 1

(AE1) in the BGS programme starting from Semester 1, which would begin several

months later in April. One of my first tasks as the Lecturer in AE1 was to map out a

course of instruction for the semester which addressed the aims and objectives of the

course as set out in the course outline (Appendix 1). My interpretation of the course outline was that the focus of the course, and therefore the focus of my instruction, was the holistic development of the learner. The aims and objectives simultaneously focused on the development of learner's academic English skills (for example, critical reading, writing, academic vocabulary, note-taking) and on non-technical aspects of their development as learners, such as being self-motivated, self-directed, reflective and collaborative learners who employ a range of learning strategies and skills to achieve their learning goals. I noted, in particular, that the objectives specified in the course outline reflected the Institute's philosophy and overall mission as represented in the graduate profile statements (Table 2.1, above).

While I was more than comfortable addressing the technical aspects of the curriculum, how to address the other, non-linguistic goals within the classroom context and a new institutional context led to a process of critical reflection, engaging in professional dialogue with my peers. In my history as a language teacher and teacher educator I had seen curriculum statements and learning outcomes such as these being reduced to mere rhetoric. Given my previous experience and scholarship in second language teaching and learning, and looking for a professional challenge and admittedly a classroom-based research project for my doctoral studies, I decided to 'put my money where my mouth is' and embarked on the development and implementation of a systematic approach to fostering these desired learner characteristics and learning outcomes in my AE class.

2.5.2   The AE teachers and approaches to teaching/learning

Over the year and a half period in which I taught AE courses in the BGS (including the periods before and during which the study took place), I had a number

of conversations with my fellow teachers about the AE courses, their interpretations of the programme and course objectives and their approaches to teaching. These conversations, along with my scholarly reading, contributed significantly to my classroom-based approach to learner development.

The five AE teachers (including myself) were all very experienced and highly qualified language teachers. We all held master degrees in education, second language teaching, applied linguistics or linguistics. One teacher held a PhD in linguistics, while three teachers (including me) were enrolled in PhD programmes in second language teaching and learning. While one of the AE teachers had been employed with the Institute for a decade or more, the rest of us had been there for less than three years.

The conversations with my teaching peers frequently took place over coffee or in passing. The AE teachers also had a system whereby we would observe two of our fellow teachers each semester, followed by a meeting where we would discuss a range of issues, such as teaching approaches, the development of teaching and learning materials and student related issues. Once a month all the teachers in the BGS had an opportunity to meet casually for a 'brown bag' session in our lunch break during which we would discuss matters related to teaching and learning, such as assessment, teaching methodology, learning strategies and motivating difficult learners. These meetings and conversations with my peers were extremely valuable to me, as a relatively new member of this particular professional community, to develop an understanding of teaching and learning at the Institute. I certainly enjoyed and appreciated the collegiality that was fostered through these conversations.

The AE teachers kindly allowed me to observe their classes and to later meet to discuss their classes during the summer semester (prior to the study) and Semester 1 (Phase 1 of the study)[3]. In addition to understanding their interpretations and approaches to the programme and courses, I wanted to explore with my peers how they conceptualised the learners and themselves as teachers in this context. As I was attempting to have my AE1 learners develop self-awareness and explore their self-concepts as language learners, I was curious as to how these might differ from the teachers' perceptions. There was no specific research question associated with the interviews and observations with teachers; they were merely a mechanism for me to engage in professional dialogue with my peers about teaching and learning at the Institute and in the AE programme, and to situate the study, particularly the LDAs, in the broader teaching and learning context.

Another of my concerns prior to the beginning of teaching the AE1 course was whether or not there were expectations from the Institute or the other AE teachers about how to address the both linguistic and non-linguistic goals or whether I had complete autonomy in this regard. I was not aiming to strictly conform with their expectations as I valued my autonomy as a teacher; however, I was mindful that these teachers would eventually inherit my AE1 students as they progressed in their programme of study and I wanted to ensure the students were adequately prepared. I also wanted to explore the approaches of others to better inform my own practice.

In my conversations with my fellow AE teachers they indicated that they tended to focus explicitly on the reading, writing or speaking skills development. Each teacher was provided with a course outline, much the same as the AE1 course outline, which detailed the learning objectives and broad weekly plan. How the

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[3] See discussion in Section 4.5.6 and Appendices 10 and 11 regarding relevant ethical considerations.

teachers went about teaching – their teaching methodology – was at their discretion; though as one AE explained to me, the Institute's unwritten policy was that teachers not engage in a lecturing style of teaching and that teaching/learning tasks and materials must be experiential and engaging. The AE1, AE2 and AE3 curriculum followed the structure of the prescribed textbook, different sections of which were used in each of the three courses, and which focused on the development of academic writing skills. The AE4, AE5 and AE6 teachers were free to choose a textbook (or not) which they considered appropriate for their given course. All of the teachers devoted a good portion of their preparation time to developing supplementary or scaffolding teaching/learning materials.

It is important to note that in the following summary of the peer observations the intention is not to evaluate or make judgements about the AE teachers, their teaching skills or their approach to teaching and learning. Rather, as noted above, the intention of the peer observations was for me, as a new instructor at the Institute, to understand my peers interpretations and approaches to the programme and courses and explore how they conceptualised the learners and themselves as teachers in this particular context. In the small number of AE classes I was privileged to observe I noticed that the focus of instruction was primarily on developing learners' academic writing, reading and speaking skills, versus the non-technical aspects of their development as learners, such being as self-directed, reflective and collaborative learners. This occurred through a mixture of transmission-style teaching, individual and group practice tasks, peer teaching and assessment. The teachers later indicated that there was an expectation that students would study independently outside of class, but they did not generally have any explicit conversations with students in class on how they might do that. In regards to the non-linguistic goals, there seemed

to be an implicit focus on developing learners' cognitive and metacognitive learning skills and strategies.   These seemed to be addressed indirectly through the design of learning tasks and materials.

I observed this implicit approach in one class where, as the students worked together on the assigned task, the AE teacher punctuated her instruction with questions to her students, which she later explained were aimed at developing students' cognition: *"OK, what's the focus?"   "What's the reason for doing this?"   "How could you apply it to your test?"   "How could you apply it to your essay writing?" "What do you do if you don't know the vocab?"*

Similarly, in different AE class the teacher assigned individual or group writing tasks to the students and was able to move from individual to individual or group to group, giving advice or assistance with the assigned task. As she spoke to students the teacher gently encouraged them to self-evaluate and reflect on their writing: *"OK. You need to strengthen this. Explain it a little more."   "What is wrong with [the thesis]? Why don't you like it?"   "What do you mean by this word"* or *"Now you are getting into details. You are expanding ... moving outside of the introduction."*   The teacher described her teaching style as being somewhat hands-off and wanting the learners to be in charge of their learning. Her intent, through the learning tasks she designed, was to have students come to their own understandings.

In another (again different) observed class, the AE teacher had assigned a learning task in which the students worked in groups of three of four to give presentations about the structure and organisation of narrative writing. In our discussion following the observation the AE teacher indicated that she designed learning tasks to develop the learners' meta-linguistic skills and to promote

collaborative learning. She ultimately hoped that students would be able to make connections between what they were studying in her class with their other studies.

2.5.3   The desire for explicit conversations

Over the months prior to beginning the study, both privately and in conversation with my peers, and later confirmed when I observed their teaching, I reflected that I had taken very similar approaches to learner development to that taken by my peers.   I had a tendency to focus explicitly on learners' language skills development (reading, writing, listening and speaking) and to focus indirectly on their cognitive and metacognitive skills development.   I believe that most teachers will admit that the demands from institutions and curriculum and assessment requirements often take priority in the language classroom.

What was bothering me about this indirect approach I was engaged in was that I also believed that if students do not possess a level of consciousness or attention to the fact that they were engaged in 'learning-how-to-learn' activities, then they were simply involved in processes and not strategic learning behaviour.   I was also conscious that the AE students had considerable experience (good and bad) as language learners in previous contexts and bring this experience, and the knowledge, beliefs, attitudes and expectations formed through these experiences, to the language classroom. Through my reflections, I was spurred on to come up with a different approach that focused on the explicit development of cognitive and meta-cognitive skills, by tapping into the students' own experiences and understandings. Ultimately, it was my desire to engage in explicit conversations with my students about their language learning which resulted in the conceptualisation of the LDAs.

2.6   Conceptualisation of the LDAs

In a previous (unpublished) pilot study undertaken at my former university, I explored how language learner beliefs change overtime with interventions aimed at developing learners' awareness of the language learning process and their roles and responsibilities within this process and an awareness of learning styles and strategies. A questionnaire, based on Cotterall's (1995) and Chan's (2001) work on learners' readiness for autonomy, was administered at the beginning and end of the 10-week language learning program. The follow-up questionnaire was proposed for the purpose of determining whether learners' beliefs change as they participate in a language program which employs instructional interventions aimed at developing learning skills and strategies for self-directed, autonomous learning. The interventions involved small group discussions amongst the students on a variety of topics, including how we learn a second language, what the roles and responsibilities of language learners and teachers are, the individual learners' learning styles and strategies and how students evaluate their language learning. This dialogical approach was inspired by Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and the concept that knowledge creation though collaborative dialogue with more experienced others, such as teachers and knowledgeable peers.

While I was still committed to the idea of fostering learner development and autonomy through classroom dialogue, I had some concerns about using this previous approach in the context of my AE course. At the time I designed the study I had not met the students in the AE1 course and, based on my teaching experience to date at the Institute, I was not sure if they had the meta-language I thought would be necessary to undertake the conversations with the same level of depth as I had experienced in my previous context. Additionally, compared to the students at the

Institute, the students in my previous context, many of whom were preparing to enter post-graduate courses, were much older and had considerably more experience of learning (including language learning) in a number of different contexts. Further, I had begun to move away from the notion of 'intervention', which to my mind signalled a deficit approach to understanding learners' beliefs and their reflections on their learning experiences.

Following a serendipitous conversation with a colleague I struck upon the idea of having the AE1 students visually represent their expectations, goals, motivations, activities, problems or difficulties, learning styles and strategies, attitudes to learning and prior learning experiences. The idea of exploring a new pedagogical approach got me excited and I very soon conceptualised a series of activities, using similar prompts to the pilot study, but where dialogue was mediated through visual tools (drawings and pictures). My aim was to promote learner development in a collegial manner and where the students, with minimal prompting from me, could explore and share their own accounts of their language learning experiences and their own conceptualisations of themselves as language learners and users.

2.7   Summary

This chapter provided a backdrop for the study, situating the learners, myself as the teacher and researcher and the LDAs in the historical, social and cultural context in which the study took place. The LDAs were conceptualised as a response to curriculum objectives and graduate outcomes statements, which in turn reflected the educational philosophy and values held by the institution. This chapter also represented my own journey along my professional trajectory. As individuals

transition from one context to another their sense of self is dis-established and they enter a period of struggle, as I most certainly did as I attempted to understand and negotiate my way through a new professional environment. Through my experiences within the particular community of practice of the Institute, and drawing upon my experiences in previous professional contexts, I began reconstruct my identity and autonomy as a language teacher. Having set the scene, Chapter 3 situates the study in the relevant literature.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Introduction

This study arose out of a classroom-based approach to address learning outcomes related to the development of students' capacity to be independent, reflective, self-directed, motivated and curious learners. The pedagogical approach taken to address these desired learning outcomes was a developmental one. The concept of learner development in language learning has emerged from the "recognition of the centrality of language learner to the teaching/learning process" (Wenden, 2002, p. 32) and has manifested itself in a number of learner-centred approaches to language learning, most notably the focus on developing learner autonomy. In line with research into second language learning, research on language learner development has tended to be dominated by psycholinguistic perspectives, which examine language and learning separate from the social contexts in which language learning and language use take place (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

Central to language learner development is the formation of self: the development of one's identity as a language learner and user. Self-related constructs have been increasingly used to frame second language research, as reflected in an increasing number of studies into language learners' self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986; Pajares & Schunk, 2001; Wang, 2004), self-confidence (Noels, Pon & Clément, 1996; Dörnyei, 2003; Csizér & Dörnyei, 2005a), self-esteem (Arãgao, 2011; Geeraert & Demoulin, 2013), identity (Norton, 2000; Pavlenko, 2001; Kinginger, 2003; Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Ushioda, 2006; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007) and motivation (Dörnyei, 2003; 2009). Such studies have emerged from the recognition that how learners approach or engage in language

learning activities not only depends on what they think or feel about the activity itself, but also how they think or feel about themselves (Mercer, 2011). The potential richness of sociocultural and poststructuralist theories as frameworks for understanding learners' emerging L2 identities and self-development remains underdeveloped (Ushioda, 2006).

This chapter reviews the literature pertinent to this study, beginning with sociocultural and poststructuralist theories of language, learning and identity construction, which form the theoretical backdrop to the study. The discussion then turns to language learner development, with particular attention on fostering learner autonomy and self-directed learning. Finally, the literature review focuses on issues of self formation which suggest that language learning and learner development invariably involves the (co)construction of language learners' self-concept/identity.

3.2   Sociocultural perspectives on language and human development

Sociocultural theories of second language learning (SLL) emerged in the mid-1990s in response to psycholinguistic approaches which focus their attention on the acquisition of grammatical, lexical and phonological forms of a language, and which viewed language learning as an individualistic endeavour (Mitchell & Miles, 2004). The major criticism of psychological approaches to SLL has been that they ignore the situatedness of language development, that is, the particular social, cultural, linguistic, political, institutional and historical settings in which language learning occurs (Lantolf, 2002). Drawing on the work of Lev S. Vygotsky's social-cultural-historical approach to human development, SLL researchers have developed lines of enquiry into the social and cultural dimensions of language learning (Jackson, 2008).

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory is essentially a theory of the mind that recognizes the role that social relationships and culturally constructed artefacts play in organizing human thinking (Lantolf, 2004; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).   A central tenet of Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, and one which is of significance to this study, is the notion that human development is a mediated process (Lantolf, 2000; Lantolf, 2002; Lantolf & Thorne, 2007). By mediated Vygotsky (1987) means that people use symbolic tools or signs (such as language, literacy, numeracy, categorization, rationality and logic) to buffer and regulate relationships with others and with themselves. These symbolic tools are human cultural artefacts, created and recreated over time by successive generations (Lantolf, 2000).

Of these cultural artefacts, language is the most pervasive and powerful to mediate people's relationships with each other and themselves, because it allows people to free themselves from their immediate environment and talk and think about things which are displaced in time and space (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007).   As individuals develop - through sustained participation in sociocultural and institutional practices and through gradual understanding of the communicative intentions embedded within such practices (Jackson, 2008) - they gain increasing control over language to regulate social interactions and intrapersonal communication (private speech).

Participation, collaboration and social interactions, central in sociocultural theories of learning, are embodied in Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Jackson, 2008).   The ZPD is the difference between the level of development already obtained by individuals and the next stage of their development that may be visible through participation in collaborative activities (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006); a process which is typically mediated by language (Mitchell &

Myles, 2004). In his conceptualisation of the ZPD Vygotsky (1978; 1987) saw learning as occurring dialogically between the learners and more skilled others (such as a caregiver or teacher). As learners carry out tasks and activities under the guidance of the more skilled others, knowledge is jointly constructed, including knowledge of language (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). In this way, learners move from 'other-regulation' to 'self-regulation'; that is, from a being guided by others to being able to accomplish activities with minimal external support (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007).

Sociocultural theories also offer a framework for understanding language learner development and the formation of learners' sense of self. Learners' L2 emerges across their learning trajectories as they participate, through meditational means, with others in different social, cultural, linguistic, political, institutional and historical settings. It is through this mediated activity that learners form and reform their sense of self. In this way, language learning is dynamically intertwined with identity processes (Pavlenko, 2001). Vygotsky (1986) viewed dialogue and interactions as playing central roles in self-development. It is through social interactions mediated by language and internalization of the sociocultural environments that individuals form and reform their sense of the world around them and a sense of themselves.

3.3   Poststructuralist perspectives

As with sociocultural theories of learning, poststructural perspectives recognise that learning is socially situated and that language is a symbolic tool which mediates social interaction.   At the heart of the poststructuralist perspective, however, is the recognition of inequitable power relations as learners struggle to

participate in desired social and professional communities. While Vygotsky (1978; 1987) acknowledged differences in status between novices and experts, this relationship is largely characterised as a cooperative one. In contrast, poststructural theorists, such as Bourdieu (1991), draw attention to the power structure in discourse, which is viewed as both a social and a political action.

Central to Bourdieu's theory is the concept of capital and its impact on social relationships. By capital, Bourdieu (1991) is referring to material or symbolic things which have been ascribed value by the social participants and which are sought after. For Bourdieu, various types of capital come into play during social interactions, for example economic, social, cultural, linguistic and symbolic capital. Differential access to these various types of capital by social participants results in differential levels of power, with those who possess capital subordinating those who do not.

As in Vygotsky's theory of learning, language plays a central role in poststructural perspectives of learning. For Bourdieu (1991), linguistic capital represents the value of a language and the mastery of that language within a particular sociocultural context. Standardised forms of the language used by dominant groups are "legitimised in specific social conditions, reinforcing their authority" (Jackson, 2008, p. 27). Bourdieu (1991) also viewed language as a form of symbolic capital. The value and meaning of an utterance are determined in part by the value and meaning ascribed to the individual speaking (Norton & Toohey, 2011). The role of language in the analysis of social organisation, social meanings and power is taken up by Weedon (1997). For Weedon, "language is the place where actual and possible forms of social organisation and their likely social and political consequences are defined and contested ... and where our sense of ourselves, our subjectivity, is constructed" (1997, p. 21).

As with sociocultural perspectives, language is viewed as a site of identity construction (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 293). In poststructuralist terms, however, language is a site of struggle where identities are negotiated through a process of positioning (Norton & Toohey, 2004; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). Individuals' self-chosen identities may be contested, devalued or imposed by others who attempt to position them differently (interactive positioning) or they may see their current selves as less than satisfactory and attempt to evoke, assert, define, modify their own desired self-images (reflective positioning) (Ting-Toomey, 1999; Pavlenko, 2001).

3.4 Learner development for learner autonomy

The past several decades have seen a considerable body of research into language classroom approaches to developing learners' capacity to become independent and self-directed learners. This practice and research has largely been dominated by psychological understandings of learner autonomy, which focus on the mental and emotional characteristics or attributes of the learner. While such approaches have made considerable contributions to the field, they do not examine in any depth the sociocultural contexts in which learners participate and the important role of mediation in language and learner development.

3.4.1 Learning strategies

Psychological approaches to learner autonomy are based on research which indicates that autonomous language learners are those who possess high motivation, confidence in their abilities to learn the target language (self-efficacy) and positive attitudes to the target language and language learning in general. Classroom-based efforts to promote learner autonomy from a psychological perspective have focused

on the training (by teachers) and on the development (by learners) of learning

strategies.   From the psychological perspective learning strategies are defined "as

being a specific plan, action, behaviour, step, or technique that individual learners

use" (Oxford & Schramm, 2007, pp. 47-48) to develop their language skills.

Research on learning strategies began with the seminal work of Rubin (1975). By

examining the learning behaviour of learners who achieved well in their language

studies, researchers have gained insights into the development and use of cognitive,

metacognitive, affective and social strategies for language learning and use (Chamot,

2005).

Learning strategies are aimed at assisting learners to become more

responsible for their language learning and to individualise their language learning

experience by encouraging them to 'learn how to learn' (Cohen, 1998). Strategy-

Based Instruction (SBI), spearheaded by Cohen (1990; 1998; 2011) and his

colleagues (Cohen, Weaver and Li, 1996) has focused on explicit and implicit

integration of strategies in classroom language learning activities. A number of

studies have emerged, linking SBI to improvements in learning outcomes. Li and

Liu's (2008) study, for example, concluded that strategy training impacted positively

on the listening comprehension of a group of Chinese English language majors. In

recent years SBI has been extending to include learning styles and is now referred to

as Styles- and Strategy-Based Instruction (SSBI). This evolution has come about as

a result of the increased recognition that learning strategies should be viewed through

the perspective of the style preferences of the learners (Cohen & Weaver, 2006).

The aim of SSBI (as with its earlier incarnation) is to provide contextualised strategy

training as a means to encourage learners to 'learn how to learn' and to help learners

become more responsible for their efforts to learn and use their target language.

SSBI is premised on the philosophy that learners should be given the opportunity to understand what they can learn in the language classroom and how they can learn the target language more effectively and efficiently (Cohen & Weaver, 2006).

A fundamental and influential framework for studies into the use language learning strategies is the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL), a self-reporting survey of the frequency with which learners use various strategies for language learning developed by Oxford (1990). A search of any academic database will reveal a wide array of research articles and theses on the use of SILL over the last 30 years. Such research has included a focus on linking choices in strategy use to levels of language proficiency (Bremner, 1999), differences in strategy use depending on individual factors such as gender (Tercanlioglu, 2004), age and nationality (Nguyen & Godwyll, 2010), the effects of effect of learning strategies on learners' writing achievements (Olivares-Cuhat, 2002), the relationship between the use of language learning strategies and multiple intelligences scores of English foreign language learners (Akbari & Hosseini, 2008) and connections between language learners' motivation and their preferred learning strategies (Lu, 2007).

White, Schramm and Chamot (2007) highlight three potential limitations to self-reporting questionnaires, such as the SILL, which are often used to gain access to students' accounts of the ways in which they go about learning a language:

- learners may not understand or interpret accurately the strategy description in each item
- they may claim to use strategies they do not use
- they may fail to recall strategies they do use (p. 95)

They suggest that methods such as interviews, focus groups, diaries, observations and ethnographic approaches allow learners to clarify and elaborate on cultural, contextual and individual factors which influence strategy use. Applying a contextual approach to gain understandings of language learning strategies in

specific contexts provides "a useful lens … to understanding how strategy use

relates to students' experiences and the actions that they take as learners both inside

and outside the classroom (White, Schramm & Chamot, 2007, p. 108).

Sociocultural understandings of language and learning also provide an

alternative lens through which to consider learning strategies.   Drawing on

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, language learning strategies represent the learners'

socially mediated plans or actions to meeting their learning goals (Oxford &

Schramm, 2007). The role of dialogue with more capable others, such as teachers,

parents or more competent peers, plays an integral role in the learner's cognitive

development and self-regulatory competence (Oxford & Schramm, 2007). In a

classroom situation, this would involve students sharing their strategies and academic

perspectives with each other and their teachers (Holliday, 2003, as cited in Oxford &

Schramm, 2007). Moving from more traditional psychological perspectives, learning

strategies can be seen to be contextually situated and socially mediated. While

contextual and social approaches have been applied to only a few studies on learning

strategies, they are increasingly being applied to other areas of second language

learning, such as learner beliefs, identity and motivation.

3.4.2   Developing learners' metacognitive awareness

The role of dialogue to mediate learners' development in relation to

developing learners' metacognitive awareness is taken up by a number of

researchers. Esch (1996), for example, cautions that we cannot reduce autonomous

learning to a set of skills or behaviours in which the learners can be trained; rather,

"we need to provide means to help learners talk and a format where learners'

attention is attracted to these phenomena … whereby learners share their experience

as a means of enhancing their language learning awareness" (p.167). From this perspective learner autonomy is not something that is done to learners, rather it is a process that can be encouraged and facilitated so that learners can develop it themselves (Esch, 1996).

In order to facilitate the development of learners' self-awareness, it is argued that explicit dialogue needs to occur between the teacher and learners, and amongst learners, as a means for learners to explore and share their expectations, goals, motivations, problems or difficulties, learning styles and strategies, attitudes to learning and prior learning experiences (Cotterall, 2000; Sheerin, 1997). Further, developing learners' awareness needs be "an ongoing cycle of action and reflection and to offer a development programme that keeps pace with the learners as they work" (Sturtridge, 1997, p.71).

Much of the recent research and practice on raising language learners' meta-cognitive awareness has taken place in self-access centres. In such contexts teachers or learning advisors provide support and guidance for learners by first ascertaining learners' backgrounds and experiences, eliciting learners' needs (often through questionnaires and interviews), assisting learners to develop a better understanding of the language learning process, and monitoring and providing feedback on the learning patterns (Sheerin, 1997; Esch, 1996; Karlsson et al, 1997; Mozzon-McPherson, 2007).

3.4.3   Situating learner development and autonomy

The approaches to autonomy discussed above have made substantial contributions to the practice and research of classroom-based efforts to foster learner autonomy and have significantly informed this study. However, a major point of

departure in this study is the emphasis placed on context. A sociocultural perspective on learner development and autonomy places emphasis on the roles of context and social interactions as major parts of cognitive and language development (Oxford, 2003).

Drawing on Vygotsky's concepts of human development, learner autonomy is viewed as a socially-shaped phenomenon as learners interact within and negotiate their way through social and learning contexts. Context is a community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1997; Wenger 1998) where learners, as newcomers participate peripherally through cognitive apprenticeships with more experienced members of the community. Learner autonomy is viewed as self-regulation and is mediated by interactions between the individual learner and more capable others, as well as interactions with physical elements, such as books and technology. Learners become increasing agentive, and more motivated to learn, as the nature of the mediated relationship becomes more meaningful to the learners and they move toward greater participation in the community (Oxford, 2003). Increasing participation in social and learning contexts inevitably involves changes in identity through enhanced awareness of the self in relation to others (Wenger, 1998). Promoting learner autonomy from a sociocultural perspective is about situating learner development in the contexts in which the learners participate and helping learners to understand the choices, opportunities and affordances available in these contexts, through dialogic negotiation with others and critical reflection of self.

3.4.4 Autonomy as agency: issues of access and control

From a poststructural perspective, learner autonomy is about socially oriented agency (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001) where contexts "afford and constrain possibilities

for individual and social action in them" (Toohey & Norton, 2003, p. 59). The quality of participation depends very much on the attitudes and power relations which may foster or inhibit greater participation in the desired community or context. The autonomy of the individual as human agency underpins Norton's concept of *investment* and links the concept of autonomy to motivation and identity (Ushioda, 2006).

Investment is the "socially and historically constructed relationship of learners to the target language" (Norton, 2000, p. 10). Learners are motivated to invest in a second language with the anticipation that they will acquire a range of symbolic (language, education and friendship) and material resources (money and goods), which will in turn enhance their cultural capital, their conceptions of themselves and further their desires for the future (Norton, 2000; Toohey & Norton, 2003). Learners constantly organise and reorganise their sense of who they are and how they relate to the social world, thus language learning becomes a site of identity construction (Norton, 2000). By investing in the target language the learner is also investing in his/her identity which is constantly changing across time and space (Norton, 2000). An individual's investment in language may be mediated by others or their participation in a given context may be challenged by others who seek to maintain particular social structures. Promoting learner autonomy from this perspective "entails the need for learners to develop a more critical awareness of the cultural constructions, ideologies and social positionings ... and to develop their own voice" (Ushioda, 2006, p. 156).

3.5   Learner beliefs and learner autonomy

Beliefs help individuals make sense of themselves and of the world around them and thus play an important role in defining language learning behaviour (White, 1999). Sociocultural understandings of language and learning emphasise the role of learners' agency as they interact within social and learning contexts. With this is the recognition of the importance in understanding learners' beliefs; that is, how learners' beliefs help them interpret social and learning contexts and guide their learning behaviour.

From a sociocultural perspective beliefs are situated within a multitude of interconnectedness between other aspects of the individual's social and cultural processes (Lave, 1991). They are constructed through interaction and participation in physical and social contexts, and consequently beliefs bear the mark of those contexts (Dufva, 2003). Beliefs are seen as part of the learners' experiences and interactions with the environment, and are thus embedded in an individual's context. Therefore, to discuss and analyse beliefs they must be considered within the social and cultural contexts (past and present) in which they occur. Further, there is an intrinsic interconnection between the co-construction of individuals' beliefs and their identities: as individuals interact and participate within various contexts, they redefine their sense of who they are.

As well as being contextually situated, beliefs are seen to be dynamic. As an individual interacts with others and the environment, previous experiences, within current or past contexts, are drawn upon to deal with the present, and this continuous flow of input results in a constant self re-organising of the way an individual perceives the world (Dufva, 2003). This is what Dewey (1938) calls the principle of

continuity, that is, the process of giving meaning to our experiences and the connections we make between past, present and future experiences (Barcelos, 2003).

To date a great deal of research on learners beliefs as they relate to learner development has focused on determining whether or not learners fit the profile of an autonomous language learner (Woods, 2003) or to assess their readiness for the behavioural change that autonomy implies (Cotterall, 1995). These studies represent normative approaches to understanding and researching beliefs (Barcelos, 2003) and are premised on the concept that erroneous beliefs may lead to less effective approaches to learning, ultimately impacting on learners' success in language learning (Horwitz, 1987). The most well known of these questionnaires is the Beliefs About Language Learning Inventory (BALLI) developed by Horwitz (1985). The BALLI was developed through a process where language teachers were asked to list their beliefs, the beliefs of others and the beliefs of their students (Horwitz, 1985). The main contention with this approach to understanding learners' beliefs is that data is collected through the use of questionnaires which measure beliefs separate to the contexts in which learners participate. In an attempt to validate the use of questionnaires, other researchers have added open ended questions to their questionnaires, such as writing a piece of advice to a friend about language learning (Cotterall, 1995), or followed up their questionnaires with interviews (Sakui & Gaies, 1999).

A number of other studies have viewed learners' beliefs as part of learners' metacognitive knowledge of language learning (Wenden, 1998). Metacognitive knowledge is seen as the stable, statable, subjective and sometimes incorrect knowledge that learners have about language and language learning (Wenden, 1987). Developing learners' metacognitive knowledge is an essential feature in fostering

learner autonomy or self-directed learning (Barcelos, 2003). Research on language learners' beliefs from this perspective employs semi-structured interviews and self-reports as a means to gather learners' verbal accounts in order to understand the relationship between their beliefs and language learning strategies. As with normative understandings of beliefs, the relationship between beliefs and actions is a cause and effect one: beliefs that are favourable to self-directed learning lead to successful strategy use. The focus of classroom-based approaches to learner development is on transforming learners into 'good' or 'successful' learners through interventions such as strategy training (Barcelos, 2003).

A relatively small number of studies have examined language learners' beliefs from contextually situated perspectives, which are aimed at understanding the learners' emic perspectives of language and language learning. Allen's (1996) study, utilising observations, diaries, interviews and document analysis showed how beliefs are related to the learners' experiences and to their interactions with teachers and are how their beliefs are subject to change as a result of these experiences and interactions. White's (1999) study, using a phenomenological approach to investigate learners' experiences in distance self-instructed language learning, highlighted how context and the learner influence each other reciprocally. The study highlighted how learners' beliefs assisted them in adjusting to a new learning environment, as they revised and adapted their initial expectations of their new context. Barcelos' (1995, cited in Barcelos, 2008) study, which used observations, semi-structured interviews and open ended questionnaires, highlighted the role of context and indicated that language learners' previous learning experiences exerted a great deal of influence in their language learning beliefs. These studies highlight the power of the narratives, created through interviews, surveys, journals and other

forms of written or spoken narrations, to understand language learners' emic perspectives of their learning experiences, their beliefs and identities.

More recent studies have explored learners' visual narratives. While visual accounts, such as drawings and photographs, have been used in psychology, art therapy and education to examine skills, abilities or emotions of individuals, there are only a small number of such studies in the field of second language learning or teaching (Kalaja, Alanen, & Dufva, 2008). Nikula & Pitkänen-Huhta (2008) used photographs taken by Finnish teenagers to explore their perceptions of the presence of English in their everyday lives, focusing on informal learning which was taking place outside of the formal school context and the connections between learning in these two domains. The photographs themselves revealed the individual students' perceptions and stories, followed up by the students' discussions of them, which combined "proved to be a powerful tool in gaining access to narratives of language learning as a personal and experiential practice" (p. 184). In another study Kalaja, Alanen & Dufva (2008) examined the self-portraits of language learners to explore the meditational artefacts (such as books or other people) a group of second language learners considered important in their learning process and how they use them. The ways in which students represented themselves through the visual media in these studies were critically related to the social contexts they participated in and highlighted how learning behaviour is often guided by learners' beliefs about language learning and their beliefs about themselves as language learners.

3.6   Self-concept: self-beliefs

The discussion above has highlighted the role of learners' beliefs in fostering language learner development. Central to this study are language learners' self-

concepts, that is, the beliefs which learners hold about themselves. To understand how learners approach or engage in language learning activities requires an understanding of how they make sense of themselves – that is, how they think or feel about themselves – and how they make sense of the world around them (Mercer, 2011). Individuals' self-concepts are their beliefs about themselves in different domains (that is, areas of knowledge or activity, such as academic domains, school domains, family domains and social domains). While self-concepts are prominent in the fields of psychology (Hattie, 1992; Marsh, 1993; Marsh & Scalas 2010) and social psychology (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Markus & Wurf, 1987), they are a relatively new talking point in second language learning research. By drawing on the understandings of self-concept from these other fields and in conjunction with sociocultural theories and poststructuralist theories of language learning, it can be argued that the notion of self-concept is extremely useful for understanding the complexities of language learner development and learners' behaviours, approaches, attitudes and motivations for language learning.

3.6.1 Clarifying terms: self-concept and identity

The distinction between the two terms *self-concept* and *identity* is hard to sustain given their interrelatedness and their treatment in the literature, where they are often used synonymously. Self-concepts are concerned with the inner psychological sense of self in a particular domain (Mercer, 2011). However, the notion of *self-concept* is inextricably linked to *identity* as self-concepts include both personal and social identities (Oyserman, et al., 2004). Personal identities are aspects of self-concept based in individual traits and goals, whereas social identities are the part of the individual's self-concept that is derived from membership to social

groups (Tajfel, 1982). Yet, an individual's personal identities are borne from social

interactions and evaluations of others. Norton, an applied linguist and

poststructuralist, in her research of adult immigrant language learners, uses the term

identity to refer to how a person understands his or her relationship to the world, how

that relationship is constructed across time and space, and how the person

understands possibilities for the future (Norton, 2000). For Norton, language is

"constitutive of and constituted by a language learner's social identity" (2000, p. 5).

In that sense self-concept and identity are reciprocally interrelated (Mercer, 2011).

3.6.2 Self-concept as socially and contextually situated and dynamic

There is a social dimension to the notion of self-concept. Self-concepts are

formed and reformed through interactions with others and the environment, and

through reflections on and interpretations of such interactions (Marsh & Scalas,

2010). In this way self-concept is both a social product and a social force (Owens,

2003). Not only are individuals' concepts of self contextually situated and socially

mediated, they are dynamic, meaning that individuals' concepts of self grow out of

their experiences and the connections they make between past, present and future

(imagined) experiences (Markus & Nurius, 1986). This continuous flow of input

results in a constant self re-organising, forming a trajectory of development of the

self from the past to the desired or anticipated future (Giddens, 1991).

This concept of *trajectory* has been taken up by Lave and Wenger (1991)

who, drawing on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of learning, use the term to

describe an individual's movement from peripheral participation to fuller, more

central participation in practices of learning and social communities. Through the

experiences of learning within the community of practice individuals construct and

reconstruct their identities. This process can be expressed as the *trajectories of the self* that individuals give voice to through a coherent narrative about themselves (Hanson, 2009). For any one individual a *trajectory of self* could be conceptualised as an array of paths that, over time, might lengthen and widen, branch out, criss-cross or peter out (Miller & Blackman, n.d.) as he/she moves within and between various learning and social communities.

3.6.3 Cognition and emotion

Self-concepts include both cognition and emotion and reflect the emotional responses to these perceptions and reflections (Owens, 2003), as well as feelings of self-confidence, self-efficacy, self-worth or self-esteem and self-acceptance (Marsh & Scalas, 2010). Markus and Nurius (1986) explain that individual can possess a myriad of self-conceptions, which can include:

> the good selves (the ones we remember fondly), the bad selves (the ones we would sooner forget), the hoped for selves, the feared selves, the not-me selves, the ideal selves, the ought selves (p. 957).

They further explain that all of these self-concepts can vary in terms of their degree of cognitive and behavioural elaborations. Each self-conception also has a particular affect, or self-feeling, associated with it. For example, when a negative self-concept is activated (such as when failing a test), it brings with it negative feelings, which serve as guidelines for interpreting the situation or event, and which in turn impact on subsequent behaviour (Markus & Nurius, 1986), positively (for example, spending more time in the library studying) or negatively (for example, going out and drinking excessively).

Emotions, as the discussion above suggests, impact on learners' experiences and play a significant role in regulating their learning behaviour. Research into

emotions in SLL has tended to focus on the role of negative affective variables, such as anxiety, as blocks to successful language learning. A wider range of learners' emotions, such as excitement, joy, anger and satisfaction, remain largely unexplored (Bown & White, 2010). With the exception of small number of studies such as Garrett and Young (2009), very little research has addressed the dynamic nature of emotions: they ways in which emotions, both positive and negative, unfold and change over time. Finally, and highly relevant to this study, very few studies of emotions in SLL have taken account of the situated nature of learning to examine emotions in the social and historical contexts in which they are formed and evolve. Employing a qualitative, triangulated methodological approach Bown and White (2010) were able to provide a rich description of the emotions of – and regulation of emotions by - three Russian language learners within a particular setting. Of particular interest to this study is the way in which emotions of the subjects of their study played a significant role in guiding their learners' individual learning trajectories. Bown and White's (2010) study represents a significant contribution to understanding the role of emotions in SLL, however, it remains largely under investigated.

3.6.4 Studies of language learners' self-concepts

Much of the research that has been conducted into learners' self-concepts has focused on the relationship between individuals' self-concepts in the academic domain and their success in their studies, as measured by grades or other academic outcomes. To date, only a small number of studies have explored the construct of self-concept in the domains of English as a second/foreign language learning. The few studies that do exist have been in the psycholinguistic tradition and have utilised

Marsh and Scala's (2010) multi-dimensional model of self-concept to examine the relationship between achievements in language learning and learners' self-concepts as language learners.

Building on the earlier work of Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton (1976), Marsh and Scalas (2010) present a comprehensive, multi-dimensional model of self-concept (see Figure 3.1, below). The model conceptualises the organisation of self-concepts as a hierarchical structure and separates academic self-concept from other, non-academic types of self-concept, namely social, emotional and physical self-concepts. Additional levels in the hierarchy are included to illustrate that, for example, mathematical self-concept might be divided into mathematical topics such as algebra, calculus or geometry and that each of these may be further subdivided into specific components related to each topic.
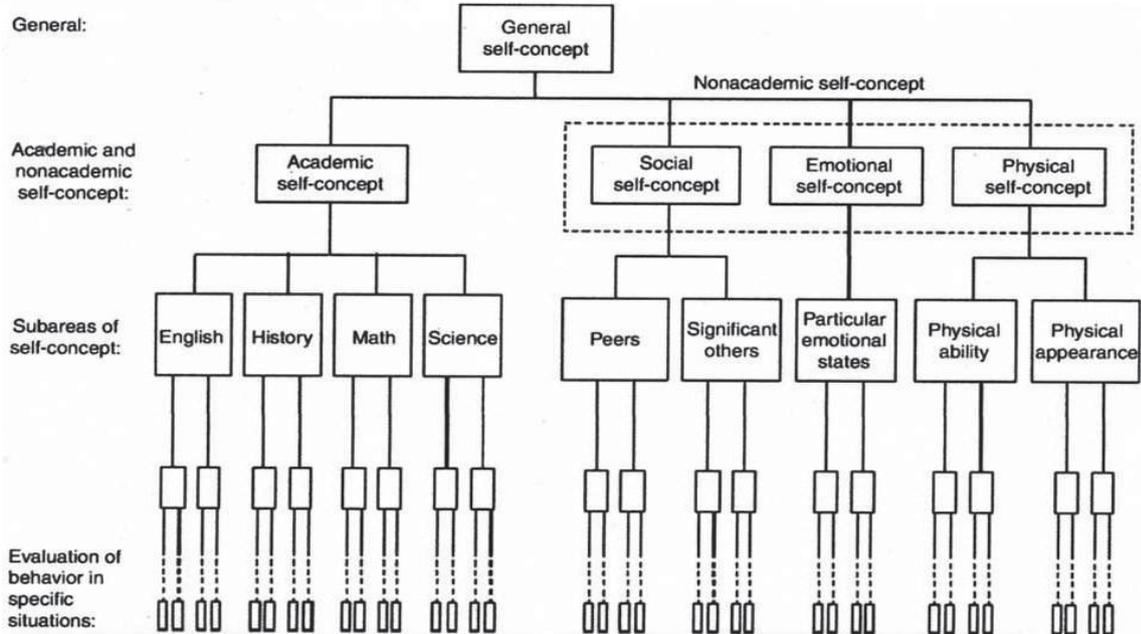
Figure 3.1. Multi-dimensional model of self-concept
(Marsh & Scala, 2010, p. 61)

The model is extremely useful as it conceptualises learners' academic self-concept against other, general self-concepts held by the learners. Further, and perhaps most relevant to this study, the model places the individuals' self-conceptualisations at the centre of the learning process. Learners' conceptions of themselves not only influence the ways in which they make sense of new stimuli and construct new knowledge, but also the individuals' attitudes and approaches to new learning tasks (Williams & Burden, 1999). Another interesting component of Marsh and Scala's model pertinent to this study, is the mediating factor of self-concept on behaviour. Self-concepts are influenced by "evaluations by significant others, reinforcements, and attributions for one's own behaviour" (Marsh and Scala , 2010, p. 660) which play an important role in influencing motivated behaviour.

Lau et al. (1999) administered a survey based on Marsh's (1990, 1992) Academic Self-Description Questionnaire to 321 advanced level English as a second language students enrolled at a Hong Kong university. Their results supported the multidimensional and hierarchical nature of students' academic self-concepts and suggested that a strong global English self-concept subordinated learners' self-concepts related to four skill specific areas: listening, speaking, reading and writing. In a similar study involving over 9000 Hong Kong secondary school students, Marsh et al. (2001) found that Chinese, English and Math achievements each had a positive effect on the matching self-concept, but a negative effect on non-matching self-concepts.

Marsh (2006) added an additional level of complexity to the multi-dimensional model, by drawing attention to the internal and external factors which impact on self-concept formation. In the Internal/External frame of reference model Marsh (2006) suggests that students' perceptions of their performance in one

academic domain are affected by comparisons to their perceived performances in another academic domain (internal frame of reference).   These perceptions are formed with references to the performance of other students in that same domain and with reference to external measures of ability, such as grades (external frame of reference).

While studies of self-concept based on the multi-dimensional, hierarchical model have contributed to understanding self-concept in second language learning, the model does not explicitly include second language studies. English as a second or foreign language, for example, is treated as a subject area, much the same as mathematics, science or history, ignoring the role of language in the formation of one's self. Self-concepts are understood to emerge through interactions with others. From sociocultural understanding of human development, these interactions are mediated by language, as a symbolic and culturally created tool. Thus language is a representational and articulatory tool in the construction of self (Walker, 2004).

A very small number of studies have focused on focused on the relationship between self-concept and language learners' motivated behaviour. In an interesting study Kormos and Csizér (2010) investigated the language learning motivations of over one thousand Hungarian students of English and German with and without dyslexia through the administration of a large scale questionnaire. The results indicate that the best predictor of learners' motivation was their self-concept as language learners. Learners of English who had a strong L2 self-concept were able to see themselves as successful users of the language in the future. It is understandable that, given the challenges faced by dyslexic students, Kormos and Csizér's results indicated that language students with dyslexia have less positive self-concepts than their non-dyslexic peers. These students found it difficult to imagine

themselves successful users of the target language in the future. The study also highlighted the mediating role played by teachers and parents in enhancing learners' self-concepts, attitudes and motivations.

Henry's (2009) study examined the relationship between gender and motivation for learning a foreign language. In particular the study focused on motivation derived from learners' self-concepts as future learners and users of foreign languages, also drawing on Dörnyei's (2009) L2 motivational self system. One of the aims of his study was to gain further insights into the problem of male students' lack of motivation for foreign language learning with the aim of developing possible strategies to enhance the students' foreign language learning self-concepts. A questionnaire was administered to 169 cohort of school aged, male and female students at two points in time, once when they were in 6th grade and again when they were in their 9th and final grade of compulsory schooling. The results of Henry's (2009) study suggest that far from being stable constructs, self-concepts change substantially during childhood and early adolescence, stabilising in mid to late adolescence.

These two studies in foreign language learning self-concept are particularly relevant to the study reported on here. Firstly, Henry's findings would suggest that learners' self-concepts might have changed over time, as learners mature, hinting at the dynamic nature of language learners' self-concepts. This is consistent with studies of self-concept for the field of social-psychology which suggest that as learners experience periods of transitions, there may be a lack of self-concept clarity, when self-concepts are not clearly and confidently defined or may be temporally unstable and inconsistent (Johnson and Nozick, 2011). This is highly relevant when examining self-concepts of second language learners as they move along their

learning trajectories, particularly as they transition from high school to university or from studying the target language in their home country to studying overseas. Secondly, both of these studies suggest there is a relationship between images of one's self in the future and one's language learning motivation. Thirdly, while both studies highlighted several key influences of learners' self-concepts, namely age, gender, parental relationships, they have only hinted at the situated nature of self-concepts. With the shift in second language learning toward a more socially situated understanding of language learners and language development, greater attention needs to be paid to the particular social, cultural, linguistic, political, institutional and historical settings in which language learning occurs.

In contrast to the large scale psychometric measures that have been used to explore language learners' self-concepts, Mercer (2011) took a qualitative approach in an attempt to better capture the complex and dynamic nature of self-concept as it pertained to individual learners. The understanding of self-concept underpinning this study was influenced by work in the field of educational psychology, particularly those studies which attended to motivational and affective dimensions of learning, along with sociocultural understandings of language development. From this perspective, self-concept is viewed:

> as a dynamic, multidimensional psychological construct, which both influences and is affected by a person's social contexts and interactions and that can vary across individuals and settings but that has a certain degree of internal stability (Mercer, 2011, pp. 13-14).

The data collected over a two-year period, through journals and in-depth interviews with learners, were examined utilising more broadly defined internal and external frames of reference. In addition to other academic self-concepts, as proposed in Marsh's (1986; 2006) model, the internal frames of reference were extended to

include influence of the interrelationships between possible selves, beliefs, and affective and cognitive reactions (Mercer, 2012). External frames of reference were extended to include feedback from significant others, previous language and other learning experiences, as well as other critical experiences of the learner, in addition to social comparisons which featured in Marsh's model. The results of this study suggest that there is a potentially strong overlap between internal and external factors impacting on the formation of language learners' self-concepts. The study revealed a complex, interconnected network of self-concepts, and calls into question "whether a single, monolithic model can be justified", suggesting the need for "a more differentiated perspective" (Mercer, 2011, p. 65). Further, while offering a more situated understanding, which takes into account the importance of external contexts, settings, experiences and others in the formation of language learners' self-concepts, the study highlights the importance of considering how self-concepts are situated within the individual as a holistic being (Mercer, 2012).

3.7   Negotiating self in social spaces

Much of the literature from social psychology sees the social construction of self-concept as unproblematic. From a poststructural perspective, however, language learning and an individual's pursued self are sites of struggle. For Norton (2000), it is through language that a person gains access to, or is denied access to, opportunities to speak. When individuals participate in social, learning, family or working communities or contexts their identities are constantly being constructed, negotiated and re-formed through the discursive practices of those communities or contexts (Ushioda, 2006; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). When certain identities are contested, imposed or devalued, unavailable or misunderstood a process of

negotiation or positioning takes place (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). Negotiation of identity is an interplay between reflective positioning (the positioning of oneself) and interactive positioning (the positioning of one individual by another) (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). So while agency and choice are critical in positioning, individuals may find themselves in conflict between their own self-chosen or desired self-images and the attempts of others to position them differently (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004).

This study examined the L2 self-concepts of a group of international students studying in New Zealand. When people shift across geographic and psychological borders they are immersed in new sociocultural environments. They find their sense of identity is dis-established and they enter a period of struggle. The new environment becomes a negotiated space, where past and present encounter and transform each other (Block, 2007). In one of the very few studies in this area, Norton's investigation of migrant women in Canada highlighted the "negotiated, constructed and conflicted nature of identity in second language learning" (1997, p. 410). Building on Norton's work, Kinginger (2003) examined the experiences of one language learner, Alice, as she negotiated and (re)constructed her social, linguistic, gender and class identities in the study abroad context. Both these studies highlight the interface between history and sociology, society and individual personality, and structure and agency, representing a shift in research from examining the interface between language use and language development to focus on the interface between language use and identity (Block, 2007).

3.8   Possible selves, regulation and motivation

A particular type of self-concept discussed in the field of social psychology, known as possible selves, is particularly pertinent to this study which in part sought to examine learner self-conceptualisations as they participate in communities past, present and future. Markus and Nurius (1986) define possible selves as the feelings, hopes, wishes, desires or perceptions the individual holds in regards to his/her future, contending that possible selves act as self-guides, motivating and regulating behaviour.   Elaborating on this, they view self-concepts as being derived from representations of the *self in the future* and the *self of the past*, which remain with us as a point of reference at any given point in time.   Thus the concept of possible selves links two dynamic properties of self-concept, motivation and change, adding a temporal dimension to the notion of *self-concept* and connecting it to the notion of *trajectories of the self*, discussed above.

The concept of possible selves represents an expansion to the cognitive approach to studying self-concept and highlights the dynamic nature of self-concept. Possible selves are specific types of self-concept pertaining to "how individuals think about their potential and their future" (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 954). This type of self-knowledge is different from an individual's knowledge of his/her race or gender; it represents future states of being which have not yet been verified.   However, possible selves are not vague sets of imagined states of being. Rather, they are "specific and individually significant hopes, fears and fantasies" which are made salient by the individual's particular sociocultural and historical context (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 954). Thus, while an individual is free to create any number of possible selves, possible selves are determined by, and are at times constrained by, the social domains in which the individual participates.

Markus and Nurius (1986) distinguish between three different types of possible selves: 1) the ideal selves that we would like to become; 2) the selves that we could become; and 3) the selves we are afraid of becoming. The *ideal self* is the person that we would like to become and acts as a future self-guiding function by setting to-be-reached standards. In the same way, the *feared self* guides an individual's behaviour away from something. Higgins (1987) distinguishes between the *ideal self* and the *ought self*; the former being representations of attributes the individual hopes or wishes he/she possessed and the latter being representations of attributes the individual feels he/she, out of obligation or duty, ought to possess. In his self-discrepancy theory, Higgins (1987) suggested that in addition to an *ideal self* and *ought self* individuals have an *actual future self* and a *can* future self and that discrepancies in these future selves may result in negative affect, such as disappointment, dissatisfaction, sadness, fear, threat and restlessness.

Possible selves are important because they function as incentives for future behaviour. Images of possible selves shape the individuals' interpretations of the world, shape their expectations and "determine which stimuli are selected for attention, which stimuli are remembered, and what type of inferences are drawn. In this way, the self-concept becomes a significant regulator of the individual's behaviour" (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 955). Possible selves are an individual's specific representations of what is possible and give rise to generalized feelings of efficacy, competence, control, or optimism, which in turn have a powerful impact on behaviour (Ruvolo & Markus, 1992).

Markus and Nurius (1986) bring a temporal dimension to the notion of self-concept, viewing it as extending backward and forward through time. Possible selves are not only derived from representations of the *self in the future*, but also

from representations of the *self in the past*. The *self of the past* remains with us as a point of reference against which the *self of the present* is evaluated and against which the *self of the future* may be defined.   Traditional notions of self-concept have viewed an individual's self-knowledge as how the person views him/herself at present, where such self-knowledge is derived from the individual's past experience. In contrast, the conceptualisation of possible selves illuminates how someone is moved from the past toward the future: *a trajectory of the self*.

3.8.1   Possible selves and motivation in SLL

In SLL Dörnyei (2009) has drawn on the notion of possible selves from the field of psychology. The relationship between possible selves and motivated behaviour is a key feature of the L2 Motivational Self System. The conceptualisation of L2 motivation within the possible selves framework has emerged as a challenge to long standing views of motivation in second language learning which have focused on the concept of *integrativeness*,   which sees motivation as being derived from individuals' identification with external reference groups.   Csizér and Dörnyei (2005a; 2005b) applied the possible selves lens to data collected through a large scale longitudinal study of secondary school foreign language learners in Hungary. The study identified that what has traditionally been labelled *integrativeness* is akin to the *ideal L2 self* and the dimension of *instrumentality* with both *ideal L2 self* and *ought-to self*.

As noted by Oyserman et al. (2006), however, possible selves might fail to sustain self-regulatory actions.   Their study of the relationship between academic attainment and academic possible selves among low income, minority teens suggests that conflicts with other parts of the individual's self-concept (for example, social

self-concept) may significantly affect their academic self-concepts. In addition, the study suggests that possible selves may fail to sustain self-regulatory action because sustaining such action over time may be difficult, leading individuals to abandon their goals.   Addressing these concerns, Dörnyei (2009) identified six conditions that can enhance (or hinder) the motivational and regulatory impact of possible selves and devised corresponding strategies summarised in Table 3.1, below.

Table 3.1.
Enhancing motivational and regulatory impact of possible selves

Condition	Strategy
availability of an elaborate and vivid future self-image	creating the vision
perceived plausibility	strengthening the vision
harmony between the ideal and ought selves	substantiating the vision
necessary activation/priming	keeping the vision alive
accompanying procedural strategies	operationalizing the vision
the offsetting impact of a feared self	counterbalancing the vision

(Dörnyei, 2009)

Such strategies are not inconsistent with approaches to learner development discussed earlier. It is the contention of this study, however, that any efforts to develop learners' awareness of themselves as language learners must be situated in the various contexts in which the learners participate (past, present and future), must recognise the possible social or situational constraints within those contexts and must assist learners to negotiate these contexts and constraints as they move along their trajectories of self.

3.9   Imagined identities, imagined communities

The power of imagination allows individuals to visualise their possible selves, thus expanding their range of identities beyond their immediate social networks (Pavlenko & Norton, 2007).   These imagined communities are "groups of people, not immediately accessible with whom we connect with through the power of

imagination" (Kanno & Norton, 2003). The possible selves an individual imagines for him/herself do not simply represent future states of being; rather, these possible selves are situated within future, yet to be realised, but nonetheless tangible, social domains. When individuals imagine their future possible selves these imaginings invariably sit within a broader context to which the individual brings their own social, historical and cultural knowledge and experience.

Norton's (2001) work on imagined communities, which draws on Anderson's (1991) work on the role of imagination, Wenger's (1998) view of imagination as a form of engagement in communities of practice, and Markus and Nurius' (1986) view of possible selves, presents a different theoretical lens through which to examine language learners and their language learning experiences. Learners have different imagined communities which are best understood in the context of their investment in the target language and the conditions under which they speak and practice it (Norton, 2001). An individual's motivation to participate (or not) could be explained by his/her level of investment in particular imagined communities and through his/her access (or lack of access) to those communities. Murphey, Jin and Li-Chi (2004) propose that a learner might imagine communities in three ways: communities to which the individual presently belongs, communities to which the individual aspires to belong and past communities to which they imagined they belonged, which they compare to the present.

A small number of studies have emerged examining the relationship between the language learners' possible self-concepts and imagined communities. Yashima's (2002) study of Japanese learners' revealed that their interests in international affairs and their willingness to study or work abroad, for example, were not connected to one geographic, linguistic or cultural community. Rather, they were associated with

a non-specific global community of English language users. This notion of *international posturing*, a label Yashima has applied to this observed phenomenon, has expanded our understanding of integrative and instrumental orientations of learners to the broader international community.

In another study, Lamb (2009) recounts the story of Dewi, a young junior high school aged Indonesian language learner, and her imaginings of herself in the future. Dewi was born in the United States and spent one year there before her family returned to Indonesia. She imagined that one day she would able to study abroad to become fluent in English and become a business women or a journalist so that she could contribute to the development of her country. Dewi imagined herself in the future living in Indonesia and also having a home abroad. Dewi had invested in a community that extended beyond her classroom. Her investment, however, was not validated by her teacher, whose spoken English was not proficient, and who did not provide the opportunities for oral practice which Dewi felt were essential to participating in the imagined community and to realising her ideal L2 self. Consequently, Dewi was not motivated to participate in the practices of the classroom community, and gave selective attention to classroom activities.

Norton and Kamal (2003) explored the motivations of group Pakistani students who had volunteered to teach Afghan child refugees. The students' motivation to learn and to teach English stemmed from their beliefs that English as an international language is essential to for the advancement of their country and other developing countries. They invested in the development of their literacy and English language skills because they wanted to appropriate identities as being educated and living in a developed country, along with the symbolic and material resources they imagined these identities could secure. The students' motivation to

learn English was derived from their imagined selves as part of a larger community

of educated English speakers where they remain Pakistani yet participate as

international citizens.

3.10   Language learner development and quality of the classroom life

The review of the literature presented above reveals the need to understand

language learner development and language learners' self-concepts as socially

situated constructs. In many ways, this study represents a response to Ushioda's

(2009) call for a person-in-context relational approach to understanding language

learners, where the focus is on:

> the agency of the individual person as a thinking, feeling human being, with
> an identity, a personality, a unique history and background, a person with
> goals, motives and intentions; a focus on the interactions between this self-
> reflective intentional agent, and the fluid and complex system of social
> relations, activities, experiences and multiple micro- and macro-contexts in
> which the person is embedded, moves and is inherently part of (p. 220)

A very small number of studies have emerged in recent years which explored

language learner development and the nuanced and multi-layered issues of self and

identity, most commonly through the personal narratives of the learner (as discussed

in Section 3.5). The challenge for the language teacher is how to foster learner

development and understand language learners' self-concepts in the classroom

setting. The language classroom brings together individuals who each move within

unique and complex systems of social relations and whose understanding of, and

participation, in these relations is affected by their own personal history, beliefs,

goals and intentions (Ushioda, 2009).

Allwright's (2006) concept of quality of the classroom life (QoCRL) offers a

useful framework to understand the complexity and idiosyncrasies of classroom

language learning and teaching. QoCRL advocates for "authentically humanistic and

process-oriented" (Gieve & Miller, 2006, p. 18) approaches to classroom practice

(and classroom-based research). This necessitates a shift in the focus of classroom

teaching and learning from prescription to understanding; the former being

concerned with what teachers and learners *ought to do*, in contrast to the latter which

views language classrooms as "shared social spaces" (Gieve & Miller, 2006, p. 28)

and language learning as the "co-production of all participants" (Allwright, 2006, p.

12). What constitutes quality is felt subjectively by classroom participants, therefore

the aim is to provide opportunities for teachers and learners to work together to

develop their emic understandings of themselves and of their classroom life, thus

emphasising the social rather than the technical dimensions of language teaching and

learning in order to generate productive learning opportunities (Gieve & Miller,

2006). In this way learners become practitioners of learning and not just targets of

teaching (Allwright, 2006).

The notion of QoCRL also acknowledges the whole individual by

recognising that language learners are not just language learners; nor are teachers

simply teachers. QoCRL acknowledges that we have multiple and complex

identities and that our personal lives are weaved together our school/work lives

(Gieve & Miller, 2006). The implication for this study is that when promoting

language learner development and understanding language learners' self-concepts

with the QoCRL framework, it is essential to bring to the fore issues related to the

learners lives inside as well as outside of the classroom (Gieve & Miller, 2006).

To date a very small number of studies have been conducted focusing on the

QoCRL. These studies, which dealt with a range of classroom issues – including

evaluating peer feedback (Zheng, 2012), promoting learner autonomy (Chuk, 2004),

negotiating the language curriculum (Bloom, 2007) and evaluating group work

(Slimani-Rolls, 2003) – were guided by the principles of Exploratory Practice, a form of practitioner research which integrates two levels of meaning: the pedagogical level and the research level. At the pedagogical level, Exploratory Practice seeks to understand classroom teaching and learning by involving all classroom participants, who work collaboratively and collegially in continuous enterprise toward mutual development and the enhancement of the QoCRL (Allwright, 2003). At the research level, Exploratory Practice uses everyday pedagogic procedures as the investigative tools to interpret the teaching and learning process: it is research in practice rather than on practice (Allwright, 2003). As is the nature of Exploratory Practice, the findings of these various studies were highly localized and situational, yet they demonstrate the various ways teachers and learners can come together to develop their emic understandings of classroom language learning and teaching.

3.11   Summary

This chapter has provided an understanding of the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of this study. The literature highlights the need to understand learner development from sociocultural and poststructural perspectives which situate learner development in the multitude of contexts in which the learners participate. Learner development is fostered by helping learners to develop their emic understanding of themselves as language learners: their goals, hopes, motivations, beliefs, fears, strengths and weaknesses. It also entails learners developing an understanding of the choices, opportunities and affordances available to them, through a process of dialogic negotiation with others and critical reflection of self. While the various contexts or communities in which learners participate may afford them opportunities, they might equally act to constrain learners' ability to interact or engage. Thus

developing learners' agency requires developing a more critical awareness of these contexts and their own voice in order to negotiate their development along their learning trajectories.

The literature also highlights that the formation of self is central to learner development. Learners' self-concepts, that is, how they think or feel about themselves as learners, play an important role in defining their language learning behaviour. Self-concepts are understood to be socially situated and dynamic. They are constructed and reconstructed over time through interactions in multiple social contexts: past, present and future imagined contexts.   They are also contested as learners negotiate their selves through a process of positioning as they move along their learning trajectories.   To date there are only a few studies which have explored the role of self-concepts in language learner development. Most of these studies have employed large scale quantitative methods which have failed to take into account the particular social and historical contexts in which learners participate and which play a key role in the (re)construction of self.

Having situated this study in the learning and teaching setting presented in Chapter Two and the review of the literature presented in this chapter, the research questions which guided this study were as follows:

1. In what ways, within an Exploratory Practice approach, did the Learner Development Activities contribute to the quality of classroom life?

2. What were the learners' self-conceptualisations as language learners and users as they participated in learning and social contexts (past, present and imagined future)?

3. How did the learners negotiate their selves along their learning trajectories?

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1   Introduction

The literature reviewed in the preceding chapter suggests a need for deeper understandings of socially and contextually situated approaches to learner development and to fostering learner autonomy.   Also highlighted is the need for a more nuanced and multi-layered examination of the complex and dynamic relationship between self/identity and language learning. The language learner is more than simply 'a language learner': he/she is a complex individual with multiple identities, a personality, a unique background and a set of individual desires goals, motives and intentions.   Importantly too, learners' sense of who they are is formed and reformed through interactions with others and the environment and through reflections on and interpretations of such interactions. Thus, to understand the language learner, there is a need to understand the social, historical and cultural contexts in which the individuals participate and in which learning and the (re)construction of self are imbedded and at times constrained.

With the theoretical and conceptual framework in mind, this chapter presents details of, and a rationale for, the research design. It begins with a description of the research approach and methodological choices, followed by a detailed account of data collection techniques, procedures and analysis. The chapter concludes with discussions of key issues related to ethics and the trustworthiness of results.

4.2   Research design

4.2.1   Practitioner research and exploratory practice

As the research took place within my language classroom, the study was considered a form of practitioner research.   Early in the design of the study I decided to utilise classroom-based Learner Development Activities (LDAs), and the artefacts from these activities, as a primary source of data with which to investigate and respond to the research questions. The artefacts were in the form of learners' visual representations of their language learning experiences created during the LDAs. Learning journals and follow-up interviews were also used in order to triangulate the data collected through the LDAs. There was a pedagogical purpose to the LDAs and learning journals, which was to address curricula and institutional goals through the development of learners' awareness of their learning goals, motivations, strengths, weaknesses and beliefs about language learning.   The LDAs and journals were an ideal fit with the research focus by providing insights into constructs of interest in this study, that is, learner development and the development of learners' self-concepts as they move along their learning trajectories. It was anticipated that the LDAs and journals would allow for a deeper understanding of these constructs under investigation by providing insights into the learning and social communities or contexts in which the learners participated (past, present and future imagined).

Conceptualisations of practitioner research reflect differing philosophical perspectives on its aims (Borg, 2010). The notion of Exploratory Practice as a form of practitioner research resonated with my philosophy that the constructs under investigation could be best explored through the collaborative activity of the classroom participants: the learners and the teachers. Exploratory Practice integrates two levels of meaning: the pedagogical level and the research level. At the

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pedagogical level, Exploratory Practice seeks to inform classroom teaching and learning by emphasizing the social rather than technical dimensions of language learning (Allwright, 2003). At the research level, it uses the pedagogic procedures as the investigative tools to interpret the teaching and learning process: it is research in practice rather than on practice (Allwright, 2003).

Exploratory Practice can be seen as an "authentically humanistic and process-oriented approach" (Gieve & Miller, 2006, p. 18) aimed at developing understandings of the quality of classroom life by providing "opportunities for teachers and learners to work for their local understandings of their classroom lives" (Gieve & Miller, 2006, p. 21). Because quality is best felt, or known, by those who experience it, Exploratory Practice involves a phenomenological approach. Such an approach integrates teachers, learners and pedagogic practice in a collegial manner, which allows for conversation and dialogue amongst classroom participants, thereby strengthening agency potential of classroom insiders (Gieve & Miller, 2006). It is by engaging in such critical conversations that learners and teachers are best able to make sense of themselves and the word around them (Miller, 2003).

4.2.2 Qualitative case study

In order to explore the how the LDAs mediated learner development within the specific learning context, and to explore learners' conceptualisations of their selves along their learning trajectories, a qualitative case study approach was chosen. It was envisaged that a qualitative approach would allow for a richer description of the routine and problematic moments and meanings in the learners' lives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). The decision to conceptualise the study as a set of case studies was driven by the need to understand the personal and idiosyncratic experiences of the

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individual language learners, rather than trying to identify a single truth applying to them. This allowed for the development of an understanding of each individual's language learning experience by simultaneously focusing on the social, cultural and historical contexts in which the learners participated.   It was believed that the situated nature of case studies would allow for a more thorough and deeper understanding of the complexities of the individual learners and their experiences. In this study, which sought to develop learners toward learner autonomy through a self-exploration of their conceptualisations of their selves along their learning trajectories, it was believed that a case study approach would allow for the learners' emic meanings to emerge.

Stake (2003) draws a distinction between intrinsic and instrumental case studies. An intrinsic case study is not undertaken for the purpose of drawing generalisations; rather, it is undertaken because of an intrinsic interest in the case, for example, this student, this school, this curriculum (Stake, 2003).   An instrumental case study, in contrast, while it may look at a case in depth and examine all of its ordinary and extraordinary details or activities, attempts to understand the particular phenomenon or areas of interest through the case; which in this study were the notions of learner development and self-concepts. By Stake's (2003) definition, the investigation reported on here, is a collective case study, that is, an "instrumental study extended to several cases" (p. 138).   Within the Exploratory Practice approach underpinning this study, the collective cases consisted of the language classroom in which the LDAs took place, the LDAs themselves and the individual students who participated in the LDAs.

4.2.3   Learners' narratives

The use of narratives has become increasingly popular in research into language learners' experiences, what they know, what they understand to be true, and the sociocultural contexts within which they live and learn. In the last decade a number of studies have focused on language learners histories (for example, Norton, 2000; Pavlenko, 2001; Kinginger, 2003; Murphey, Jin & Li-Chi, 2004), the primary aim of which is to obtain first person accounts of language learners' experiences. Through narratives we are able to selectively connect events, across time and space, which ultimately help us shape the 'plots' which are our lives (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000).   Narratives are significant in the social construction of our identities: they act as the interface with self and society and a means by which individuals make sense of their experiences (Nikula & Pitkanen-Huhta, 2008).

In this study learners' narratives were constructed discursively through the LDAs, the artefacts of the activities, their learning journals and the follow-up interviews. The artefacts of the LDAs were a series of posters created by the learners which visually represented their L2 self-concepts, language learning histories, beliefs, attitudes, anxieties and emotions.   These narratives were utilised to explore learners' own conceptualisations of themselves as language learners and the relationship between these self-concepts and their development as language learners along their learning trajectories.   Such an approach was inspired by ethnographic approaches to research. While images and drawings have been used in other areas of education and psychology, they have rarely been used as a research tool in the field of second language learning (Kalaja, Alanen, & Dufva, 2008).

The narratives constructed in this study are not traditional narratives, in the sense that they do not have a beginning, middle or end. Rather, they are snippets of

the language learners' lives, or "mini-narratives" (Nikula & Pitkänen-Huhta, 2008, p. 173). The narratives emerged from the context of the images the participants created during the LDAs and the learning journals and were further constructed through the classroom discussions and the interviews.

4.2.4   A social-constructivist approach

The choice of a research design is aligned with the nature of the research questions, the type of knowledge or information being sought from the research, and the researcher's epistemological and ontological beliefs.   This investigation took a social-constructivist approach to human inquiry, the aim of which was to understand the complex world of lived experience from the point of view of those who live it (Schwandt, 1994). The ontology which underpinned this study was that knowledge and meaning are constructed through an individual's interactions with others in a multitude of social contexts. Given that social-constructivist inquiry is pluralist and relativist, often multiple and conflicting meaning and knowledge is constructed, which are all potentially meaningful (Schwandt, 1994).

This study was situated within the broad domain of sociocultural theory, which seeks to take "into account the complex interactions between the individual acting with meditational means in the sociocultural context" (Swain & Deters, 2007, p. 821). Such an approach allowed the socially situated contexts, that is, the physical and social spaces where the action takes place, for example family life, peer group interaction, participation in institutional contexts like schooling, organised sports activities and workplaces to be examined (Lantolf & Thorne, 2007).   Further, it allowed me, as the teacher-researcher, to engage with the participants in an interactive process where meaning emerged through dialogue and negotiation

(Lincoln & Guba, 2003). In this way, the concepts of importance to this study emerged as they were constructed by the participants and not by some preconceived notions held by the teacher-researcher. The social-constructivist perspective underpinning the investigation contributed to the decision to take an Exploratory Practice approach and qualitative case study approach to the research design.

4.2.5   Longitudinal focus

My proximity to the participants in my role as the teacher-researcher also allowed for the relationships to be sustained over a period of time. This extended temporal dimension to the study was an ideal fit, given the sociocultural and poststructural understandings of the concepts under investigation.   Rather than providing a single snapshot of the learners at one point in time, the longitudinal study allowed for deeper and richer understandings of the idiosyncratic, persons-in-context: not only their histories, imaginations, desires and identities as emergent bilinguals, but also how these emerged along their learning trajectories.

4.3   Participants and recruitment

As the LDAs and journals were classroom-based activities which occurred in my language class, the participants for this study were recruited from this same class. The participants were nine, first year Bachelor of Global Studies (BGS) students enrolled in the researcher's Academic English 1 (AE1) course. In the first week of the course the students and I discussed the curriculum, which included a focus on the development of the students' ability to become independent, autonomous learners, with all ten students enrolled in AE1. In this discussion I spoke with the students about the possibility of meeting curriculum outcomes through LDAs and journal

activities. These activities appealed to the students who seemed to welcome opportunities to interact with others in a meaningful, yet safe way.   Importantly, students were advised that there were no grades or assessment associated with these tasks.

I also explained to the students that I was beginning my doctoral studies which would investigate language learners' experiences and that I was seeking the students' permission to use the artefacts of the LDAs, the posters they would create, and the learners' journals as sources of data for my study and invited students to participate in a series of follow-up interviews throughout the year. A detailed information sheet was also provided to students in their first language, and which included an overview of the study, and detailed the participants' roles and rights, how participants' rights and anonymity would be protected and how data would be managed and stored. Students were invited to read the information sheet carefully and were informed that a brief meeting would be held the following day after class in which they could ask any questions they may have about the study. After class the next day, I met with nine students who expressed their willingness to participate in the study and arranged tentative dates for the first follow-up interviews.

A brief introduction to the participants is presented here, while more detailed descriptions are presented in the results chapters of this report. At the time of the study, the participants were all between 18 and 20 years of age. Other demographic details of the participants are present in Table 4.1, below.   Eight of the nine participants were female, six of whom were Japanese, one was Thai and one was Tahitian. The lone male participant was from New Caledonia. One other male student from the same AE1 course declined to participate in the study.

Table 4.1.
Participants

Participant(Pseudonym)	Nationality	Gender
Mayu	Japanese	Female
Luc	New Caledonian	Male
Rie	Japanese	Female
Kiki	Japanese	Female
Tomo	Japanese	Female
Mami	Japanese	Female
Naomi	Japanese	Female
Paweena	Thai	Female
Maria	Tahitian	Female

All the participants were non-native speakers of English and, at the time the study began, they had already been in New Zealand for about one year. In that first year, because they had not met the English language requirement (TOEFL 550 paper-based test or equivalent) to directly enter the Bachelor of Global Studies programme (BGS), all of the participants completed the year-long English Preparation Programme (EPP) at the Institute. At the end of the EPP the participants' language level was reassessed, again using the TOEFL test. They achieved the minimum TOEFL score of 550, or greater, and were permitted entry into the BGS the following academic year (the year in which the study took place).

4.4 Ethical issues and procedures

This study involved students from my AE1 class and artefacts from classroom-based learning activities (LDAs and learning journals), which is consistent with practitioner research, discussed above. Given this, particular care was given to ethical issues, particularly to the recruitment procedures, receiving informed consent, maintaining anonymity and confidentiality, minimising harm to the participants and reciprocity. In the first instance permission to undertake research at the Institute was sought. Following the guidelines of the Institute's Research Committee a formal letter of application was submitted to the committee outlining the aims of the

research project, intended participants for the study, proposed data collection instruments and timelines and how anonymity and confidentiality would be maintained.   This study also adhered to Massey University's Code of Ethical Conduct for Research Teaching and Evaluation Involving Human Participants. Once permission to proceed with the study was granted by the Institute's Research Committee an application to conduct research was submitted to Massey University's Human Ethics Committee (MUHEC)[4].

As part of the process of seeking informed consent, during the recruitment process I presented potential participants with an overview of the research project, accompanied by an information sheet that was translated into their first languages (see Appendices 5-7). This presentation occurred at the end of the second AE1 class for the semester. During this presentation the potential participants were informed verbally, and through the information sheet, that the LDAs and the journals were part of the course curriculum, and that all students in the class would thus participate in these learning activities whether or not they chose to participate in the study. Students had been introduced to the pedagogical purpose of the LDAs and journals during the first class. The potential participants were also informed that there were no grades or assessment of any kind associated with these learning activities. The information sheet also set out the participants' role in the wider project, their right to participate in any or all of that project and their right to withdraw at any stage throughout the project without notice.   Potential participants were asked to take time to read over the Information Sheet and a time was set to meet with those who wished to participate the following day to answer any questions they may have had. Those who attended the meeting and expressed an interest in participating in the study were

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[4] Application number 08/02, 28th April, 2008 (see Appendices 2-7)

then given a consent form (see Appendix 3). Participants were reminded verbally of

the purpose of the study and their rights at each stage of the data collection process.

All participants were assured that anonymity and confidentiality would be

maintained through the following measures:

- any information collected would be used for the purposes of the
  investigation only;
- records of data would be housed securely by the researcher;
- a pseudonym would be used in any write up of the project (for example,
  doctoral dissertation, scholarly publications and conference
  presentations).

Throughout the project I remained cognizant of, and worked proactively to

minimise, any potential harm to participants of this study. The research project

required participants to discuss their experiences as language learners, their beliefs

about language learning, and their attitudes and so on.   Such topics are very personal

and for individuals to discuss with another person their beliefs is to reveal something

of themselves, which involves a certain amount of emotional risk taking.

Participants were reassured (firstly in the Information Sheet and then at the

beginning of any data collection activity) that should they feel uncomfortable at any

time they were free to not participate and there would be no negative consequences

for doing so. At the beginning of the LDAs all participants were asked to respect the

views held by and expressed by other participants. All my interactions with the

participants were conducted in a supportive, non-judgemental and non-threatening

manner.

I was aware of the potential power imbalance between myself and the

participants and therefore adopted an appropriate tone in order to put participants at

ease and to gain their continued trust and contributions. Some time was spent talking

to participants about my teaching experience, thoughts on learner development and

my interest in students' experiences. I adopted the position of an experienced and reflective teacher, advising the participants that the study was part of my doctoral dissertation and that like the participants I was also on a journey to improve my understanding of language learning and teaching. During the data collection activities, I emphasised to the participants that this was their time to self-explore their learning experiences and I was eager to listen to whatever they wanted to say. The tasks were deliberately open-ended so that the participants could say as much as or as little as they felt comfortable, without feeling that certain responses were expected of them.

Researchers have an obligation to ensure that participants benefit in some way for their contributions. I perceived that there were several possible benefits to the students, whether they participated in the study or not. In addition to the pedagogical purpose of the LDAs and journals, which were aimed at developing learners' self-awareness as language learners, it was hoped that these would provide all students with an opportunity to develop meta-language useful for discussing the learning process and their learning experiences. The interviews gave those students who participated in the study the opportunity to practice their English speaking skills outside of class, which is something not all students in this particular context got to experience. In addition, by working one-on-one with their teacher they received personalised attention, which hopefully encouraged and supported them in their studies.

4.5   Data collection: procedures and techniques

The learners' narratives emerged from the LDAs, the posters created by learners during the LDAs, their learning journals and the follow-up interviews. An

overview of these data collection techniques and their relationship to the research

questions is presented in Table 4.2, and discussed in detail below.

Table 4.2
An overview of the data collection

Questions	Sources of Data	Techniques/Instruments
1. In what ways, within an Exploratory Practice approach, did the LDAs contribute to the quality of the classroom life? 2. What were the learners' self-conceptualisations as language learners and users as they participated in learning & social communities – past, present and imagined future?	1st year, Bachelor of Global Studies students, enrolled in Academic English, Level 1	LDAs Artefacts of LDAs (i.e. posters) 'Now & Then' images Learning journals Follow-up, semi structured interviews
3. How did the learners negotiate their selves along their learning trajectories?	Teacher-as-researcher	Research journal

4.5.1 Data collection phases

As detailed in Figure 4.1, below, the data was collected in two phases. The

first phase took place in the subjects first semester of their BGS beginning mid-April,

2008. During this first phase the subjects were enrolled in my AE1 class. The

second phase occurred during Semester 2, which ran from the beginning September

to the end of December, 2008. In this second phase the subjects were no longer in

the teacher-researcher's class.

Week 1	• Overview to study • Recruitment of participants
Week 2	• LDA1-Language Learning History • Journal Entry 1
Week 3	• LDA2-Goals & Motivations • Journal Entry 2
Week 4	• LDA3-Language Learning Process • Journal Entry 3
Week 5	• LDA4-Influences • Journal Entry 4
Week 6	• Journal Entry 5 • Follow-up Interview 1
Week 7	• Follow-up Interview 1
Week 8	• LDA5-SWOT Analysis • Journal Entry 6
Week 9	• LDA6-Language students are like... • Journal Entry 7
Week 10	• LDA7-Language teachers are like... • Journal Entry 8
Week 11	• LDA8-Great expectations • Journal Entry 9
Week 12	• Journal Entry 10 • Follow-up Interview 2
Week 13	• Follow-up Interview 2
Week 14	• Follow-up Interview 2

Research Journal

Phase 2 – Semester 2

| Weeks 12 ~ 14 | • Follow-up Interview 3 |

Figure 4.1. Phases of the research project

4.5.2 Learner development activities

Over the course of Semester 1, the learners participated in a series LDAs

which were integrated into the curriculum as pedagogical response to the course

objectives and the graduate profile of the BGS programme. The details of the LDAs

are presented in Table 4.3, below.

Table 4.3

Schedule for Learner Development Activities

Activity	Description
Activity 1	**Language Learning History** On the poster paper, draw a timeline to show your language learning history. Include on the timeline significant events in your learning history by drawing a picture representing these events and/or by writing a few sentences describing each of the events.
Activity 2	**Goals and Motivations** What are your dreams, your goals and your aspirations? What do you want to do? What do you want be? What DON'T you want to do? What DON'T you want to be? On the poster paper, create a collage of images to answer these questions.
Activity 3	**The Language Learning Process** Draw a diagram or flowchart (or any image you like) that shows the process of learning a second language.
Activity 4	**Influences** Step 1: On the poster paper, draw a picture of yourself as a language learner (that is, how do you see yourself as a language learner). Step 2: Think of the people, things or events which have influenced you in becoming the person you described in the picture. These influences can be positive or negative. You can draw a picture, attach a photo or write a few sentences to represent these influences.
Activity 5	**SWOT Analysis** On the poster paper, describe yourself in terms of your: Strengths – things you feel you do well Weaknesses – things you feel you don't do well Opportunities – things (including events and people) that are available to you and that will help you to achieve your goals Threats – things (including events and people) that might hinder you in achieving your goals
Activity 6	**Language students are like ….** Think of a metaphor to describe language students. Draw a picture or use a picture from a magazine that represents this metaphor.
Activity 7	**Language teachers are like ….** Think of a metaphor to describe language teachers. Draw a picture or use a picture from a magazine that represents this metaphor.
Activity 8	**Great Expectations - Now and Then** Think of the time before you came to [the Institute] and before you entered the degree program. What did you expect your experiences to be? What did you expect your life to be like? Now that you have been at [the Institute] a little while and have almost finished your first term, is the reality different from your expectations? On the poster paper, represent your expectations **before** and compare them to your reality **now**.

During the LDAs the students discussed their language learning experiences and understandings of themselves as language learners with their classmates, after which, they individually represented these experiences and understandings in the creation of posters. By the end of the course the learners had created seven posters which represented their learning experiences, their beliefs, their goals and motivations and their attitudes about language learning.

The rationale for the design of the LDAs was informed by the literature which argues that approaches to language learner development must dedicate time to raising the learners' awareness of their learning goals and objectives, the resources and strategies needed to achieve their goals, the language learning process and their motivations and attitudes toward language learning (Sheerin, 1997). The LDAs and the creation of these posters acted as a launching pad for me as the teacher-researcher to engage in explicit dialogue in the classroom with learners, and promote discussion amongst learners, about these issues. Given the complexities of these concepts and the English language level of the participants, the visual medium provided a unique way to elicit the inner thoughts and feelings of the students.

In regards to the purpose of the investigation, it was felt that the artefacts of the LDAs, that is the posters created, would be ideal mechanisms to explore with the learners their conceptions of themselves as language learners, the relationship between their self-concept and their motivations and how they negotiate their selves along their learning trajectories. This was an ideal fit with the sociocultural framework underpinning the study, which 1) views the individual as possessing multiple and complex identities, a unique personality, a unique background and a set of individual goals, motives and intentions, and 2) attempts to widen the

investigative lens and bring into focus the complex meanings individuals make as they interact in physical and social spaces.

On the first day of class, after spending some time introducing ourselves, I provided an overview to the course. I distributed the Course Outline to students and provided an overview to the course aims and objectives and answered their practical questions about course and assignments. The second day began with a discussion on elements of the Course Outline, such as *self-directed*, *learner-centred*, and *strengths and weaknesses*, followed by a brainstorming session with students how these might be dealt with in class. After providing a handout detailing the LDAs (see Appendix 8), I facilitated a discussion on why, how and when we were going to work on the LDAs in class together.

The LDAs typically began with students working in groups of three or four to discuss the respective task. Students would then break out of their groups and work individually on creating their poster. Paper, magazines, scissors, glue, poster pens and pencils were available to students to use in the creation of their posters. After about twenty to thirty minutes students would re-group (not necessarily with their original group members) and present their posters. Often the student presenting the poster would field questions from the group members, though this was not prescribed. The use of visual images as a source of data was later utilised in the final interviews at the end of study to elicit from the students changes in their self-concepts and motivations which they felt had occurred during the year.

4.5.3 'Now and Then' images

Given students' workload and pressures of preparing for final exams, LDA8 which had originally been planned to occur toward the end of the course did not

eventuate. I decided to incorporate this task in the second phase of the data collection process. In preparation for the third and final follow-up interview the participants were asked to find and bring along two images: one which they felt represented themselves at the beginning of the academic year and the other which they felt represents themselves at the end of the year. Again, these images were used as a launching pad to discuss the issues under investigation.

4.5.4 Learning journals

Journals and diaries have become common sources of research data in the field of second language learning and teaching. They are a particularly useful mechanism for capturing subjects' accounts of their language learning experiences, beliefs, anxieties and attitudes, "granting the subject both agency and voice" (Pavlenko, 2007, p. 180). As part of the AE1 curriculum, the students were required to keep a journal to reflect on their language learning experiences occurring both within and outside of their classes and the Institute. The task of keeping a learning journal was introduced to the AE1 class in the first week of classes, with the students being given very broad suggestions on what they should write, such as:

- What learning activities did you do that you liked/didn't like?
- Why did you like/not like them?
- Other than in the classroom, where have you used/practiced your English?
- What did you think about this experience?

The journals operated as an ongoing dialogue with the students. The students were asked to submit the journals on a weekly basis, and upon reading the entries I composed a short response. The responses included comments regarding the subjects' entries and offered encouragement and advice to the subject (see Appendix

9, for example). Salient points from the journal exchanges were also explored further in the follow-up interviews.

4.5.5   Follow-up, semi-structured interviews

Interviews are very powerful tools in qualitative research: they "give voice to common people, allowing them to freely present their life situations in their own words, and be open for a close personal interaction between the researchers and their subjects" (Kvale, 2006, p. 481). Interviews are not neutral tool for data gathering; rather, they are "active interactions between two (or more) people leading to negotiated contextually based results" (Fontana & Frey, 2003, p. 62). This was a very important consideration when designing the research for this project, the aim of which was to gain insights into learners' own conceptualisations of self. Semi-structured interviews were used in the research project, allowing some structure to the interview process, while ensuring some consistency between the interviews with different participants. At the same time it also allowed me, as the researcher, and the participants the freedom to be responsive to the dialogical process through a freer flowing exchange. Through the dialogical context of the semi-structured interview, personal narratives were constructed.

Throughout the investigation each participant was interviewed three times. The first and second interviews were conducted twice during Semester 1 - around weeks 6 and 13 of the academic calendar, respectively - and were approximately 60 minutes in length. The follow-up interviews provided an opportunity to elicit the participants' interpretations or explanations of the data emerging from the posters created during the Learner Development Activities. This is what Lincoln (1995) has

termed member checking and is a technique for both generating data and gaining deeper insight into the phenomenon being investigated.

The questions asked during the follow-up interviews were intentionally broad, leaving room for the participants to put forward their own interpretations, for example, "What can you tell me about the poster?". Where verification or clarification was required questions such as "You seem to be saying ..." and "Do you mean...?" were used. In addition to questioning participants about the poster they created, I inquired about the participants' learning and other activities, both inside and outside the classroom. The aim was to obtain a broader picture of learners' experiences and of the various communities in which learners were participating. These questions, too, were quite broad: "What have you been doing on campus?", "What activities have you been doing in town?" and "What has been the highlight/lowlight of the year so far?"

The third and final follow-up interviews occurred at the end of Semester 2, in the two weeks prior to the formal end of classes. In Semester 2, the participants were no longer students in any of the researcher's classes, having moved on to AE2. This interview focused on the 'Now and Then' images participants were invited to bring along. This final meeting was also used to review the LDA posters to 1) give participants an opportunity add any final comments, 2) discuss any changes which may have occurred, 3) seek clarification or explanation regarding the data which emerged from Phase 1 of the data collection process, and 4) to look forward into the following year and discuss the participants' expectations, hopes and desires for the coming academic year.

4.5.6   Research journal

Throughout the study I maintained a reflective research journal. Much has been written about the role and benefits of teachers maintaining reflective journals as a means to record their teaching behaviour and thoughts; it made sense that a research journal could act in the same manner.   In this study the journal was not a journal in the traditional sense, with sequential daily or weekly thoughts and ideas recorded in a notebook. In essence the journal acted as repository of my ideas, thoughts and feelings about the research project including the following:

- annotated sketches out the research plan
- notes about the design, development and execution in the classroom of the LDAs
- ideas and connections about the data being collected
- notes about follow up questions to pursue in the interviews
- references to published literature on salient points emerging from the data
- background information such as course outlines and graduate profiles
- ideas or thoughts generated through discussions with fellow doctoral students
- notes taken during observations of and discussion with teaching peers.

The journal became part of the iterative research process, and not just a final product, as I continuously revisited and built upon earlier ideas, thoughts, conversations and research events.

While this investigation was not focused on teachers' beliefs and experiences, the intent to incorporate data from the observations and discussions was included in both the ethics application to the Institute's Research and Massey University's Human Ethics Committee (see Appendix 2).   Informed consent was sought from teaching peers to use classroom observations and subsequent discussions in the study, as it was anticipated that data related to their beliefs about language teaching and learning, their approach to teaching at the Institute and their previous teaching experience would contribute to understanding the contextual background in which

this study was set. The relevant Information Sheet and Consent Form are attached in Appendices 10 and 11, respectively.

4.6 Data analysis

The process for data analysis in this study falls firmly within the sociological tradition, which treats written and visual text as windows into human experience (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Consistent with this tradition, the data was analysed using grounded theory methods which are a "set of flexible analytic guidelines" that enable researchers to simultaneously focus on data collection and analysis, "with each informing and focusing the other throughout the research process" (Charmaz, 2008, p. 204). In this way, rather than analysing data in a predetermined manner and imposing preconceived codes, the analysis was grounded in the data itself (Charmaz, 2008). This allowed for the data to remain true to the learners' voices.

Following grounded theory guidelines, data were analysed using an iterative process, which involved a number of interrelated stages: data reduction, data display and conclusion and verification (Keeves & Sowden, 1997). Through this process, as the researcher, I became more and more 'grounded' in the data, developing increasingly richer understandings of the participants' learning experiences in a rigorous and detailed manner. This process of data analysis was applied to data generated by the LDAs, learners' journals, interview transcripts and the reflective research journal. Essentially, the process of data analysis occurred in two main stages: in-process analysis and post-process analysis.

4.6.1 In-process analysis

Data analysis began with a treatment of the data emerging from the posters created during the LDAs and journal entries, primarily in preparation for the follow-up interviews. Copies of the posters and journals were obtained prior to each of Follow-up Interviews 1 and 2, and notations and connections of the most salient aspects were made for each individual participant.   By way of example, below is an extract of Mayu's LDA7 poster on which she presented her various metaphors for a language learner.
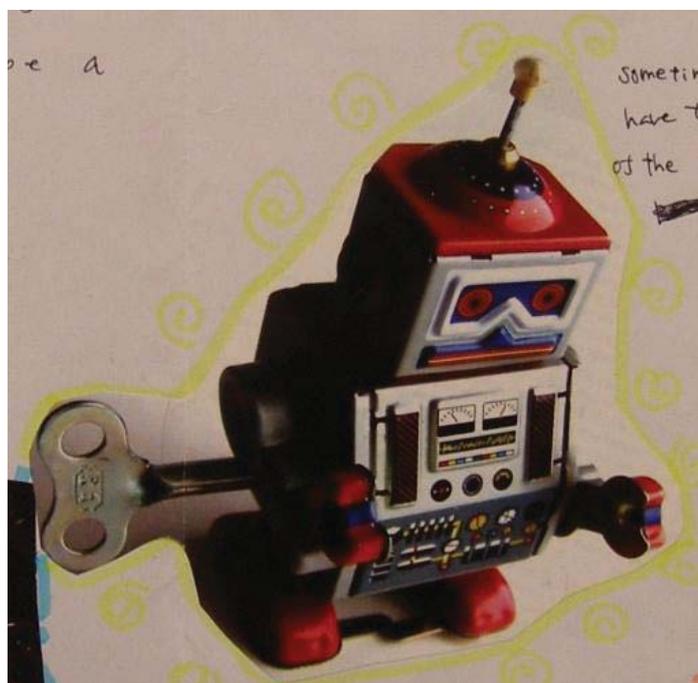
Image 4.1. Extract from LDA6-Mayu

The images Mayu presented, including this one of the robot, and their meanings and importance to Mayu were explored in the follow-up interview, as shown in Table 4.4, below.

Table 4.4

Extract from follow-up interview-Mayu

Turn	Script
JK	So how about the robot image, how do you think that matches the learner?
Mayu-I2-3	I think the robot walk, like continuously. Like, same rhythm. Keep going. Students, if want to improve their English, need to walk continuously.
JK	And at the same pace?
Mayu-I2-4	Yes. And they have to keep going, like a robot.
JK	OK. The thing with a robot is often at the back of the robot there is some key that you have to turn.
Mayu-I2-5	Ah, yes.
JK	Who is responsible for turning the key?
Mayu-I2-6	Who? I think myself.

This step in the analysis process meant that rather than simply relying on my interpretations of her images, Mayu could offer her own interpretations. Managing the data in this heuristic manner lent itself to creating a more complete and richer story of the individual language learners. At each stage this process provided an increasingly deeper understanding of each of the individual participants' personal histories, which informed the preparation for future rounds of interviews.

4.6.2   Post-process analysis

This stage of the data analysis process began after the second follow-up interview at which time data on each of the participants was brought back together for a higher level of analysis.   This began with the thematic coding of the data. In qualitative data analysis, themes are considered to be categories of knowledge, meaning and experience (DeSantis & Ugarrizza, 2000).   Themes can be 'fuzzy' constructs that may be identified by the investigator before, during and/or after data collection (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).   The themes for this study were partially

determined by the research questions which focused on issues of learner development and self-concepts and context/community. Other themes, such as beliefs, emotions and motivations emerged from the data. The process of coding began with a careful, line-by-line reading (and re-reading) of the interview transcripts and journals, and section-by-section readings of the posters. Notations were made on the data documents and key texts were highlighted. Connections were made between the data emerging from the three data documents, and notations made. Themes were split, while others merged. Finally, through this iterative process, a stable set of themes and sub-themes emerged for each of the participants. Table 4.5, below, shows the themes and subthemes identified for one participant, Luc, through this coding process. As can be seen, each of the themes was given a colour coding. Table 4.6, below, provides an example of how Luc's interview data were coded according to these themes.

Table 4.5
Themes and sub-themes-Luc

Themes	Sub-themes	
Community `green`	on-campus shops/town Academic English other classes New Zealand New Caledonia band family	negotiating access participation non-participation others
Self-concept `red`	future imagined self past self present self as a student in NC as a English language learner/speaker as a professional musician as a traveller	negotiating self confidence doubts dreams/desires/hopes positive/negative others
Identity `light blue`	being French	negotiating conflict

Motivation blue	investment	
	affordances	
	self-regulation	
Beliefs pink	about language learning	process
	self-efficacy beliefs	students' and teachers' role
	self-beliefs = self-concept	
Emotions yellow	frustration	
	happiness	
	anger	
	disappointment	
	excitement	
	hope	

Table 4.6

Extract from follow-up interview 1-Luc

Turn	Script	Themes
I1-14	Yeah, um, I know I have to speak more quickly as them, because I don't want to feel the French drummer. I want to feel the drummer of the band. I want ... it's a kind of improvement of my English. I want to feel I am English, not French, without ... maybe I can keep my French accent, because I can't ... but to ... without mistakes in my language, to understand exactly what the members what. And I feel more confident because I am not scared about the understanding. I am scared about what I want to explain about what I feel, but about what the members say I can understand easier.	Band –participation and access Self-concept – future self – as band member want to feel English, but still be French Investment emotion – scared/not scared

Data reduction was followed by a reorganisation and re-presentation of the
data. Tables, matrices, visual displays, flowcharts can all be used to display the
qualitative data (Keeves & Sowden, 1997). In this study this process involved
choosing cutting and pasting segments of the text (verbatim quotes) and posters that
the researcher felt were representative of the themes to create a separate profile of
each participant based on these themes. Throughout the numerous iterations
involved in this process, data were organised and reorganised according to the
themes and meaning extracted to draw preliminary and then final conclusions.

4.7 Trustworthiness

In constructivist inquiry the notions of reliability, validity and generalisability traditionally used in the positivist paradigm of scientific research have been replaced by the notion of trustworthiness. Lincoln (1995) established alternative criteria for ensuring a systematic and thorough methodological approach to qualitative inquiry. These criteria are presented in Table 4.7, below, alongside their parallels from the positivist perspective.

Table 4.7
Criteria for trustworthiness

Scientific Paradigm - Rigour	Constructivist Paradigm - Trustworthiness
Internal validity	Credibility
External validity	Transferability
Reliability	Dependability
Objectivity	Confirmability

(Adapted from: Lincoln, 1995, p. 277)

Credibility has to do with descriptions and explanations, more specifically, whether the explanations fit the descriptions and whether the results are believable (Janesick, 2003). The issue of transferability deals with the extent to which the results can be generalised to other subjects or settings. Dependability, or accuracy of results, is a challenge for the qualitative researcher, particularly when exploring multiple concepts or dynamic and ever-changing contexts (Trochim & Donnelly, 2006). Whether results can be verified or corroborated is an issue of confirmability.

Thus the aim of the qualitative researcher is to ensure trustworthiness of the procedures and data generated through these procedures. This necessitates intensive and prolonged engagement with the research, along with careful descriptions of the research setting, methodology, analysis procedures and researcher's position (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). In this study, as the teacher-researcher, I engaged with

the participants over a period of a year, with the first six months in particular being an intensive period of interaction. A detailed research plan for data collection and analysis was devised and a research journal used to record (amongst other things) details related to the research setting. In the presentation of each of the student cases, the use of quotations and images provided by the participants establishes the credibility of the analysis and interpretations (Chapelle & Duff, 2003). These have all been used in the write up of this study to represent this study as faithfully and completely as possible.

Member checking and triangulation techniques are both mechanisms for clarifying meaning (Stake, 2003). In this study data was sought from multiple participants and through the use of multiple instruments, that is, the LDAs, the posters created by the participants during the LDAs, learning journals and the follow-up interviews. Triangulation of data collection methods enhanced the credibility and dependability of the findings, as data was cross-checked from multiple sources. This also contributed to providing a richer, fuller picture of the phenomenon under investigation. Member checking was another means by which researcher cross-check findings or understandings. The follow-up interviews with the participants provided an opportunity for them to explain or clarify their interpretations of the images they had created through the LDAs.

4.8   Summary

This chapter presented details of the research design for this study. It began with a description of the research approach and methodological choices, followed by a detailed account of data collection techniques, procedures and analysis and concluded with issues related to ethics and the trustworthiness of results. The

findings from the research activities described above are presented in the next two chapters. Chapter 5 presents findings pertinent to the first research question, which sought, through an Exploratory Practice approach, to understand the ways in which the LDAs contribute to the quality of classroom life. In Chapter 6 the investigative lens shifts from the broader focus of the language classroom to the individual participants. Three student cases, which draw on data derived from the individuals' LDAs, and supported by data from their learning journals and interviews, are presented through three student cases. The findings are analysed in relation to the second and third research questions which sought to understand the learners' self-conceptualisations as language learners and users as they participated in learning and social contexts (past, present and imagined future) and the ways in which they negotiated their selves along their learning trajectories.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE QUALITY OF THE CLASSROOM LIFE

5.1   Introduction

Exploratory Practice places emphasis on the social rather than the technical dimensions of language learning and teaching and provides opportunities for teachers and learners to work together to develop an understanding of their classroom lives (Allwright, 2003). What constitutes quality of the classroom life is understood subjectively by classroom participants in the ways in which they interact and engage in tasks and with each other. In this way quality of the classroom life is discursively constructed within the classroom as classroom practice is enacted (Gieve & Miller, 2006). Quality may be felt differently by participants depending on their sense of purpose, their willingness to participate and communicate, their enjoyment, the connections they make with others and connections they make between their lives inside and outside of the classroom (their personal lives, their social lives and other areas of their student lives).

Drawing on data generated from the LDAs, and supported by reflections from the researcher's journal, learner interviews and the learners' journal, this chapter examines the ways, within an Exploratory Practice approach, the Learner Development Activities contributed to the quality of the classroom life.   To best provide an understanding of the contributions the LDAs made to the quality of the classroom life a decision needed to be made about how best to convey the findings to the reader. As the LDAs themselves represent a case within the collective case study, it was decided to write up a detailed chronological account of the LDAs as they occurred within the language classroom. The account of each of the LDAs focuses on their contribution to the quality of the classroom life and each is

structured around the key themes that emerged through the learners' participation in the activities and through the artefacts of the LDAs, that is, the posters created by the learners. In addition, in keeping with Exploratory Practice, which seeks to inform the practice of classroom teaching and learning, reflections on how successful (or otherwise) each of the LDAs were, from a reflective practitioner's perspective, are included.

The findings presented in this chapter reveal that the creation of the posters during the LDAs acted as a meditational means for participants to make visible, to understand and to share (with their peers and the teacher-researcher) the experiences, the people and the events which they felt contributed to (or hindered) their language learning. The activities gave voice to the learners' emotions, their L2 beliefs, their L2 goals and their motivations. A discussion of these findings is presented in Chapter 7.

Referencing the data in this chapter follows particular conventions. The students' LDAs are referenced as LDA1-Mayu, for example. The use of [RJ, 24/04/08] references data taken from the researcher's journal entry recorded on 24th April, 2008. Data taken from students' learning journals are coded as [J1-Mayu], for example, referring to the student Mayu's first journal entry. Student interview data is coded as [I1-60-Mayu], referring to Interview 1 with Mayu and the 60th turn in that interview.

5.2   LDA1: Language learning histories

This first LDA began in a in a way that would continue for the LDAs that followed. Once students had arrived and settled into class and housekeeping tasks were attended to, we began to focus on the activity. After talking through the task

and procedures with the students, and with an *"OK, let's go"* from me, the students formed three groups of their choosing and one-by-one they recounted their language learning histories [RJ, 25/04/08].

The conversations were a little awkward at first, as the students were a little shy and perhaps wondering if they were 'doing it right'. Some students spoke more than others and some students asked more questions of the others or interjected when others were speaking, perhaps reflecting different personalities and different levels of comfort with or engagement in the task. During this preliminary period I moved between the groups asking questions where I thought appropriate and modelling the type of interaction I was anticipating. After about twenty minutes, as conversations were slowing down, students moved back to their own work space to begin working on their individual posters. None of the students had prepared by bringing materials such as pictures or coloured pens. Anticipating this possibility, I had brought along several packets of coloured pens, glue, scissors and a stack of assorted magazines. As they worked through the process of creating their posters the students carried on casual conversations (in English) with each other and freely borrowed or exchanged materials. Once students had completed their posters they paired with a student who was not in their original group and recounted their language learning histories as depicted on their posters.

The learners charted their L2 learning histories in diverse ways and with varying degrees of detail. A couple of the students drew a timeline broken down according to age and/or school year and noted the level of language they were studying at different points of time. For example, Paweena wrote "greetings, thank you, sorry", "some tenses" and "short words" on her timeline at the ages of 7-12, when she was a primary school student [LDA1-Paweena]. Mami also drew a linear

timeline which she divided according to both age and level of schooling and recorded her experiences learning English and other languages such as German, Chinese and French [LDA1-Mami].

Other students, such as Marie and Rie, represented their histories graphically (see Images 5.1 and 5.2, respectively, below). This was likely influenced by the focus of our recent AE lessons which was to describe information contained in graphs and tables [RJ, 25/04/08]. Plotted against key points on their graphs, they wrote text to narrate their L2 learning histories. Next to her text Rie drew images depicting her and others, adding another dimension to her narrative. Captured in the images she drew of herself was her emotional state at different stages of her language learning journey.
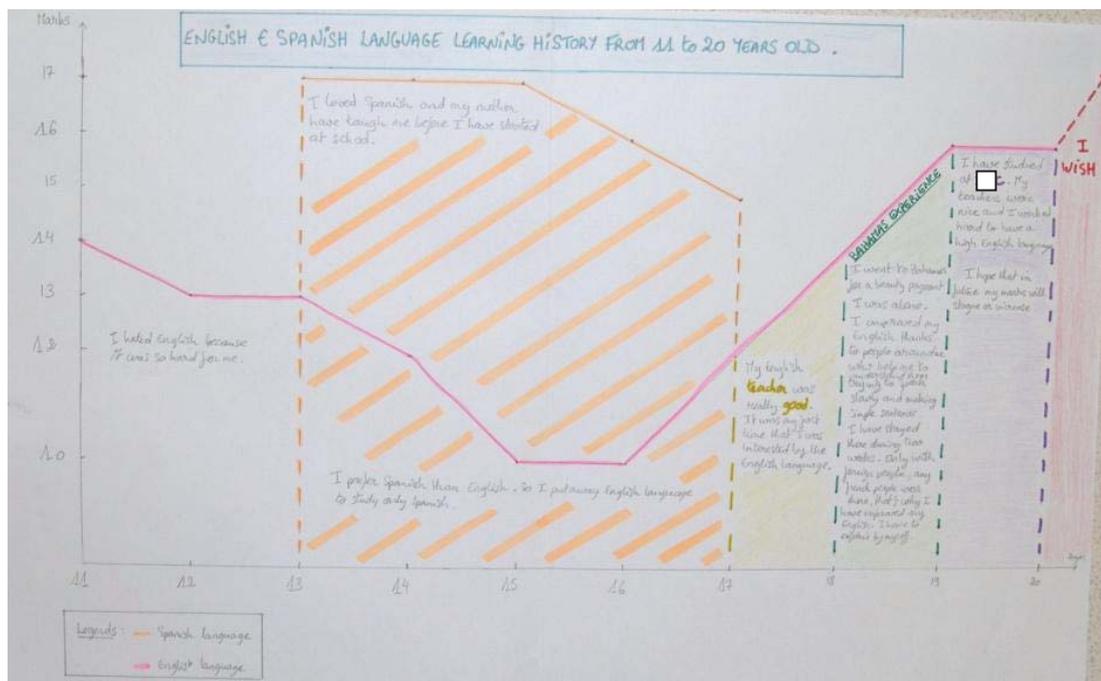
Image 5.1. LDA1-Marie[5]
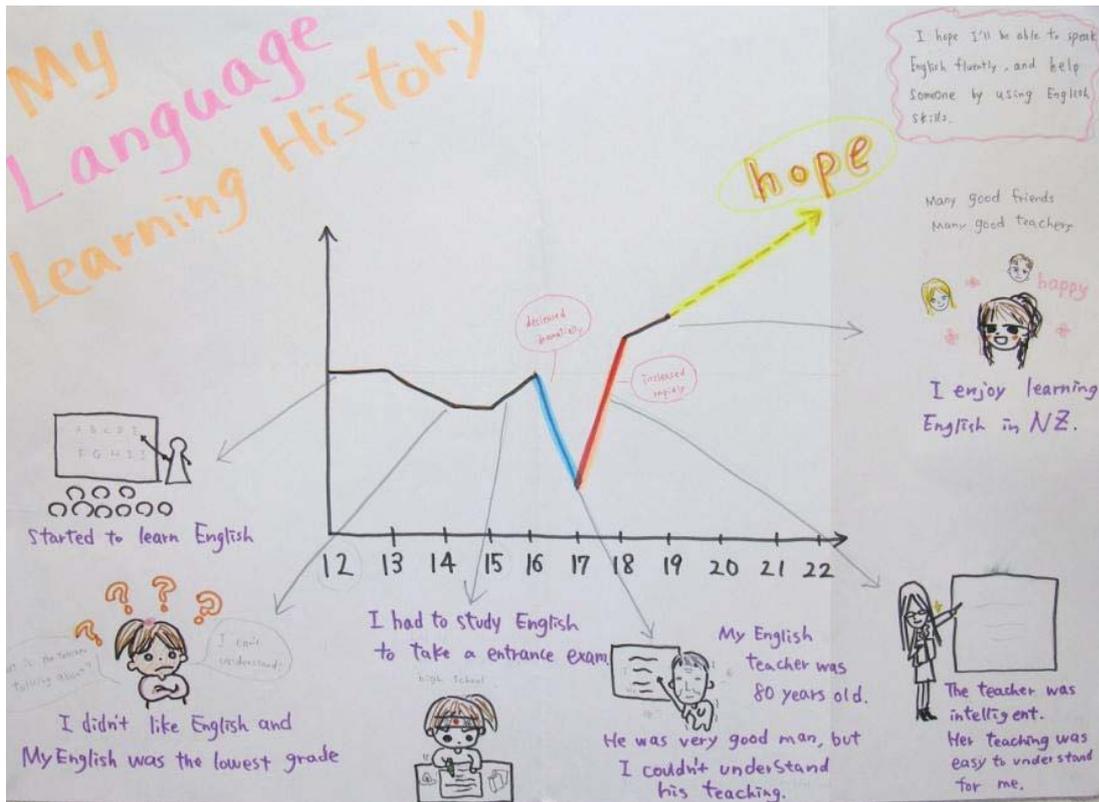
Image 5.2. LDA1-Rie
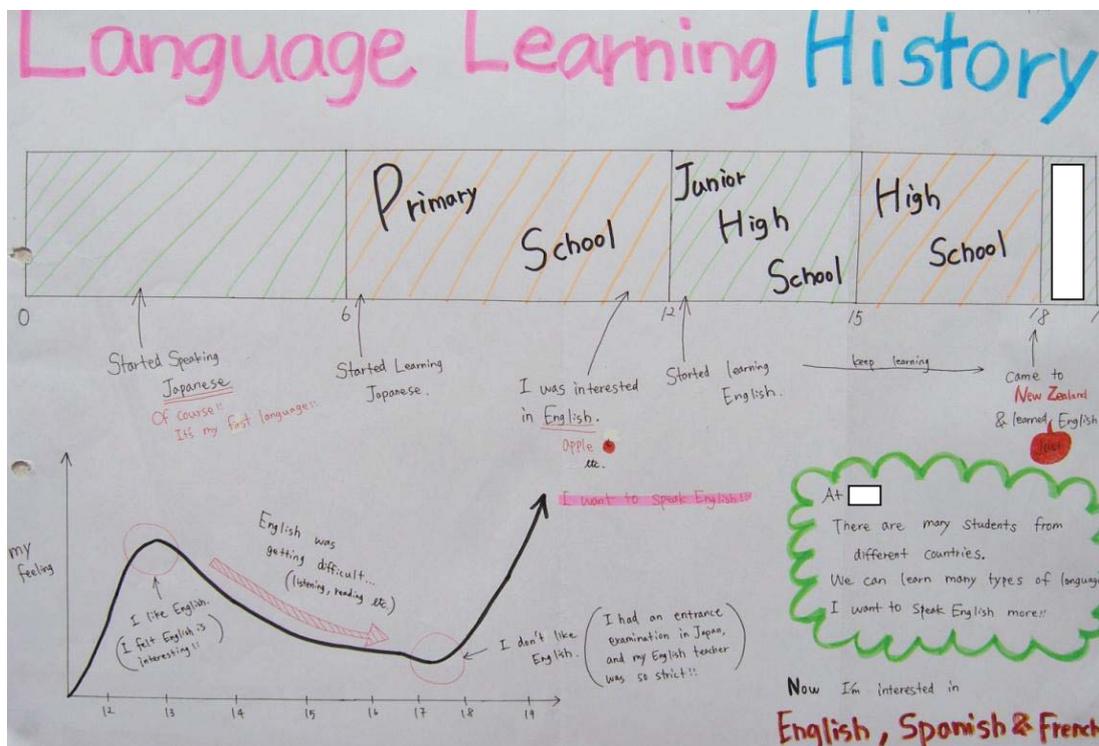
Image 5.3. LDA1-Tomi

In her poster, Tomi drew a timeline broken down according to her age and key learning stages, such as primary school and junior high school (see Image 5.3, above). Separately, she also represented feelings toward studying English in a graph, highlighting the wave of emotions as she grew older and progressed through her English language studies.

Mayu drew images representing herself as a learner at several key points in time and different geographic locations, such as in Japan, Denmark and New Zealand (see Image 5.4, below). Quite expressively, she captured both critical experiences and corresponding emotions along her learning journey.
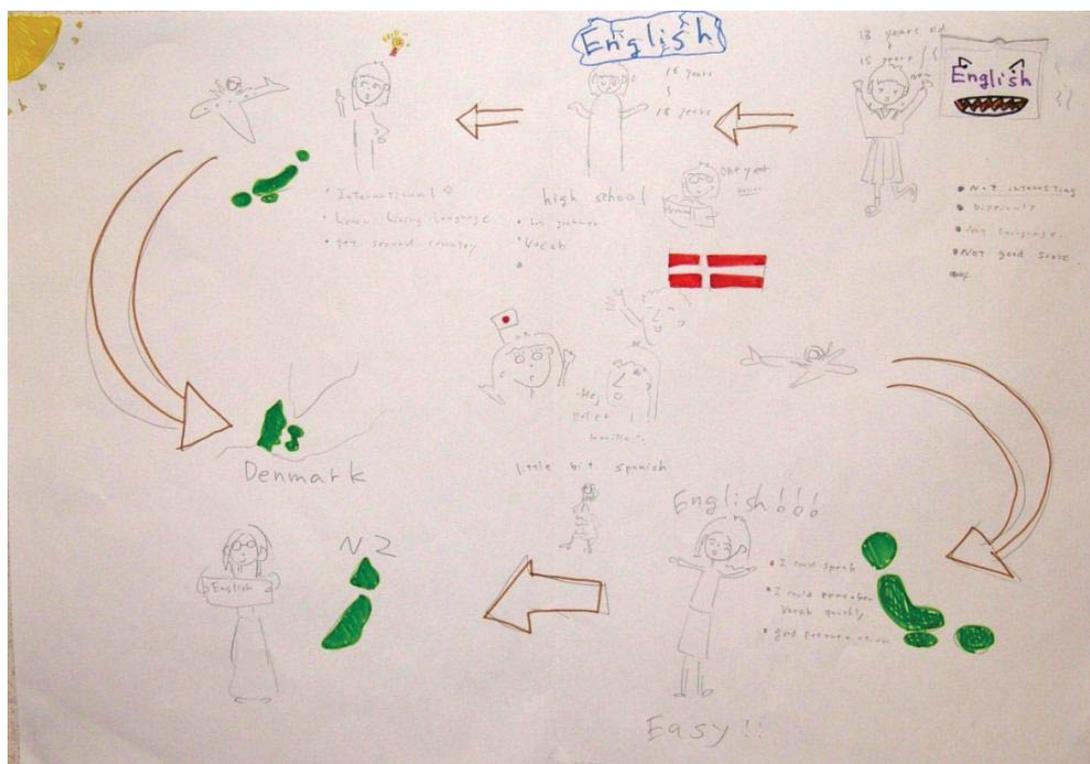
Image 5.4. LDA1-Mayu

In charting their language learning histories a number of the students made specific references to people and events which they felt positively and negatively influenced their language development. For example, Marie's English language

development stalled when she changed her focus to studying Spanish. Access to Spanish through her mother made studying the language easier and more enjoyable for Marie. After more positive experiences with a particular English language teacher, who she considered to be good, and the experience of travelling overseas to participate in a beauty pageant, where she had to draw on her English skills to interact with other girls her age, Marie charted an upswing in both her English skills and attitudes to learning the language. Luc also mentioned his family, particularly his mother who spoke English quite well, and his international travel experiences as contributors to his increased interest and proficiency in English [LDA1-Luc]. For Rie, studying for exams and her experience with an elderly male teacher whose teaching she could not understand resulted in relatively poor achievement in English. She noted an improvement in her English development after studying with an "intelligent" teacher [LDA1-Rie].

All the students depicted themselves as poor L2 learners in their earlier days of studying English and this corresponded to negative attitudes to learning the language. In the earliest days of studying English, many of the students expressed a curiosity with the language along with a corresponding positive attitude. However, as the language became more difficult and the pressure of formal studies and exams intensified, this enthusiasm plummeted. This was most vividly seen in Tomi's graph where she mapped her feelings for English against her years of English learning experience. After an early peak when she started to learn English at the age of 12, over the next 6 years her attitudes and her perceptions of herself as a language learner deteriorated. Self-perceptions as being a poor student and the associated negative feelings can be seen in Rie's posters where she drew very expressive images of herself looking stressed and unhappy. For example, she depicted herself as a 14

year old as quite sad and confused, writing that: "I don't like English and My English was the lowest grade" [LDA1-Rie].

Despite their earlier negative experiences with and feeling towards English and their negative perceptions of their language skills, the students seemed to experience a turn-around at the age of 17 or 18. This shift corresponded with the end of their formal studies in their home country and entering a new language learning environment in New Zealand. Rie, in contrast to her images of her earlier self, drew a picture of herself appearing extremely happy at the age of 18 with the caption "I enjoy learning English in NZ" [LDA1-Rie]. Many of the students expressed on their posters how hopeful they were that this upward trend would continue during their time studying in New Zealand. They represented their L2 study in New Zealand and beyond (that is, their future) with words such as "hope" [LDA1-Rie] and "I wish" [LDA1-Marie] "I will improve my English" [LDA1-Luc] and "I want to speak English" [LDA1-Tomi].

Teacher reflection

My main thought after completing the first of the LDAs was "phew!" [RJ, 25/04/08]. I was relieved for a number of reasons; mostly that students had participated so willingly and cooperatively. While we had discussed the LDAs the week prior and students had indicated their interest in both the LDAs and the study, I was not sure how this would translate when it actually came time to undertake them. During the group segments of LDA1 the students seemed a little self-conscious and their exchanges were a little stilted and sometimes brief. Despite this, they did seem to have a genuine curiosity about others' language learning background. In particular, I noted that a couple of the Japanese female students were very attentive

to the non-Japanese students as they described their language learning histories [RJ, 24/04/08]. As the Japanese students seemed to have very similar backgrounds as language learners, I wondered if they were particularly curious about how different or similar their experiences were to those of different nationalities [RJ, 24/04/08]. The desire to connect with international students came up a number of times during the study, in both the LDAs and in the interviews. Rie, for example, frequently express her desire to get to know students of other nationalities, their language and their culture:

> Um, I want to be around international culture. And I want to know Kiwi, so ... [I1-34-Rie]

> Because I am interested in international students' thoughts and ideas, so I can know their ideas in English, but I can also talk to them in their own language to learn. [I3-154-Rie]

While students may have had varying degrees of engagement in this LDA (and with others) at the time they took place, over time and with opportunities to reflect, several of the students noted the impact of LDA1. As reported by Marie in her final journal entry, for example, LDA1 allowed her "to be clear in my mind to know about my goal ... or to understand how I improved my English" [J10-Marie].

It was my hope that the activity would allow students to make critical connections to people and events which impacted, positively and negatively, on their language learning experiences. That a number of the students did so made this a successful activity. What I did not expect was the expressions of associated emotions [RJ, 24/04/08]. Rie and Mayu drew pictures of themselves in various emotional states and Tomi drew a graph of her feelings about English. Marie and Naomi used words and exclamation points, respectively, to reveal the emotional impact of their experiences:

I love Spanish [LDA1-Marie]

The club member is not only [Institute] student or Japanese. good!!! [LDA1-Naomi]

That the LDA afforded students the opportunity to express how these key people and events made them feel was to me another indicator of the success of this LDA.

One element of LDA1 that left the strongest impression on me was the students' expressions of hope and expectation for their time in New Zealand. Despite previous relatively unhappy experiences as L2 learners in their home countries the students appeared optimistic about their future as L2 learners and users. Later, when reflecting on this first LDA, I felt quite scared for them, as well as a huge sense of responsibility as their teacher [RJ, 24/04/08]. In particular, I was concerned about whether the learning environment, in the classroom and more broadly at the Institute and in New Zealand, would live up to their expectations and desires. How would they be able to sustain their excitement and joy in the face off the many challenges that awaited them in their new programme of study? What if their expectations and desires as L2 learners did not match the realities? Would they be disappointed and would they cope with any disappointments? How were they going to navigate life for themselves and their own learning trajectories? How can I, as their teacher, help them navigate their learning? I adopted a wait-and-see approach to address these questions and concerns I had formulated. As this was just the first of the LDAs, I thought that we might have an opportunity to discuss these concerns with each other in the class or more one-on-one in when I interviewed students. I also recognised that these were my own concerns and cautioned myself that I ought not to project these on to the students [RJ, 24/04/08].

5.3   LDA2: Goals and motivations

Identifying goals and motivations was at the core of this activity which in my opinion produced the most colourful of all the posters the students created during the LDAs. Observations of the students revealed they were quite engaged with the activity and spent a considerable amount of time choosing pictures from the magazines I brought along.   In addition, they supplemented the magazine pictures by drawing images and adding text. Some students used their laptops to access the internet to find pictures representing their goals and motivations. Importantly too, there was a lot more talk amongst the students, compared to the previous LDA, as they searched for and cut out pictures for themselves and passed around ones they thought might be useful for their classmates [RJ, 02/05/08]. They displayed willingness to engage in the activity and a willingness to listen to and engage with their classmates. For these reasons, I felt that the activity was quite successful.   It seemed to have left an impression on at least one of the students, Mayu, who recorded in her learning journal how the creation of the posters in the LDAs helped her to remain focused on her language learning goals:

> When I think about my goals, I remember the pictures that I used to the activity. It helps me to remember my goals. [J10-Mayu]

A key theme that emerged from the posters created during this activity related to the students' future employment goals.   Marie's poster was completely dedicated to her desire to become an air traffic controller; not just anywhere, but in her home country Tahiti (see Image 5.5, below).   Tomi also dreamed of a job in the travel industry. However, she was unclear about what exactly this job would be, but hoped to work in some capacity in an airport (see Image 5.6, below).

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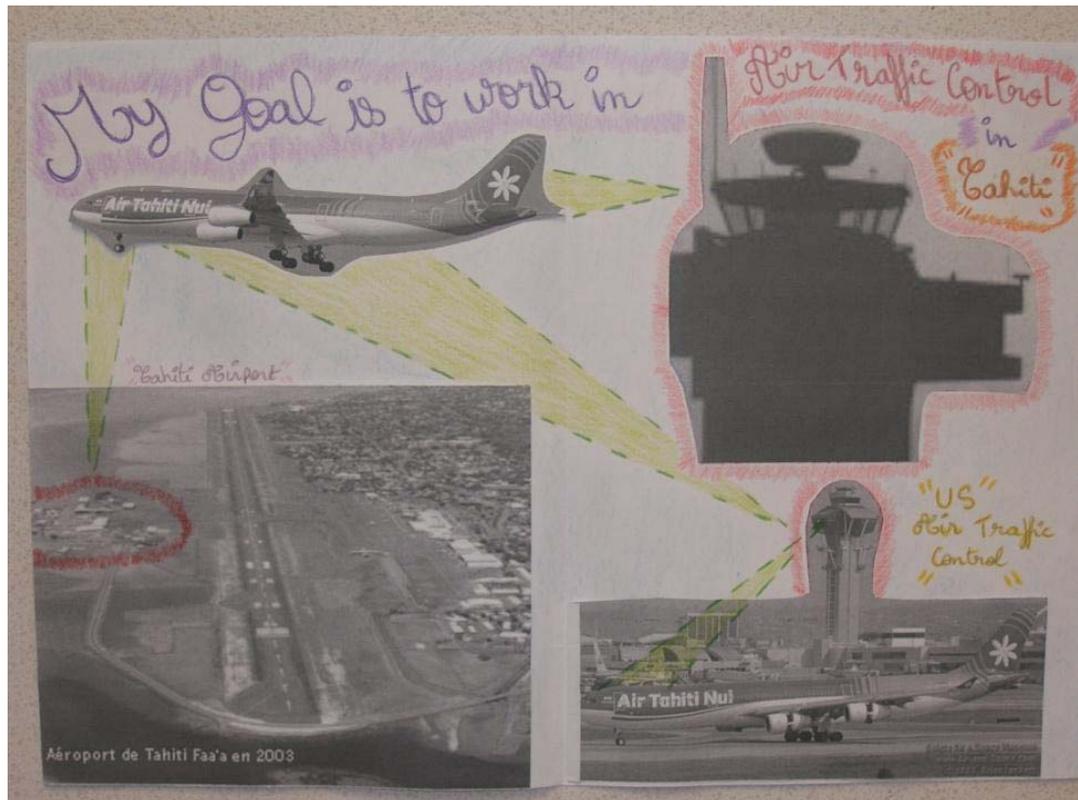
Image 5.5. LDA2-Marie
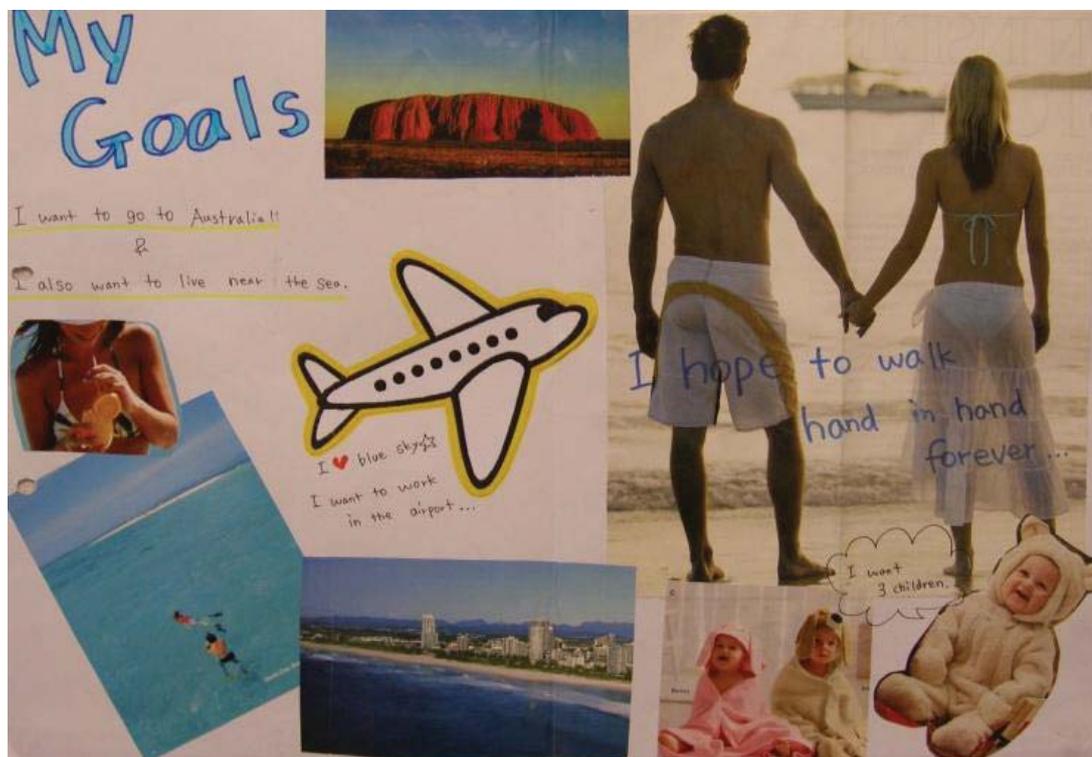
Image 5.6. LDA2-Tomi

Luc included a drawing of himself as a drummer (see Image 5.7, below). His goal was to become a professional musician: "If I could join a band it would be fabulous and I could travel around Europe or maybe the world". He did acknowledge that he would first need to finish his studies and would likely have to get another kind of job in order to support himself until he reached his goal, though he was not concerned about exactly what that job would be [RJ, 02/04/08]. Luc also expressed his desire to travel to South America to fulfil his long held dream of visiting ancient temples and experiencing the culture.
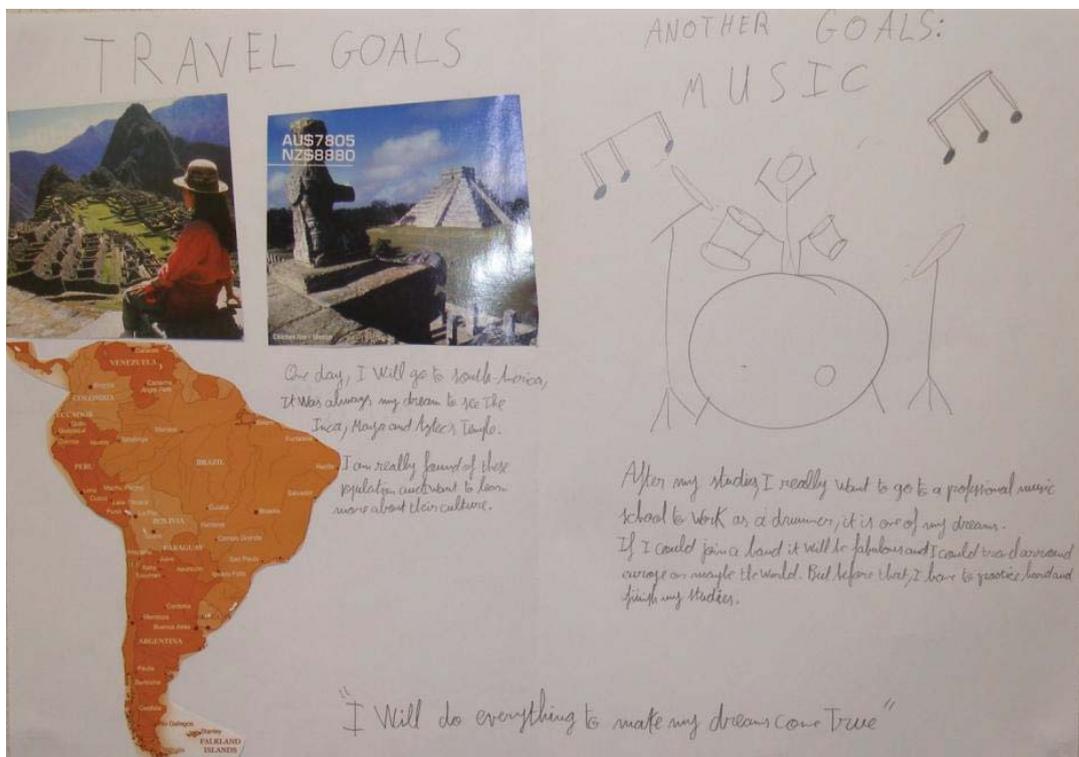
Image 5.7. LDA2-Luc
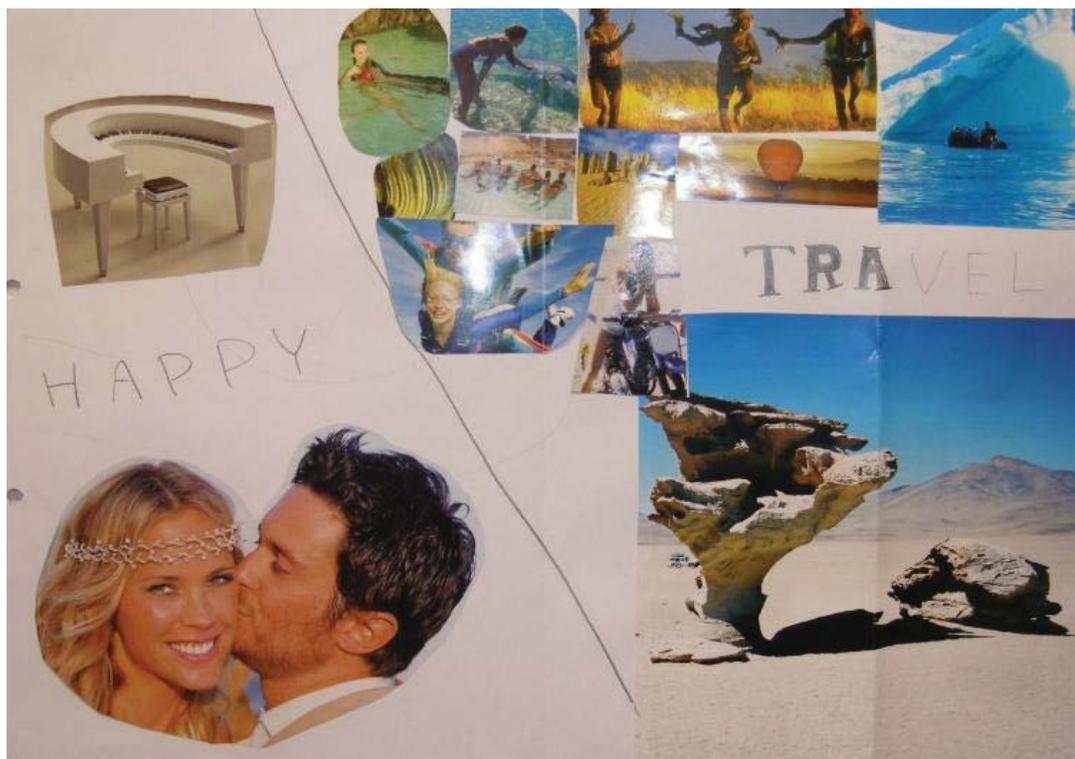
Image 5.8. LDA2-Rie

Rie's poster also represented her musical aspirations (see Image 5.8, above). I discovered during the activity that Rie was an accomplished pianist. She wanted to travel to developing countries and teach music to children [RJ, 02/04/08]. This revelation led to a short conversation between Luc and Rie about their musical interests. Travel also featured largely in Rie's poster. Underpinning Rie's travel goals was her desire to connect with people. As she mentioned later in our first interview when I asked where she would like to travel:

> Anywhere. Africa. If I go to Africa, I want to talk to children and I
> want to help them. [I1-69-Rie]

Mayu also revealed her desires to connect with other people. She included a picture of young people playing volley ball (see Image 5.9, below). She mentioned during the activity that she was playing with a team which was made up mostly of

women from the local community. Mayu felt this was a chance to meet and interact

with people outside of the Institute community, which would hopefully lead to an

improvement in her English.   While she enjoyed playing with this local team, her

goal was to secure a position on another local university's team. (The other team

played at an A-grade level, whereas Mayu's current team played at a C-grade level.)

Mayu also dreamed of becoming a journalist and travelling the globe, reporting back

to a Japanese audience about environmental issues being faced by people in the

countries she visited.

Image 5.9. LDA2-Mayu

Image 5.10. LDA2-Naomi

Something that struck me in the posters and subsequent discussions in class amongst the students was the expression of their desires to simply be happy. As Naomi visualised in her poster, she wanted to be "healthy, wealthy" (Image 5.10, above). By this she meant that she wanted to travel, experience the world and have many good friends with whom she could spend enjoyable times. Her goals were echoed in Tomi's poster (Image 5.3, above) where she displayed her desire to fall into everlasting love ("I want to walk hand in hand forever") and have children. Similarly, Rie depicted her goals related to her emotional well-being (Image 5.2, above) quite simply with the word "HAPPY" alongside the picture of a piano and the romantic picture of the young couple.

Connected to the theme of happiness which was prominent in many of the posters were the expressions of emotions as the students imagined their future selves. Tomi declared, " I ♥ loved blue sky" [LDA2-Tomi] when depicting her goals around

work and travel. Luc declared passionately "I love practicing hard" and "I Will do everything to make my dreams come True" when depicting his goal to become a professional drummer [LDA2-Luc]. Mayu drew a picture of herself with her hands raised gleefully in the air on an airplane as she travelled the globe [LDA2-Mayu].

Teacher reflection

I was surprised that only one student, Paweena (see Image 5.11, below), explicitly mentioned studying and improving English as a goal on her poster [RJ, 02/05/08].

Image 5.11. LDA2-Paweena

The students did not seem to be motivated to learn the language in and of its self, but for what the language could potentially afford them: travel, jobs, experiences and relationships. A common element across all the learners, which they expressed in their poster, class discussion and later in our interviews, was their desire to have international experiences and to make connections with other people. The students seemed to be wide-open and excited to experience life. As Paweena and Naomi stated in our first interview when asked why they wanted to travel:

> Just experience. Some experience you want to see and, like, if you want to do something, you have a chance to do it, so just do whatever you want. [I1-83-Paweena]

> It is an opportunity to see, um, not Japan. Or feel something. [I1-29-Paweena]

From my perspective, LDA2 affirmed my belief that the students were working toward self-determined goals, contrary to the beliefs of some of my teaching peers who felt that students at the Institute lacked clear direction and motivation [RJ, 08/02/08]. Their goals were not, as teachers might have imagined, to become proficient English language users or to complete their degree programme. Language teachers prioritise the teaching and learning of the language, and while acquiring the target language is a goal held by students, they are human beings who ultimately want to have happy, healthy and fulfilling lives, way beyond the current classroom or any language learning environment. These posters helped me put the students' language learning goals into perspective. They reminded me that the students in my class were young people and studying English and their degree programme in New Zealand was just one phase along their learning and life trajectories [RJ, 08/02/08].

5.4   LDA3: Language learning process

In LDA3 the students co-constructed complex representations of the language learning process, connecting their independent learning, to learning and using English in the language classroom and in the 'real world'. Though they created their posters individually, I observed that they were very much influenced by their preliminary discussions with me and their classmates. This manifested in similarities in the ways the students visually represented the language learning process and the common usage of words such as "goals", "assess" (meaning to evaluate their language learning) (students' suggestions), "input", and "self-assess" (my suggestions) [RJ, 09/05/08].   This appeared to be quite a challenging activity for students and I sensed different levels of engagement, with one group spending more time on the activity and creating more detailed conceptualisations of the language learning process. Overall, however, their willingness to listen to and integrate the ideas of others into their conceptualisations of the language learning process seemed to contribute to the quality of the classroom life.

Students separated into two groups of four for the preliminary portion of the activity[6]. As with the other activities, after discussing the topic with their group, they then individually created their posters. Students from one group presented matrix-like constructions of the language learning process, such as Tomi's (Image 5.12, above) and Rie's (Image 5.13, below).   The process of language learning was divided into distinct categories such as "daily", "people", "academic", "self", "class" and "real world". The use of arrows highlighted the students' understanding of the connections between these categories.

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[6] Kiki and the one student who chose not to participate in the study were absent from class on this day.
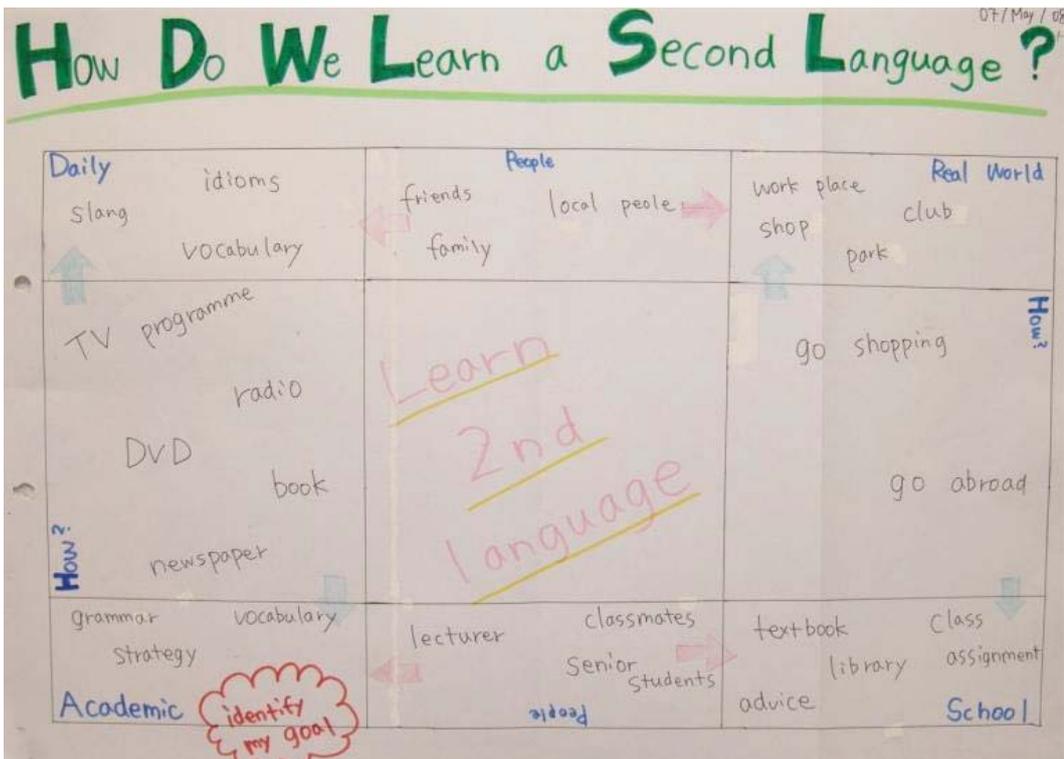
Image 5.12. LDA3-Tomi
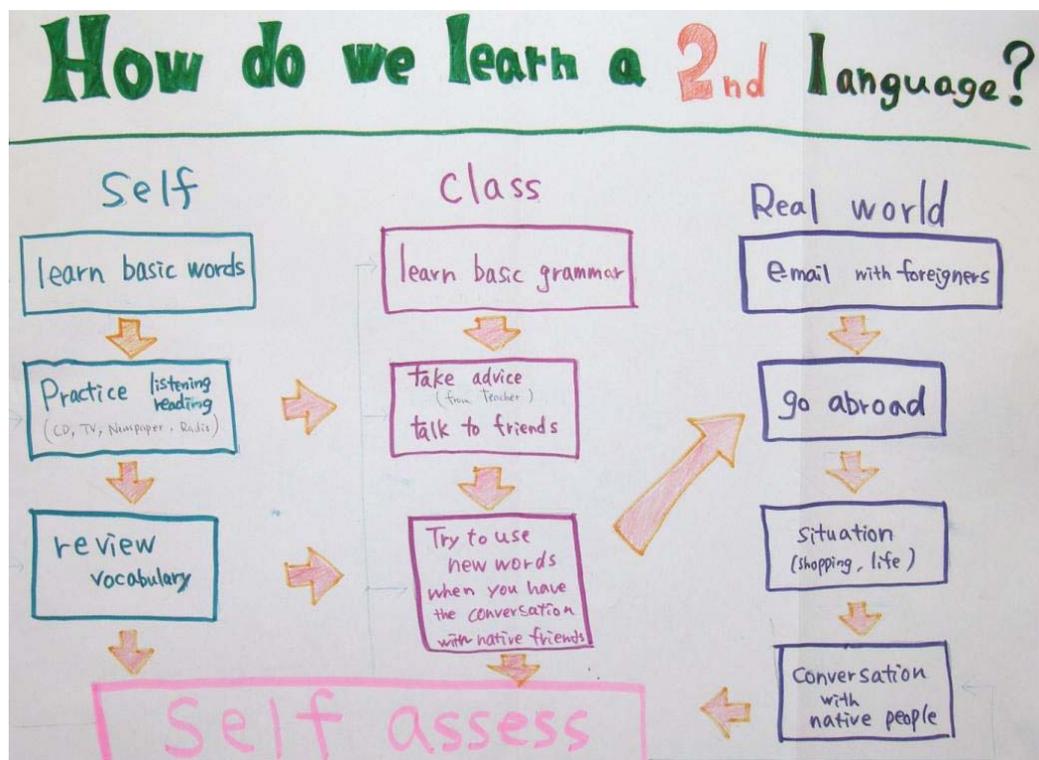
Image 5.13. LDA3-Rie

It was interesting that while Tomi and Rie acknowledge the connection, they make a clear separation between the class/school and life outside of the class/school, as if formal learning settings were not a part of the real world.   The real world seemed to be one in which they travel, work, shop, participate in club activities, experience life and speak with 'native' people. For Rie it seemed that language learning in the classroom precedes learning in the real world, where under the guidance of the teacher and "native friends", she can try out the language. For Tomi it seemed that different aspects of language are learned in different settings. In daily life and when working or participating in club activities, where she interacts with friends, family and locals, she learns and uses slang and idioms. In comparison, grammar and vocabulary (perhaps academic vocabulary) are learned in the school setting, with teachers, classmates and senior students playing a key role.
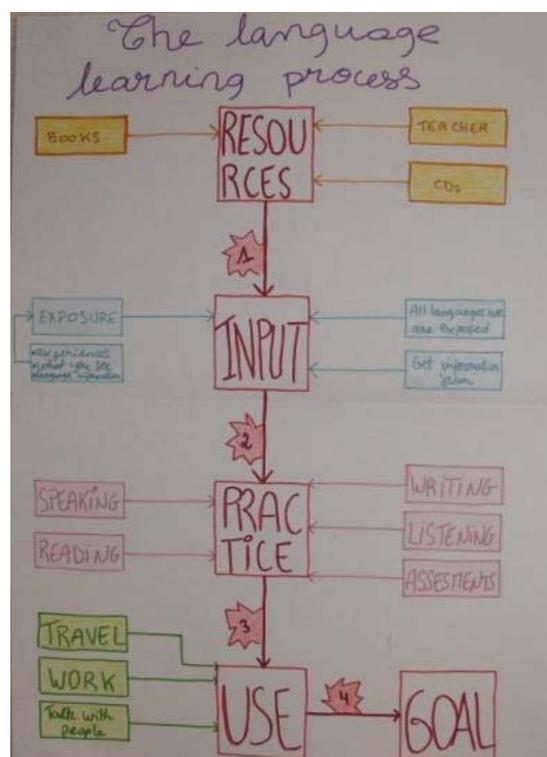
Image 5.14. LDA3-Marie

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In the other group, Marie (see Image 5.14, below), Paweena, Luc and Naomi created almost identical posters. All featured sequential stages of language learning: resources, input, practice, use and goal. Exposure to resources such as teachers, books and CDs provide language input, which is then used for practice in the four skills. It is at this stage that learners are assessed (though by who is not mentioned on the poster). Language is then used to communicate with people in situations such as travel and work, which reflect learners' ultimate goal of language learning.

I was curious about the level of access the students actually had to the types of "real world" situations they referred to, so I enquired about this during the activity as they were creating their posters. Tomi explained that she worked part-time as a cleaner in a motel, but found that she was communicating mostly in her first language (many of her co-workers were Japanese) [RJ, 09/05/08]. She also observed that when communicating with her boss, she did not use the appropriate cues to indicate she understood his instructions. Tomi felt that her boss believed she could not speak English. Naomi was the manager of the kendo club on campus which was open to people in the community [RJ, 09/05/08]. Occasionally one of the New Zealand members would organise club BBQs which she enjoyed attending because they offered her a rare opportunity to socialise with people from outside the Institute. For Luc, at the time of the activity, his only significant "real world" interactions were with classmates and teachers at the Institute and conversations with the clerk in the local music store [RJ, 09/05/08]. Rie had very limited interactions with people off-campus, so focused her efforts on interacting with other international students in class and on campus [RJ, 09/05/08]. Of all the students Mayu had the most access to the "real world" as she was doing a homestay with a New Zealand family and played volleyball with a group of native speakers off-campus [RJ, 09/05/08].

As students were creating their posters, I noticed that they had written words such as "goal" or "self-assess" as major stages in the language learning process. During the latter part of the activity, when students were describing their posters to each other, I asked how they self-assess or know when they reach their goal, I found the responses were interesting. Some of the students indicated that they measured their language ability when they are able to complete an assignment for their content courses (not necessarily the grade they got for that assignment) and when they interacted and communicated with native speakers and other international students outside of class [RJ, 09/05/08].

Teacher reflection

In terms of quality of the classroom life, this activity afforded students an opportunity to reflect on and to voice their beliefs about how they learn a language and to make connections between life inside and outside of the classroom. Tomi, for example, quite clearly represented her beliefs that people and materials play a key role in mediating her language learning. She seemed to believe that different types of language are learned in different learning contexts, yet these two domains are connected. Many of the students expressed their belief that using language in the 'real world' was both part of the learning process and a desired outcome.

The complexity of their beliefs contradicted the opinion of many of the Institute's teaching staff who generally felt that students do not understand how to learn a language. I had sensed that many of the teachers thought students were passive learners waiting to be spoon fed the language by the teacher [RJ, 09/05/08]. The posters seemed to indicate that they believed language input came from a variety of sources and that while they believed the teacher has some responsibility for

mediating learning, other people (friends, classmates, senior students, 'native'

speakers) and they themselves are contributors.

5.5   LDA4: Influences

The original intent of this activity was for students to present a picture which represented themselves as a language learner and to think of the people, things or events which have influenced them both positively and negatively.   While I observed that students did not find this activity particularly interesting, I did feel many of the students appreciated the opportunity to vent on some difficulties and disappointments they had encountered and the resulting negative impact on their attitudes to studying, living on campus and living in New Zealand.

Only one student, Mayu, actually drew images of herself, while the others either listed or drew diagrams in the creation of their posters (see Image 5.15, below).   Like most of students, Mayu felt that classmates, friends, family and activities such as hobbies and sport had positive influences on them as language learners.   Friends and family provided encouragement and helped to support them when they were feeling stressed from the demands of study.

Other students noted locations such as the dining hall, library or the gym as positive places where they could socialise with other students.   Rie drew a Venn diagram listing positive influences in one circle and negative influences in the other (Image 5.16, below). Where the two circles overlapped, she wrote that the dining hall had both a positive and negative influence on her. Rie found the dining hall a good location to study and to meet and have conversations in English with other, non-Japanese international students; however, it was often too noisy to carry out a conversation in a satisfying way.

Image 5.15. LDA4-Mayu

Image 5.16. LDA4-Rie

In a similar way, Paweena listed people, class and study, sports club and entertainment and parties as key influences on her as a language learner (Image 5.17, below). Against each of these she listed both the positive and negative aspects of these factors on her language learning. "People" offer Paweena fun experiences and opportunities to learn from each other; however, sometimes there is "too much fun" and they "disturb other people". "Entertainment and party" are fun and a great way to make friends; however, getting drunk is wasting time as there are the negative consequences.
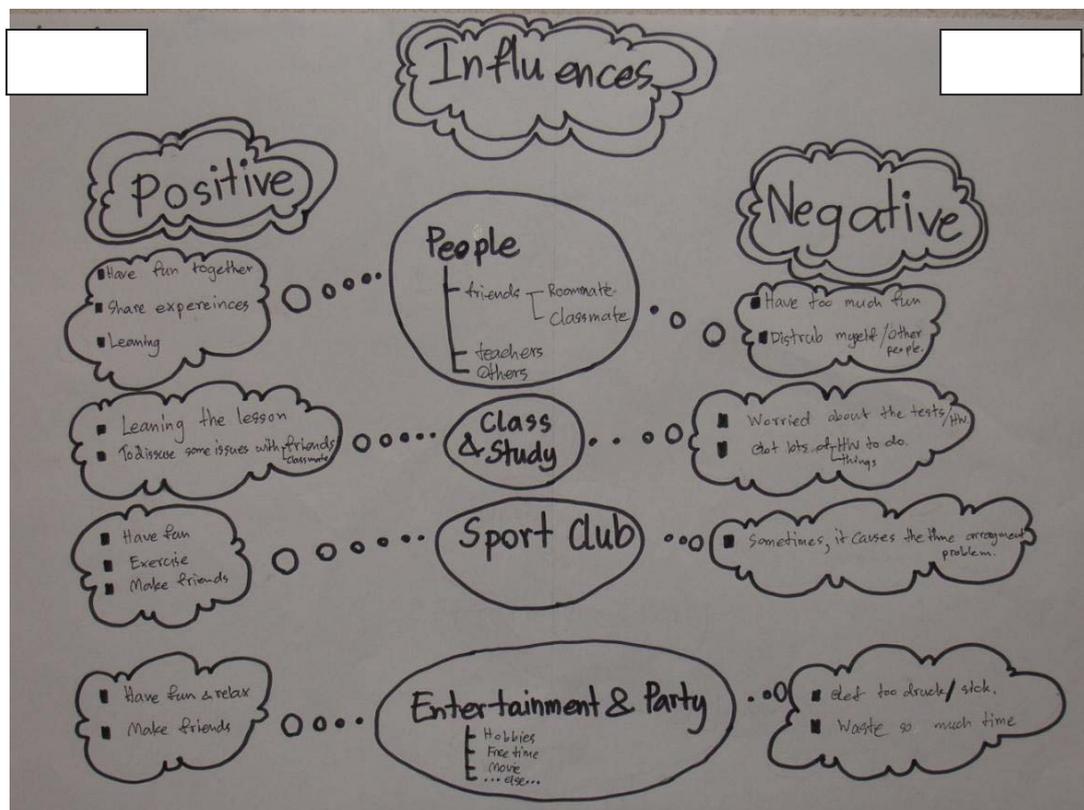
Image 5.17. LDA4-Paweena

On the topic of negative influences the students spoke of the conditions of living on campus. The fees charged by the Institute included all meals, however, the students complained that were not receiving value for their money spent. Some of the

students felt the quality of food in the dining hall was quite poor and they often skipped meals. All but one of the students lived on campus and while the dormitories have some cooking facilities, supermarkets were not conveniently located [RJ, 16/05/08].

Several of the students spoke of the conditions in the dormitories as having negative influences on their development as language learners. Mice and cockroaches in the dormitories were problems, made worse when other students did not clean up shared spaces such as the dormitory kitchens and living rooms. Marie said she was often woken up at night because any sound made her worried that mice or insects were in her room, leaving her tired in classes the next day (see Image 5.18, below). The noise from other students socialising in the dormitories was also problematic for many students. Marie was quite expressive about her roommate with whom she frequently fought. Quite ironically, Marie acknowledged that as a native speaker her roommate was also a good source of English vocabulary.
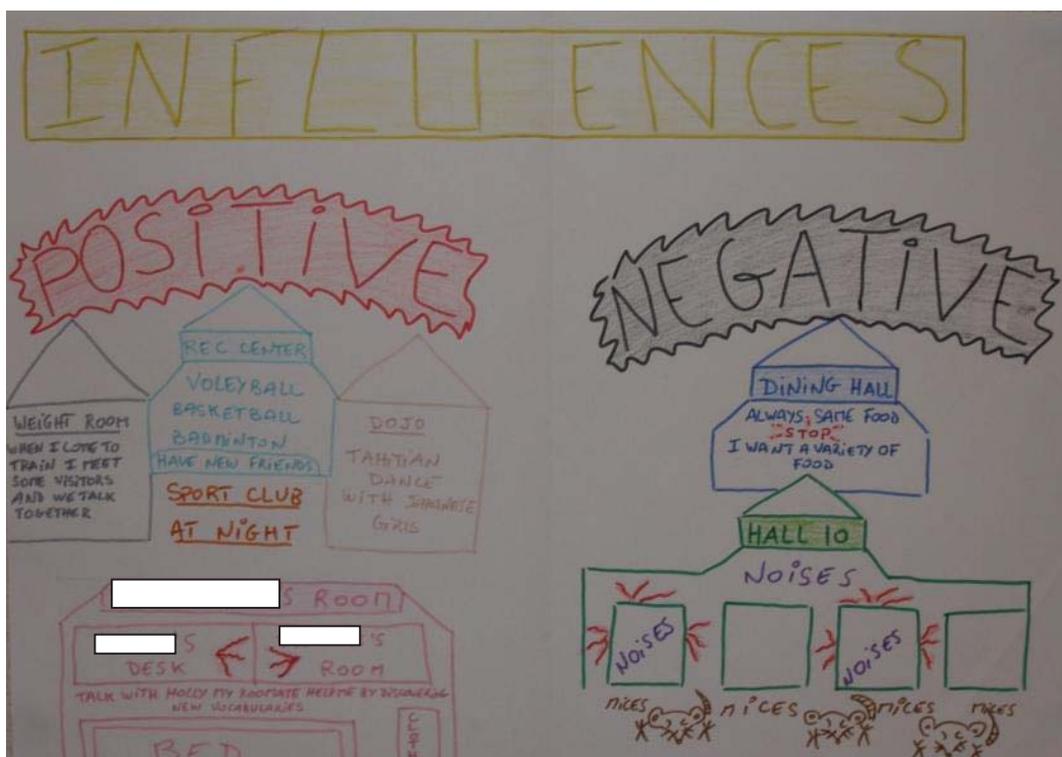
Image 5.18. LDA4-Marie

Access to the internet was another sore point for the students. Mayu noted this on her poster (Image 5.15, above), and several students explained during the discussion how frequently the server went down, which meant they could access resources for their assignments or send and receive email from friends and family [RJ, 16/05/08]. I expressed my sympathy explaining that the recent difficulties had staff similarly frustrated and that unreliable technology meant we were hesitant about planning lessons which would need to take place in the computer pool or the library [RJ, 16/05/08].

For the Japanese students in the class, they were very disappointed at the large number of other Japanese students on campus, as Rie noted in her poster (Image 5.16, above). In our group discussions, before and after creating the posters, several of the students expressed how prior to studying in New Zealand they had imagined themselves being immersed English and interacting with students from varied language and cultural backgrounds [RJ, 16/05/08].

Teacher reflection

Listening to the students I realised that many of negative influences impacting the students were factors often in the hands of the Institute's administrators, yet they impacted considerably on their learning experiences and the quality of the classroom life. Coming to class tired, hungry or disappointed that their experiences as international students was not all they had imagined it to be must have been very disappointing for them and impacted on their attitudes to studying [RJ, 16/05/08]. In this activity I again saw how few opportunities students had for the 'real world' experience they had anticipated prior to studying in NZ. I could imagine how I

would have felt having invested so much in the study abroad experience only to have it fall short and not have any control over the situation [RJ, 16/05/08].

I was pleased that many of the students mentioned in the discussions that teachers were positive influences, as they did not feature largely on the posters as being influential (either positively or negatively) [RJ, 16/05/08]. Also absent from the posters and discussions were references to people, events or activities outside of the Institute. The exception was Mayu who mentioned volleyball and Luc who mentioned his international travel experiences as positive influences. I wondered if there were there more things we could do to give the students a better experience; for example, integrating activities in the curriculum to help them make connections between their classroom life and the 'real world'.   In addition, I was not sure I had a good understanding of what the students' expectations were upon entering the Institute and beginning their bachelor programme and thought that perhaps some kind of needs or situation analysis should be undertaken. I was hopeful that I could pick up on these thoughts when I interviewed the students so I could gain a better understanding of some of the less positive experiences. I also wondered if I and other teachers, as employees of the Institute, could do more to advocate for the students in order to improve some of the living conditions on campus.

5.6   LDA5: SWOT analysis

This activity got off to a very poor start. Attendance was low (six out of ten students) because some students had not returned after the two week-long mid-semester break. Marie, for example, had decided to stay longer in Tahiti so that she could take an entry test into a training programme for air traffic controllers. There was also confusion with the timetable as our class was rescheduled to later in the day

in order to accommodate an all-staff meeting, which may have explained the other absences [RJ, 13/06/08]. For this activity, on impulse, I decided that we would move two tables together which sat three students across from another three, with me sitting at one end. Rather than breaking into groups of three or four prior to creating the posters, as we had done previously, we began our discussions as a whole (albeit small) class. We were a little less formal as we sat around chatting, which may or may not have contributed to the very interesting conversations that unfolded.

Though the students queried whether this activity was too similar to LDA4, when I made the connection between the concept of a SWOT analysis and case studies they might undertake in their international relations or economics courses their investment in the activity seemed to increase. Further, rather than be taken aback by their comments, that they had consciously reflected on the similarities between LDA4 and LDA5 signalled to me that they had actually taken away some purpose from these activities. We did reach a compromise when I acknowledged to them that perhaps the opportunities and threats was quite similar the positive and negative influences discussed previously and they agreed to my suggestion that later in the session we would also look at how they harness opportunities and minimise threats. Their willingness to negotiate and persevere with the activity signalled a level of engagement and a measure of the quality of their experiences within that class as a whole.

As signalled by the students at the beginning of the activity, they very easily wrote down their opportunities and threats as language learners. Reflecting LDA4, their threats included the predominance of Japanese students (Mayu, Image 5.19 and Tomi, Image 5.20, below), the poor internet (Mayu), lack of motivation (Tomi), negative thinking and pressure (Naomi) and being sleepy in class (Rie). The students

all included club activities, going to the dining hall and the library to socialise and watching DVDs and television.
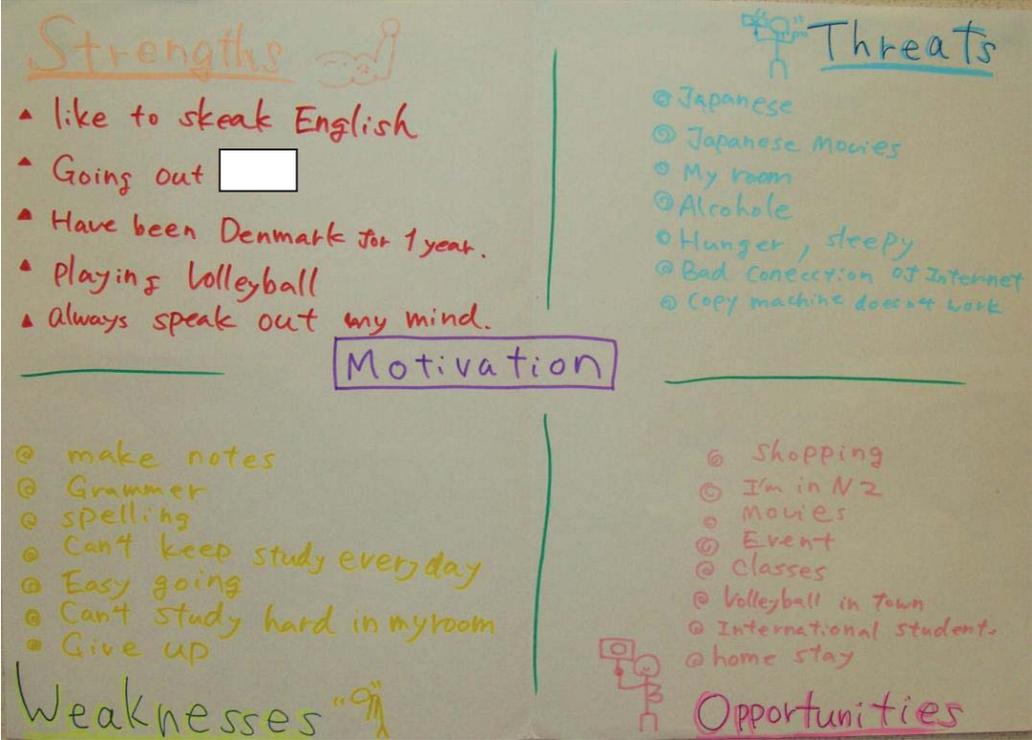
Image 5.19. LDA5-Mayu
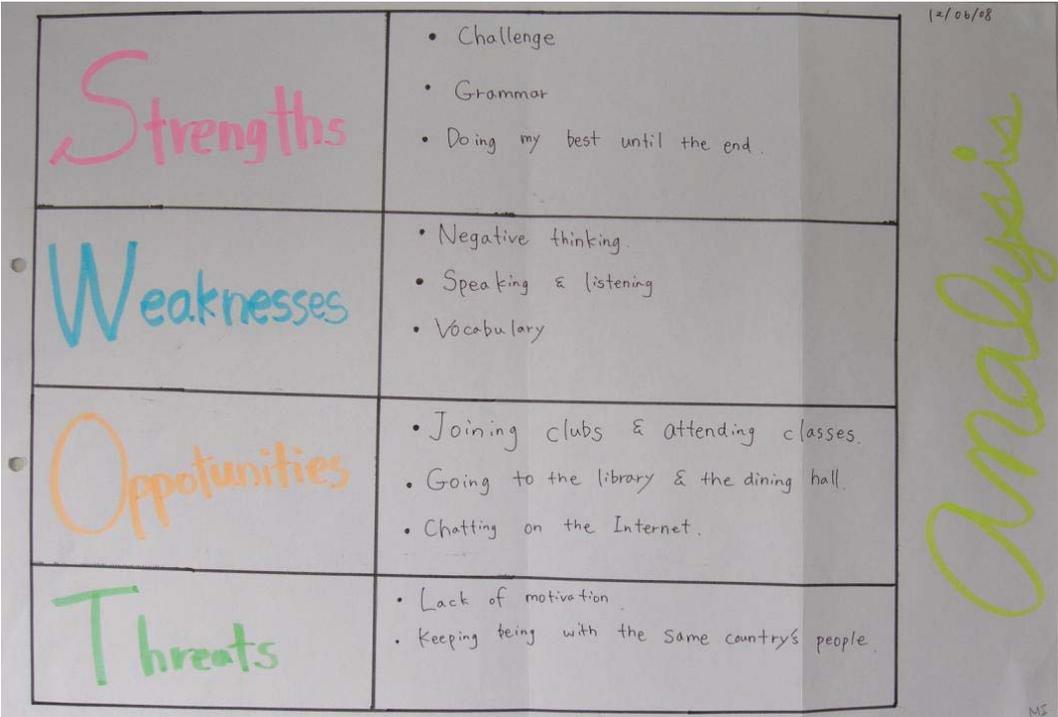
Image 5.20. LDA5-Tomi

The students were also quick to reference their weaknesses. These included speaking and listening skills (Rie; Naomi; Tomi), grammar (Naomi), laziness (Mami), being absent from class a lot (Naomi), giving up easily (Mayu) and negative thinking (Tomi). In comparison with the ease in which they identified their weaknesses, the students struggled to identify their strengths as language learners, leaving this section on their posters blank. I am not sure who got the ball rolling, but after some silence the students began making suggestions about their classmates' strengths as language learners. Positivity (Naomi; Rie), determination (Naomi, Tomi; Rie), pronunciation (Mami) and grammar (Tomi) were noted by the students as their strengths. Mayu and Mami agreed that playing volleyball in the local team strengthened their English. Mayu acknowledged that her year of living in Denmark as a high school student strengthened her English and also her resilience and independence.

The activity did leave an impression with several of the students. Later in our interview Rie reported on how her classmates had assisted her:

> Weaknesses ... I can find weaknesses easily, but I can't find my strengths, so I ask someone, my friends, 'give my strengths' [I2-66-Rie]

> Moreover, talking with my classmates, I could know my characteristics, which I had not noticed. [J10-Rie]

Similarly, Mayu felt her classmates gave her a better understanding of herself as a language learner and in providing emotional support:

> My strength is I always speak out my mind in the class. It is told by one of my classmates. [J5-Mayu]

> I can't realise what my strengths and weaknesses are by myself. Moreover, some students told me my strengths and their opinions help me to be happy. [J10-Mayu]

That the students were willing to move beyond themselves to engage in the identity of others was a measure of the quality of the classroom life which was by now well-established for this group.

After the creation of the posters, in the last fifteen minutes of the class, we talked as a group very generally about strategies the students might engage in to overcome some of the threats and weaknesses mentioned in the posters. Students suggested strategies such developing study plans, keeping a vocabulary journal, watching movies without Japanese subtitles. I contributed by suggesting the use of a reward system to maintain motivation to attend classes. As we were running very short on time for this discussion, I suggested that we do some activities sometime next week to further explore learning strategies. The next week I introduced them to VARK (2001), which is an instrument used to identify learning styles and makes recommendations about associated learning strategies.

Teacher reflection

The aspect of this activity that really surprised me was the difficulty students had in identifying their strengths. I suspected that they would be hard on themselves and quickly identify their weaknesses. I suspected that they would not readily identify their strengths or perhaps out of modesty not want to highlight their strengths to the class. While I was hopeful the students would provide support for each other I was surprised at how they engaged with each other in identifying each other's strengths. They were positive and encouraging as they validated each other as language learners. It allowed them to speak positively of themselves without giving the perception that they were better than anyone else. It was a nice bonding

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experience between the class members, which based on their journal entries that

week seemed to have been a positive experience.

In the future I would choose to omit LDA4 and follow up the SWOT activity in

LDA5 with a session focusing in greater depth at learning strategies. The students

seemed to enjoy doing the VARK activity, commented on in the final journal entry:

> Another good thing is VARK questions. It told me the best method of
> my learning English. [J10-Rie]

My intention for the LDAs was for students to create their own representations. And

while they were participative and seemed to enjoy the activities around exploring

themselves as language learners, after completing these last activities I had the

feeling they were tiring of having to produce the posters. I began to doubt my

decision to steer away from questionnaire type instruments which, when

conceptualising the LDAs, I thought was too interventionist. Perhaps by introducing

a questionnaire-type instrument, such as the Strategy Inventory for Language

Learning (SILL), would break up the monotony.

5.7   LDA6: Metaphor for a language learner

The purpose of this activity was for students to explore their

conceptualisations of language learners through metaphors, as part of a wider focus

on understanding and developing themselves as language learners. Purely by

coincidence, we had only recently explored the use of metaphors in academic writing

in one of our classes. The students appeared to be very interested to further

understand and practice their use of metaphors in their writing. Their enthusiasm for

and engagement in the activity was observed in their lively chatter with each other

and the sharing of images which they found in the magazines I provided while

creating their posters. Prior to undertaking this activity I had imagined that the

students would formulate quite similar metaphors to each other. However, unlike in some of the other LDAs, they all created very different posters which reflected their varied conceptualisations of language learners.
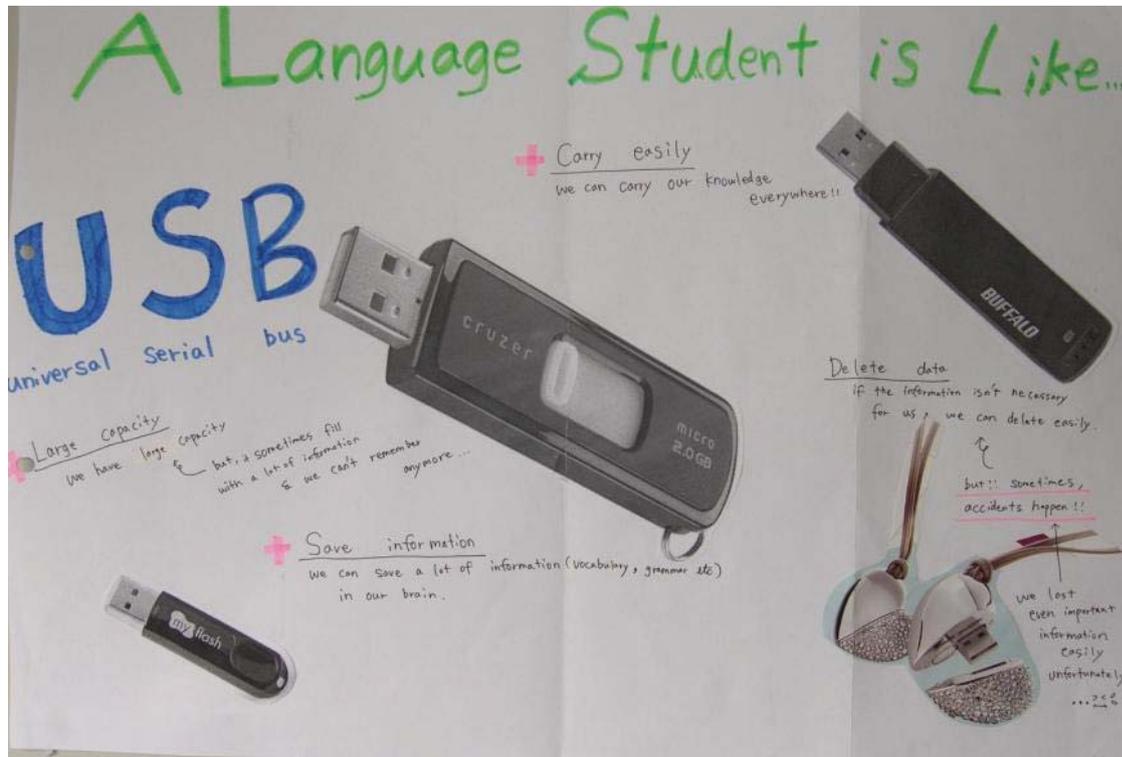
Image 5.21. LDA6-Tomi

On her poster Tomi included several images of USB sticks as her the metaphor for a language learner (see Image 5.21, above). Toward the end of the activity, when the students were discussing their posters in groups of three or four, she explained that like a USB, a language learner can store a large volume of data (for example, grammar and vocabulary) and, like a USB, this information can be erased easily or forgotten [RJ, 13/06/08]. Tomi further explained how sometimes she cannot access the language that she had studied and practiced; that sometimes there is a fault with the USB [RJ, 13/06/08]. I noted that on her poster was an image of a jewelled, heart-shaped USB. When I asked her later during our first interview

why she chose that image and if it had any particular significance, Tomi explained that Mayu found the picture and had given it to her during the activity [I2-18-Tomi]. I saw this as an example of how Tomi's conceptualisation of a language learner was supported by her classmate.

Kiki presented an image of a diamond which she had cut out of a magazine as her metaphor for a language learner[7]. Kiki explained to her group in the latter stages of the activity, and again to me later in our second interview, that by studying very hard and by making the most of the experiences in New Zealand she saw herself as transforming from raw materials into a jewel [I2-40-Kiki]. This transformation to become a beautiful diamond reflected Kiki's desired transformation to become a good English language speaker.

Mayu presented a number of different metaphors for a language learner on her poster (Image 5.22, below). The main theme of her poster was that being a language learner was like being on a journey. She explained that sometimes the journey was exciting and fun because it was often undertaken with other students, and on the journey a learner could discover and be immersed in different cultures. The journey could also be arduous as learners had to sometimes travel through a "wasteland to reach your destination". I was curious about Mayu's image of the robot, which did not seem to match the theme of the other images, so as the students were discussing their posters in their groups toward the end of the activity, I asked her why she chose that image. She stated that sometimes as a student she acted like a robot, doing things automatically or following the instructions of the teacher without thinking [RJ, 13/06/08]. Her response was a movement between describing

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[7] Kiki had misplaced this LDA poster, therefore it is not included in this chapter

metaphors for language learners generally, to a reflection on herself as a language learner.

Image 5.22. LDA6-Mayu

Later when I spoke to Mayu in our second interview about her LDA6 poster I asked her if there were any other characteristics language learners possess. Mayu drew on Kiki's metaphor to conceptualise herself as a language learner:

Like, I remember what [Kiki] said, which is about a stone, which has a diamond... but I really think the same thing. [I2-17-Mayu]

Mayu explained that she had already identified her goal to become a journalist, so now, through her studies she was "polishing to get the diamond" [I2-17-Mayu]. I saw this as another example of how the students were co-constructing their understandings of themselves as language learners.

Naomi used two contrasting images in her conceptualisation of a language learner; one of a thin, sullen young man and the other of two chubby guys who were laughing and smiling (Image 5.23, below). She explained that the contrasting images symbolised the growth of the language learner. As the "Thin" learner consumed resources, information, vocabulary he would become "FAT!!!". For Naomi, being 'fat' was not a negative condition; rather 'fat' language learners are those who happy because they have become the "Master of English".
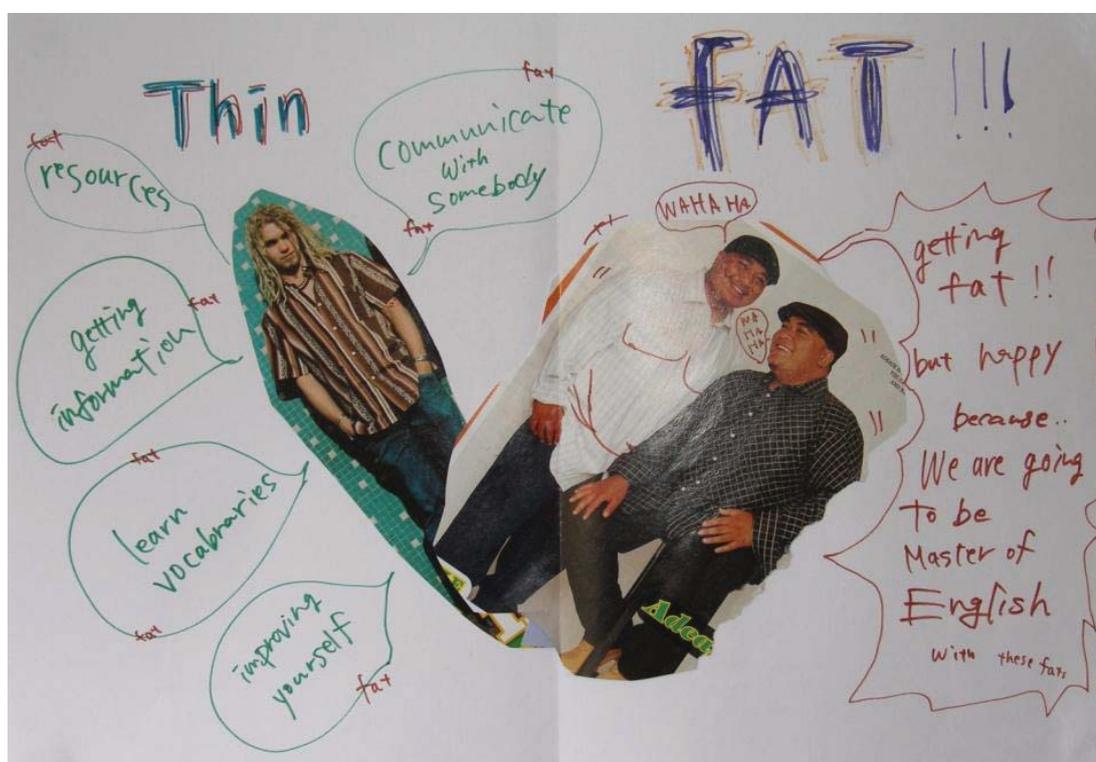
Image 5.23. LDA6-Naomi

Mami's metaphor also related to food and nutrition (Image 5.24, below). She used the metaphor of a hungry person to symbolise the language learner. Food, in the form of knowledge, was essential for learners to survive. Without food (knowledge), the language learner would die.
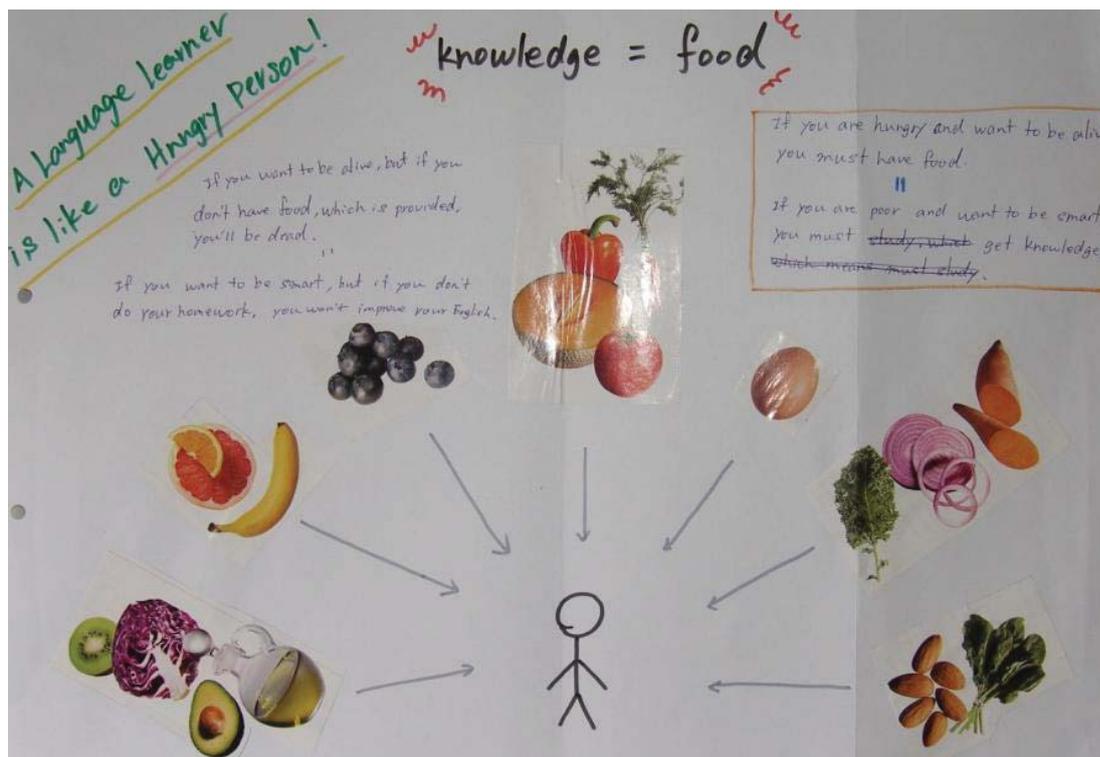
Image 5.24. LDA6-Mami

Luc and Rie used metaphors of wild animals to conceptualise language learners (Image 5.25 and Image 5.26, respectively). For Luc, being a language learner was like a lion seeking his prey. To become a better student and improve his English he had to "become a Better hunter" of opportunities to talk and share ideas in English. For Rie, being a language learner was like being a wild bird. Just as a wild bird has to source its own food, a language learner must "collect information actively", meaning he/she must be an independent and active learner. Just as a wild bird has to be aware of its environment and "sniff danger", a language learner must be curious and explore his/her environment. For both the wild bird and the language learner, the environment is crucial. Just as the environment provides a secure, warm place for the wild bird to live, the learning environment provides language students with opportunities and situations which allow him/her to develop.
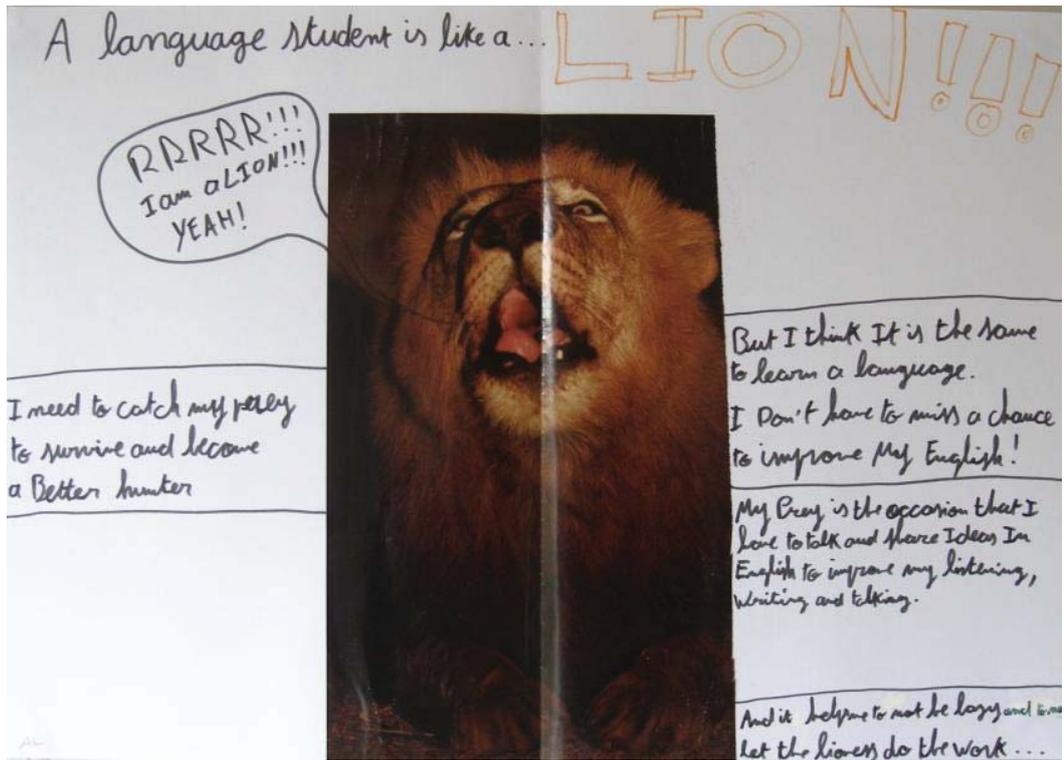
Image 5.25. LDA6-Luc
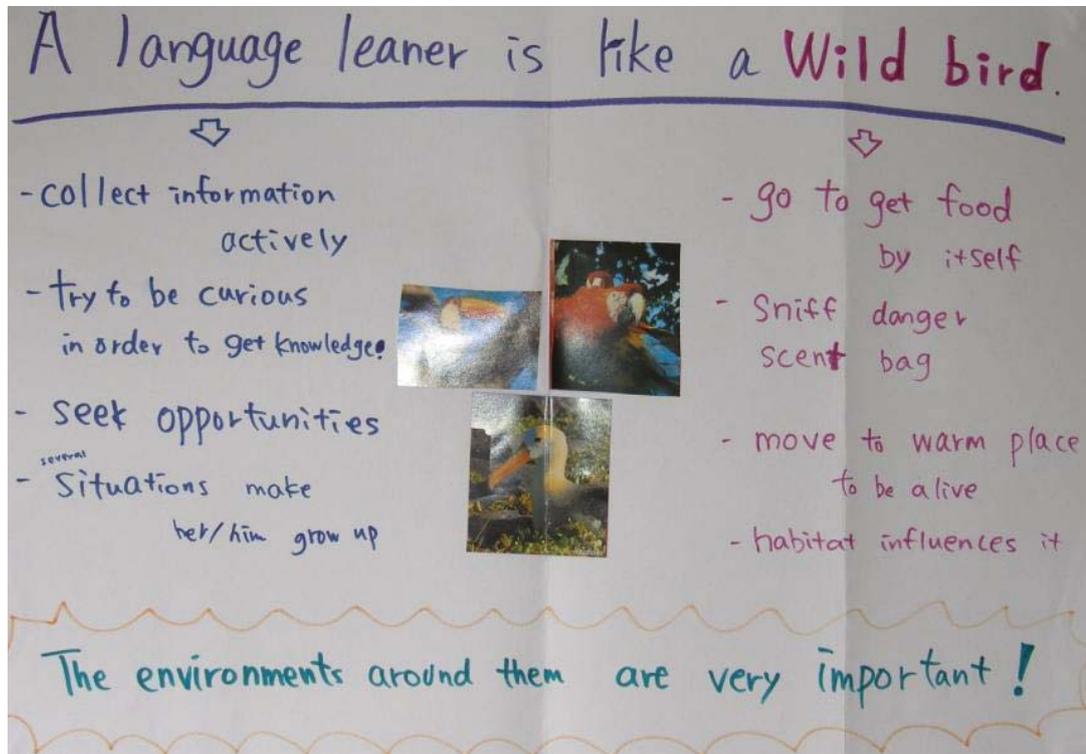
Image 5.26. LDA6-Rie

Teacher reflection

In the conceptualisation of the LDAs I was curious about whether students'

perceptions of language students were similar or different to that of their teachers'.

Therefore, when talking with the AE teachers during the semester I made sure I

asked them for their metaphor for language students. Mickey, for example, felt that a

language student is like a child who needs to be "provided with the steps, support

and encouragement to be able to go out on their own" [RJ, 13/06/08]. She added

another metaphor of a language student as a baby bird, who needed to be "spoon-

fed until they are ready to fly on their own" [RJ, 13/06/08]. Mickey qualified her

response by referring specifically to students at the Institute, which she felt were less

mature and capable than students she had taught in a previous context. The

students' role is to "learn and apply" as the teacher provides the skills "step by

step". Tara felt that a language student is like a do-it-yourself (DIY) project, in

which the students build upon their existing structure with the help of the teacher

who provides "new material".

A couple of things struck me, particularly comparing students' responses to

teachers' responses. It seemed the teachers spoke of language learners as existing

within the formal context, in class and at the Institute. In contrast, the students saw

language learners in contexts outside of the classroom. The teachers saw language

learning as something done to learners, whereas the students saw it as something

they went out and achieved:

> they catch their prey by seeking out opportunities to communicate with people (Luc)
>
> collect information actively and be curious and seek opportunities (Rie)
>
> go on a journey of discovery and integrate into the culture (Mayu)
>
> communicate with people and get information and resources (Naomi)

I know my own metaphor for a language student was changing over the course of the semester working with this particular group of students and with the LDAs. In my conversations with AE teachers I had described language students as performers in a circus, where I as the teacher was the ring leader who choreographed a spectacular and fun performance which took place in the language classroom [RJ, 21/03/08]. I was coming to see these particular students as being less directed and with more agency and control of their own unique 'performances' as language learners and users then given credit for [RJ, 30/05/08].

5.8   LDA7: Metaphor for a language teacher

This activity was designed to offer students an opportunity to reflect on their understanding and expectations of their language teachers in terms of the teachers' roles and responsibilities. It struck me during this activity that the students had a clear sense of what they considered to be a good language teacher [RJ, 20/06/08]. Throughout this activity I was also reminded of the deep influence their teachers had both on their language learning trajectories and their L2 self-concepts. Tomi's poster, on which she wrote "a language teacher is like … GOD", was particularly powerful (Image 5.7, below). She explained to her group in the latter part of the activity that language teachers were god-like because they both punish and reward students; they both help and create difficulties for students. Tomi explained that punishment and difficulties came in the form of assignments and tests, while help came in the form of support and encouragement. Tomi also explained that teachers provide rewards in the form of good grades, a break from assignments and occasional treats, such as lollies. On reflection, I was a little unnerved about the

power Tomi attributed to the language teacher, yet quite relieved that she saw a

kinder side: thank goodness I had often brought muffins or biscuits to class to share

during our break time [RJ, 20/06/08]!
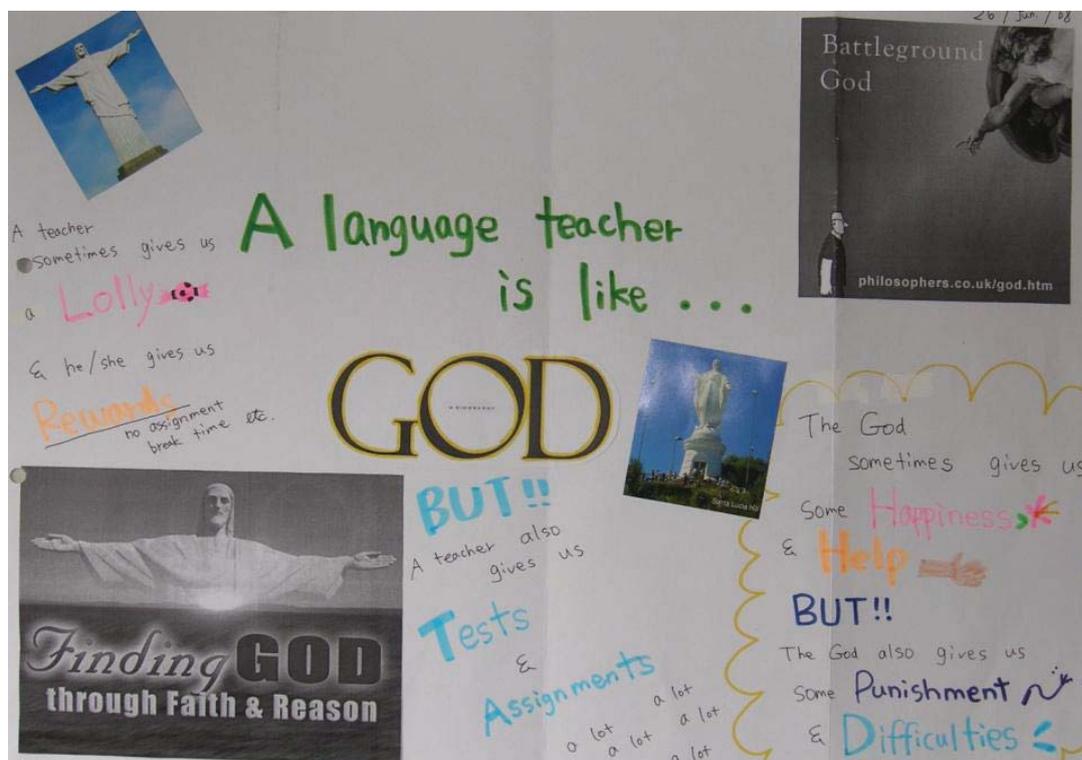
Image 5.27. LDA7-Tomi

Luc's poster also evoked powerful images of the language teacher.

Unfortunately, Luc had misplaced his LDA7 poster, therefore it is not included in

this chapter, however, I recorded details of the poster in my research journal and we

discussed it at length in our second interview.   During this activity Luc had found a

picture of Mount Rushmore, on which is carved the faces of four former United

States presidents, in one of the magazines I had brought along.   In the group

discussion stage of the activity Luc likened language teachers at the Institute to

democratic presidents who guided learners, understood their needs and helped them

to develop [RJ, 20/06/08].   He contrasted this benevolent type of language teacher to

those he had encountered in his high school days, who he described as "dictators" [RJ, 20/06/08]. By this he meant they were authoritarian and not concerned about the learners as individuals [I2-116-Luc].

Mayu likened a language teacher to a designer, who can fashion students into "beautiful English speakers" (Image 5.28, below). According to Mayu, language teachers must recognise that each individual student has different characteristics; therefore teachers need to have a different design or plan for each student.
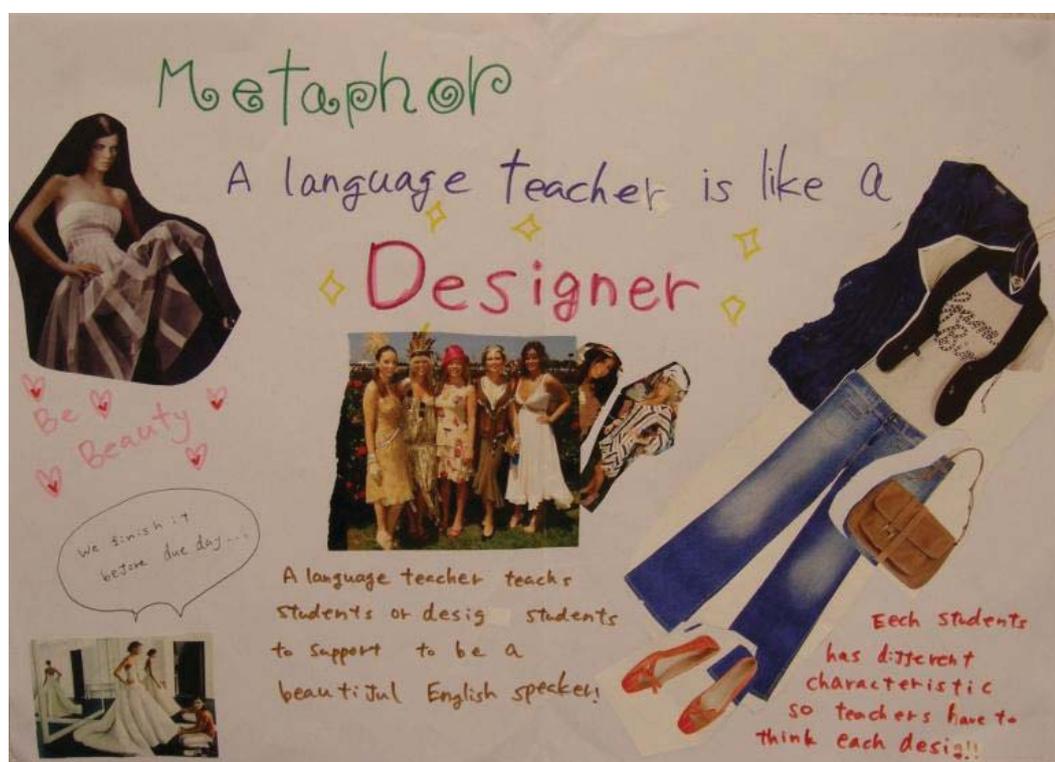
Image 5.28. LDA7-Mayu

This activity seemed to have left an impression on Mayu. Writing in her learning journal, Mayu reflected on LDA7 that "now I know teacher helps students, but students also have to work themselves" [J10-Mayu]. Mayu also elaborated on her poster in our third interview, explaining that the role of the teacher is to push students to become the "best design possible" [I3-25-Mayu]. According to Mayu,

this takes a powerful teacher, but also a motherly teacher [I3-26-Mayu]. Mayu told

me in our final interview that she had found her strong "designer" and "mother" in

Mickey, her AE2 teacher in Term 2. Interestingly, in my conversations with Mickey

throughout the year, she frequently referred to her role as a language teacher as being

like a mother to the students [RJ, 20/06/08].

Naomi continued her themes of food and nutrition from LDA6 into this

activity (see Image 5.29, below). For Naomi, a language teacher provides nutrition,

in the form of information and knowledge which assists the students becoming "fat",

that is developing as language learners. Sometimes this "food", in the form of

assignments tastes sour to students, yet it is beneficial. Sometimes the teacher

provides "fast food", though not in a negative sense, rather by giving students timely

and good advice.
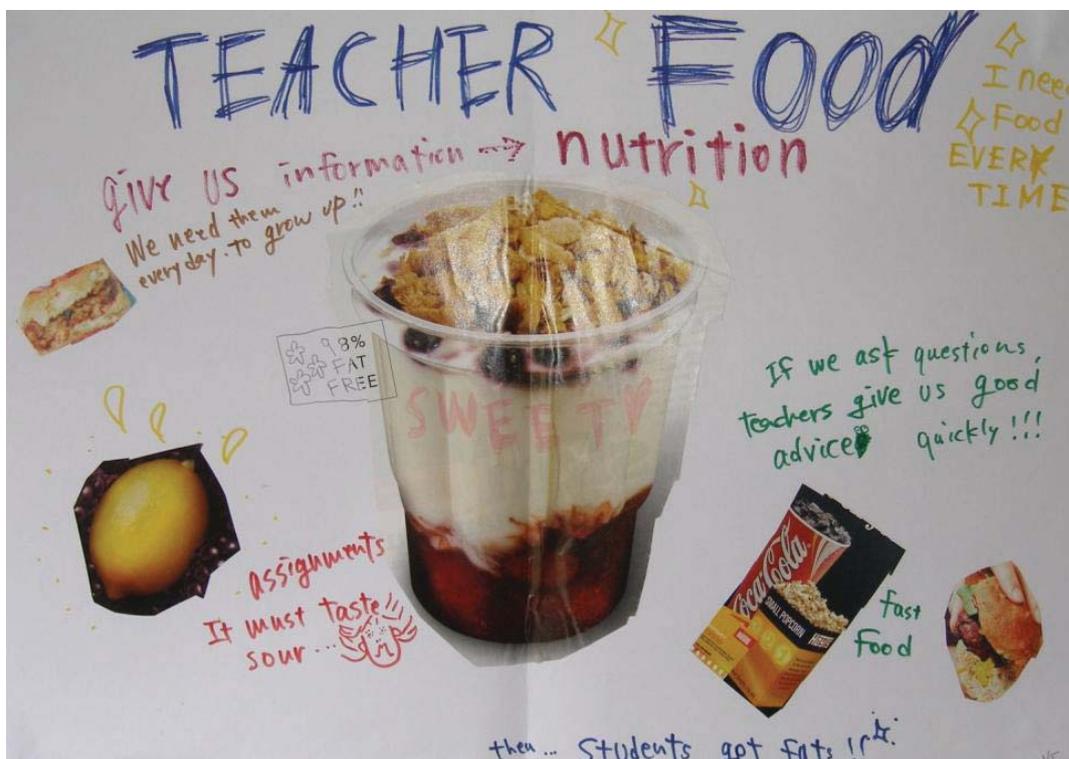
Image 5.29. LDA7-Naomi

Teacher reflection

I was surprised by the power of some of the images created in this LDA, and the associated emotions, particularly in Tomi's and Luc's posters [RJ, 30/05/08]. I knew from the earlier LDAs and our first interview that Luc had unpleasant memories of his interactions with teachers in the school system in New Caledonia. In comparison, his interactions with teachers at the Institute were far more pleasant, resulting in a positive conceptualisation of language teachers. I was not sure about Tomi and was concerned about the power she attributed to language teachers [RJ, 30/05/08]. She explained in our second interview that this view of the language teacher stemmed from her negative experiences learning English in Japan where she felt the teachers were quite strict and often punished students for not doing homework [Tomi-I2-35]. To a lesser extent she felt her teachers at the Institute also punished students with homework and assignment; however, teacher equally rewarded their students for their participation and achievements [Tomi-I2-33].

As a teacher, I would not want that kind of power that Luc and Tomi spoke of or to be perceived by students in that way. I thought back to an earlier journal entry from Luc, who said "you seem to care much about what students think or feel" [J1]. *That is the way I wanted students to think of me and that the incorporation of the LDAs into the classroom activities were a reflection of that. In my discussion with my teaching peers I presented the metaphor of a circus ring master to represent me as a language teacher. Not one who was cracking a whip or ordering people around, but one who choreographed the wonderful, entertaining and unique performances of individuals or groups [13/06/08]. There were similarities between the students' metaphors for language teachers and those presented by the other AE teachers.*

5.9   Summary

The various images and metaphors created by learners during the LDAs represented the complexity of the students' language learning experiences, their goals and motivations as language learners, their belief about language learning and how they see themselves as language learners. The LDAs seemed to afford students opportunities to develop their self-awareness, contributing to their development as language learners. Further, the LDAs contributed to the quality of the classroom life by giving voice to their emotions, beliefs and understandings of language learning.

Some LDAs were more successful than others in enhancing the quality of the classroom life, demonstrated by the levels of student engagement with the activities, their enjoyment and willingness to participate, the ways in which the students interacted and connected with each other and how the activities facilitated bringing the outside world into the language classroom. The impact of the LDAs on the learners is captured in the final reflections by two of the learners in their final learning journal entries:

> Cutting pictures, which related to the topic, retracing past learning English and thinking again of my learning development contributed my strategy of learning English. When I thought afresh about my strengths, opportunities, weak points and threatens, I recognized again my present state and tried to solve my problems ... Moreover, talking with my classmates, I could know my characteristics, which I had not noticed. I thought class conversations and discussion are more important for me than my self-study. [J10-Rie]

> Also Wednesday study helps me to remind my goal and strategies to improve English. Actually, I enjoyed the activities and listen to the other students' idea and English history... The activities remind me that I have much chance to improve my English... I can't realise what my strengths and weaknesses are by myself. Moreover, some students told me my strengths, and their opinions help me to be happy... Now I know teacher helps students but students also have to work themselves. [J10-Mayu]

As a language teacher, the Exploratory Practice approach I took to learner development offered me opportunities to reflect on the beliefs and theories which

underpin my teaching. I gained insights into the lives of the language learners, which extended beyond the immediate context of the classroom and institution, but also their previous learning contexts, their various social contexts, and even into their future, imagined contexts. I felt empowered by being able to explore a new pedagogy which I felt could enhance my learners' experiences in my particular classroom in a way that recognized them as complex individuals, with unique identities, personalities, histories, goals and emotions, who are reflective and act as intentional agents.   In that way the LDAs were a reflection of my teacher autonomy.

CHAPTER SIX: STUDENT CASES

6.1   Introduction

Having presented the findings from the LDAs with respect to how they contributed to the quality of classroom life in Chapter Five, in this chapter the investigative lens is refocused to examine the individual participants.   Three student cases are presented in this chapter to explore more deeply the learners' self-conceptualisations as language learners and users as they participated in learning and social contexts (past, present and imagined future) and the ways in which they negotiated their selves along their learning trajectories.

In deciding which of the nine student cases to include in this chapter, I choose those for which I had the most complete and comprehensive data. Several of the students did not participate in all of the LDAs or regularly complete learning journals. One of the students, due to illness returned to her home country before the semester ended and could not participate in the second interview.   Due to work and study commitments we were unable to schedule an alternate time to conduct the interview when she returned.   A couple of students were quite shy in the interviews and therefore our discussions of their learning experiences were not as detailed as others. The individual student cases are organised as chronological narratives of their language learning stories. At the same time the cases are also organised around their various self-conceptualisations as language learners as they journeyed along their language learning trajectories.   Each case concludes with a summary of emerging themes which will be later discussed in Chapter Seven.

6.2   Introducing Mayu

Mayu was a female student from Japan, and at the beginning of the study she was 19 years old. I met Mayu on the first day of the AE1 class and got to know her throughout the year.   As I discovered throughout the course and through our interviews, Mayu had what could be described as a typical Japanese education history, studying at a Japanese elementary school and junior high school. However, halfway through her final year of high school Mayu entered a study abroad programme and spent a year living and going to high school in Denmark. After a year in Denmark, Mayu returned to Japan and completed the final half-year of her senior year. She opted out of the Japanese university entrance process and instead applied to study at the Institute in New Zealand. Mayu's English language level was not sufficient for her to immediately enter a degree programme, so like many other students at the Institute, she undertook a year-long English Preparatory Programme. At the end of the preparatory year, Mayu took the TOEIC test and gained provisional entry[8] in the Bachelor of Global Studies programme for the following year.

One thing that struck me about Mayu in that first week was her quiet confidence and her thoughtful approach to her studies. Most of the students knew each other from the preparatory year. Despite this, they were a little nervous about studying at the degree level and so were initially apprehensive and quiet in class. Mayu was not an extroverted student, but she certainly made an effort to communicate in class, ask questions and actively participate in learning tasks with her classmates. As a teacher, I didn't have to coax her to respond to questions; she

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[8] The Institute granted provisional entry into the degree programme to students who scored just below the English proficiency entry requirements. These students were simultaneously enrolled in two Diploma level courses and two Degree level courses. At the end of the first semester the provisional students were required to meet the English proficiency entry requirements in order to continue in the Degree programme.

often spoke up in class and gave appropriate (verbal and non-verbal) cues to indicate whether or not she had an answer or contribution to make to a discussion point.

Mayu had a seemingly 'light and breezy' attitude about her. I would often see her on campus, and in classes, wearing a long, flowing skirt and t-shirt. Mayu could often been found in the cafeteria hand-making jewellery which she would later sell to other students or at one of the number of fund-raising events held at the Institute during the year. As I got to know Mayu more, I also discovered she was quietly competitive, both with others and with herself. For example, Mayu explained that when she say that another student has received better results in an assignment or exam she was spurred on to work harder [I2-56]. I was surprised to hear from her that she has an older brother who was also a student at the Institute. In our time together she spoke of him only once and indicated that they spent very little time together as they tended to fight [I1-181]. Although he began studying in New Zealand six months before her start, it was her and her mother's research on universities in New Zealand that promoted him to quit his university in Japan and study abroad.

6.2.1 Self as a language student: the early days

"my start was very bad ... " [I1-93]

Mayu's journey as a language learner began as a thirteen year old junior high school student in Japan. Mayu described herself in that period as a lazy student and English as her worst subject [J1]. She characterised her early days as a language student as a period of frustration, which she illustrated in her LDA1. In this activity Mayu drew an image of herself with tears dripping from her face and her hands in the air, exclaiming "No" (see Image 6.1, below). Next to her is an English textbook

with an angry face on it, signalling her dislike of English. Mayu carried this negative

attitude toward studying English through to high school, which, like junior high,

focused on grammar and vocabulary and not what Mayu considered to real language.

She described the English she was learning at this time in her life as a dead language,

without life [I1-96].

> And I didn't like class, like the way to learn English, because it was just
> like grammar, grammar, grammar, vocabulary, vocabulary. It is so
> boring. I didn't think it was learning a language. [I1-95]
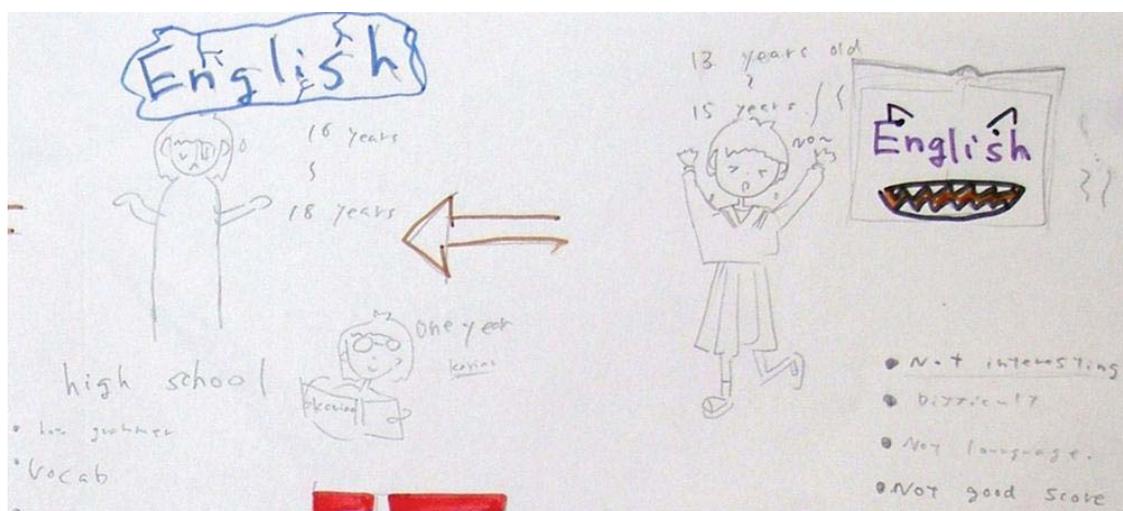
Image 6.1. Extract 1 from LDA1-Mayu

As a high school student Mayu could not even contemplate studying abroad.

In fact, when she heard that some of her classmates were planning to go overseas to

study Mayu felt that "I will never do that" [I1-71]. However, in her final year of

high school Mayu decided to go to Denmark as an exchange student. So what

changed her mind? Firstly, after her encounter with an American English teacher

Mayu began to see English in a different light. She began to view English as an

"alive" [I1-163] language, not the dead language of vocabulary and grammar. Mayu

could see a purpose for English as a communication tool with non-Japanese others:

And he is a pretty nice person, so I talked with him and I had his class, but I totally couldn't understand a thing he said. [I1-101]

Like, I thought that I want to understand what he said. Maybe it helped my ... helped me to go abroad. [I1-103]

The other 'light-bulb' moment, as Mayu depicted it in her LDA1 (see Image 6.2, below) occurred when Mayu began to see the possibilities for language learning and language use outside of school and outside of Japan. Mayu began imagining herself as "international" and learning English as a "living language" [LDA1].
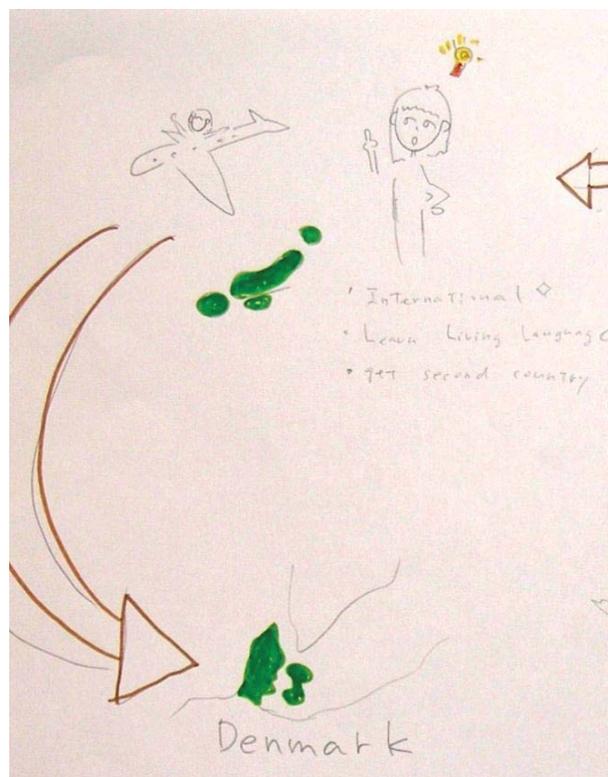
Image 6.2. Extract 2 from LDA1-Mayu

Her decision to become an exchange student also stemmed from her growing interest in environmental studies and international relations, which were formed out of an increasing awareness of a world beyond Japan; a world she desired to be a part of. In order to pursue her studies in these areas, Mayu felt she needed to study English. Half way through Mayu's senior year at high school she went to Denmark

as an exchange student *"to learn Danish, English and Danish culture"* [J1]. Denmark was not Mayu's first choice of destination. At that time Mayu was developing a keen interest in the environment and thought South America would be an ideal destination to learn about environmental issues [I1-105]. However, influenced by her parents and her teachers who felt that South America would be too dangerous, and having left her application for the exchange programme quite late, Mayu's destination options were limited.

While the experience in Denmark was an extremely positive one for Mayu, she was still trying to understand her motive for living and studying abroad in Denmark and still trying to identify or reconcile the purpose of language learning:

> ... but when I was in Denmark I was like "Why did I choose Denmark?" Many Danish friends asked "Why did you choose Denmark?" I couldn't answer it because I didn't have much reason why I choose Denmark, because it is not an English speaking country. [I1-107]

After a year in Denmark, Mayu returned to Japan to complete the remaining half of her senior year. Upon her return her, the value and significance she placed on studying English had changed. Mayu's depiction of herself after her return to Japan sits in sharp contrast to her earlier depictions of herself in Japan as seen in the images from LDA1 (see Image 6.3, below). Mayu drew herself open-armed, and with a more relaxed expression on her face. She described English as easy and she felt she could speak English, with good pronunciation – though sometimes she spoke English with a Danish accent [I1-120] – and could remember vocabulary quickly. Mayu was pleased to tell me that she received the highest grades in English and other subject areas [J1]. In contrast to her earlier experience studying English in Japan, Mayu now enjoyed going to English class [J1]. Interestingly, perhaps reflecting this turn-around in Mayu's attitude and experience of studying English in Japan, she drew a map of Japan in a reverse image to that which she presented in Image 6.2.
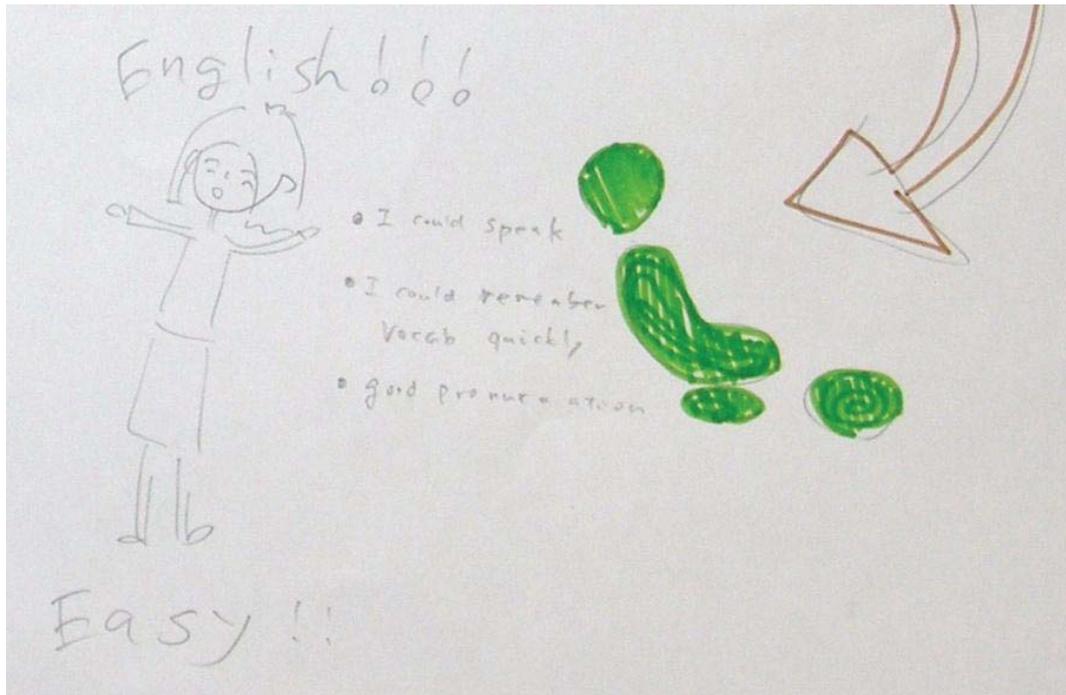
Image 6.3. Extract 3 from LDA1-Mayu

6.2.2 Future self as an English speaking global citizen

"Oh because, just, I thought that now, the world is getting ... global" [I1-72]

After completing the final six months of high school in Japan Mayu enrolled at the Institute in New Zealand. Mayu's developing image of herself as a member of global community, which was no doubt enhanced through her study abroad experience in Denmark, certainly impacted on her decision to study in New Zealand. When asked why she wanted to study English overseas Mayu explained that she wanted "to know more about earth, because I am living on the earth" and "learn international relations" [I1-73]:

> English is very useful and if I didn't English and I just speak with Japanese, but in the world there are more people. (I1-72)

> Yeah, yeah. I thought I should be [part of it]. And I wanted to learn international relations, then I thought for this study I need English, because of globalisation. (I1-74)

Mayu was excited about her journey to become an English speaker in this global world she had discovered. In LDA6, Mayu presented a number of images as metaphors for a language learner.   In Image 6.4, below, Mayu showed her feeling of excitement with a picture of a group of young people cheering, exclaiming "Let's go to journey!!". In the same activity, Mayu included another image of a group of men dressed in sheep costume, with the caption saying that as a language learner you "sometimes you have to be a part of the country". Here Mayu is reflecting on how, as an international student studying in New Zealand, she felt she must assimilate and behave like a New Zealand student:

> I think it means that now I am in New Zealand, sometime I have to do
> the same thing ... same study with Kiwi students. Like, not exactly, but
> I have to be like a New Zealander. [I2-8]

Mayu was not sure whether she is successful at being like a New Zealander, but she did feel that her "English is kind of Kiwi English now" [I2-9] as she was able to communicate with New Zealanders and use some slang.
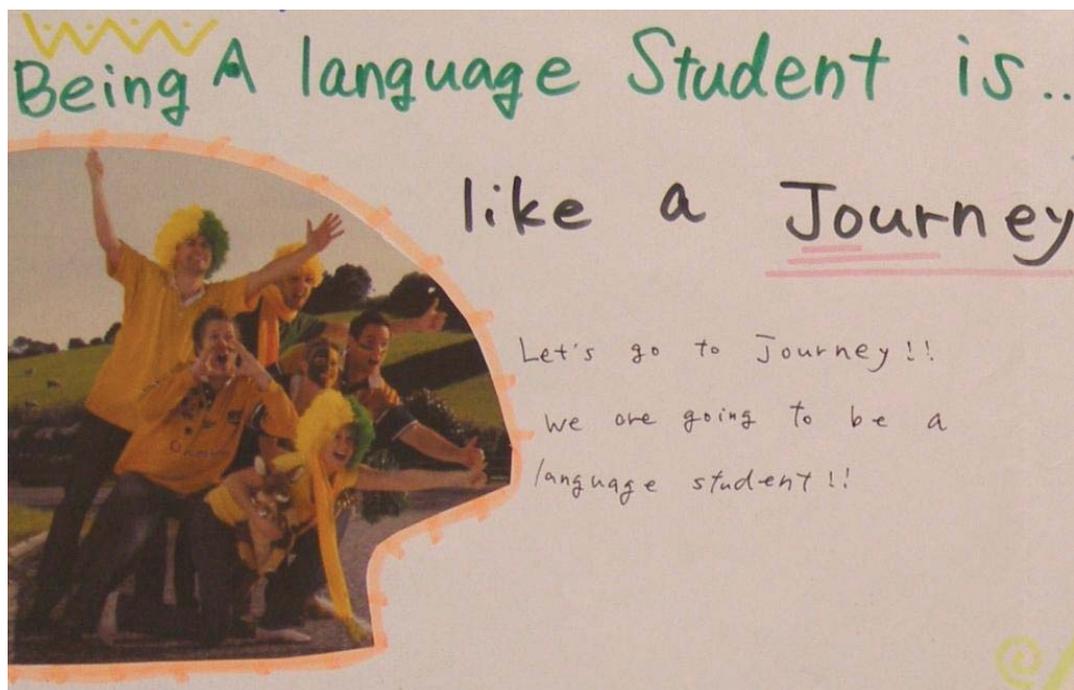
Image 6.4. Extract 1 from LDA6-Mayu
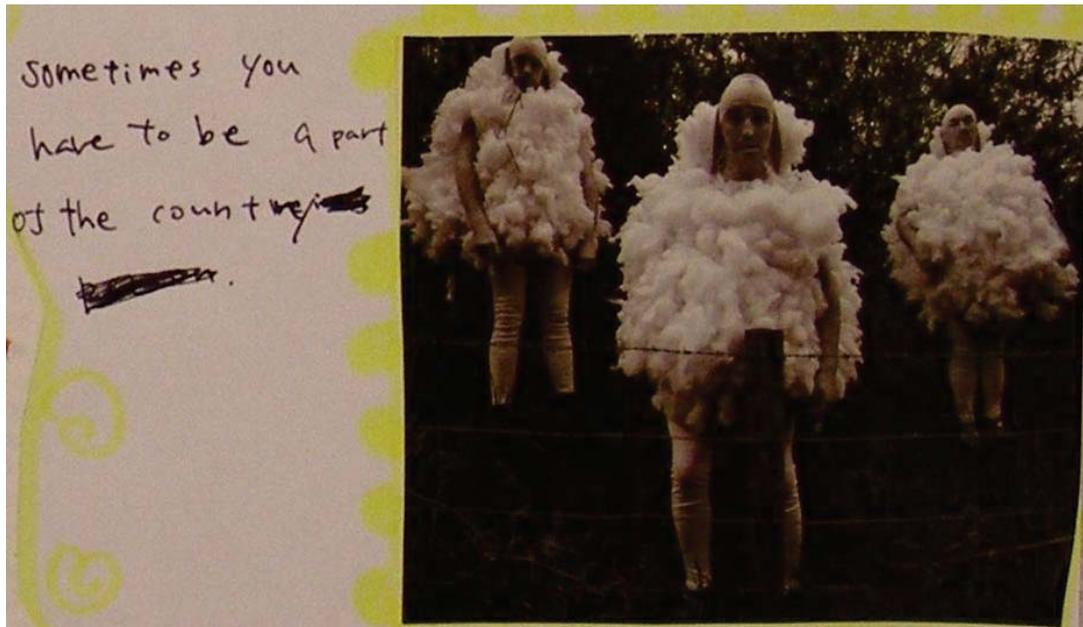
Image 6.5. Extract 2 from LDA6-Mayu

In contrast, in another image from LDA6 (see Image 6.6, below) depicting a group of people hiking across a rugged landscape, Mayu described the "wasteland" that students must travel through on their journey. Here she seemed to be indicating that her journey was not always so smooth; that sometimes as a student you have to navigate difficult terrain. Part of the difficult terrain for Mayu was the dominant Japanese community on campus:

> I think Japanese friends. Like drink together in Japanese and attendance and opening ceremony is all Japanese. We all speak Japanese. It's like a Japanese club. So it is not good. [I1-173]

Some time you have to work wasteland to reach your destination.
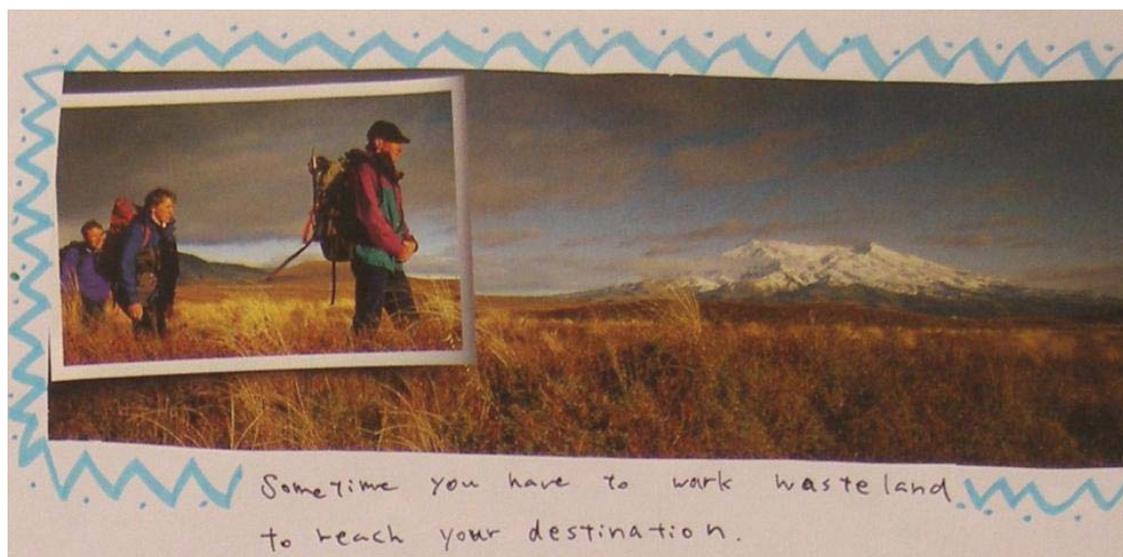
Image 6.6. Extract 3 from LDA6-Mayu

Several times in the interviews Mayu mentioned how this has impacted on the decisions she has made in regards to her learning. For example, Mayu decided to live off-campus *"because it is too much Japanese [on campus] and the relationships are very complicated"* [I1-39]. With such a dominant Japanese group on campus Mayu's confidence in her ability to interact in English outside of the classroom was low. She felt she was not being challenged:

> ... because there were still many Japanese and normal conversation was not difficult. Even now I think [the researcher] asks questions and I think I can do, but I want more like news discussion. [I1-83]

This negative experience detracted from Mayu's preconceived notions of what it would be like to live and study in New Zealand and challenged her desired self as an international student.

Mayu was sometimes frustrated and disappointed that the opportunities she imagined would be available to her which would allow her to sink her teeth into the topic of international relations didn't materialised. She had envisaged herself having deep and meaningful conversations with her peers about world issues. Outside of

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class Mayu felt that she didn't have many friends "who do deep" [I1-85], meaning she didn't have many friends who enjoyed the types of deep conversations about world issues that she had anticipated. Much to her dismay she also found that she could not participate in class compared to other students.

> In IR [International Relations] class there are lots of other Asian nationality students, their English is very good. And sometimes I can't follow them, so I thought, oh, I really need to improve. [I3-33]

> I think still, I go to class, but opinion ... I don't say much opinion in the class. Um, yes. So recently, I feel like I should say something, but always I think, oh, I am going to say this one, I am going to say this one. But other students say the same thing and it's gone on too long and, oh, no time. Just I am thinking that I should say something. [I3-44]

6.2.3   Self as a member of a Kiwi family

"If I have a family in New Zealand I can be more New Zealand" [I1-29]

At the beginning of her studies in the Bachelor of Global Studies programme, Mayu decided to move off campus to experience a homestay with a Kiwi family. She was motivated to undertake a homestay experience by an image of desired self as having a New Zealand family and acquiring a New Zealand identity. Mayu was invested with the hope that she would acquire symbolic resources: friendship, family and New Zealand culture:

> I want to have a family in New Zealand. [I1-28]

> Oh, if I have a family in New Zealand I can be more New Zealand, like New Zealand, living in New Zealand. And I can have many cultures. [I1-29]

> And if I graduate ... and it is all finished, but if I have a family, I can visit New Zealand again, and I can think of New Zealand as like my third country. [I1-30]

Another reason why Mayu decided to live off campus was that it separated her from other Japanese students living and studying on campus *"because it is too much Japanese"* [I1-39]. The dominance of Japanese students on campus represented a

challenge to Mayu's identity as an international student and her desired future self as a New Zealander.

Mayu's motivation to live with a homestay family was clearly linked to her previous experience living/studying abroad in Denmark: she felt that Denmark and her Danish homestay family were her second country and her second family, respectively. In comparison to her homestay experience in New Zealand, Mayu had spent a great deal of time with her host family in Denmark [I1-114]. Her Danish homestay mother helped her with school assignments and showed her how to take on responsibilities around the house, such as cleaning her room. The family had a teenage daughter and son, who Mayu could relate to, especially the daughter who in the past was a homestay student in South Africa. Mayu felt that she was being treated as a member of Danish family; a feeling was validated when the family took her with them on skiing vacation to Austria, at their own expense.

Mayu's investment in undertaking a homestay experience in New Zealand quickly came under challenge in the form of two young homestay sisters, aged 5 and 8. As a homestay student, Mayu imagined that she would become a member of that family community, as she felt she had with her Danish homestay family. Mayu felt the two girls were quite naughty and when Mayu did not interact or play with them as they demanded, tantrums would ensue [I1-33]. Mayu felt like she was being treated as a baby sitter because the parents both worked full-time and often left the children in her care [I1-40]. Mayu had been so keen to have a relationship with her host sisters; however, that dream was quickly extinguished as she tired of their behaviour. Similarly, Mayu's hopes of forming a relationship with her host parents did not come to fruition: they worked full-time and had little energy to do anything but sit and watch television in the evenings [I3-139].

6.2.4 Self as a community member: volleyball and a job

"High point is that I get much more chance to communicate with town people by volleyball and part-time job." [I3-111]

In LDA2, Mayu introduced us to her goal to play competitive volleyball (see Image 6.7, below). In fact, several months prior to our first class together, while she was concluding her EPP year, Mayu had the opportunity to join a local female volleyball team who she played with three times a week. Mayu was introduced to the team by a senior student at her university. The team was made up of local players; some of whom were soldiers at the local military base and some of whom were Samoan-New Zealanders, including the coach who is a male Samoan. At first Mayu thought it would be a just-for-fun activity, but shortly after she joined the team decided to join the national league. Mayu was excited about the move to a more competitive league and about the opportunities to travel with the team to a number of tournaments in Wellington and Auckland.
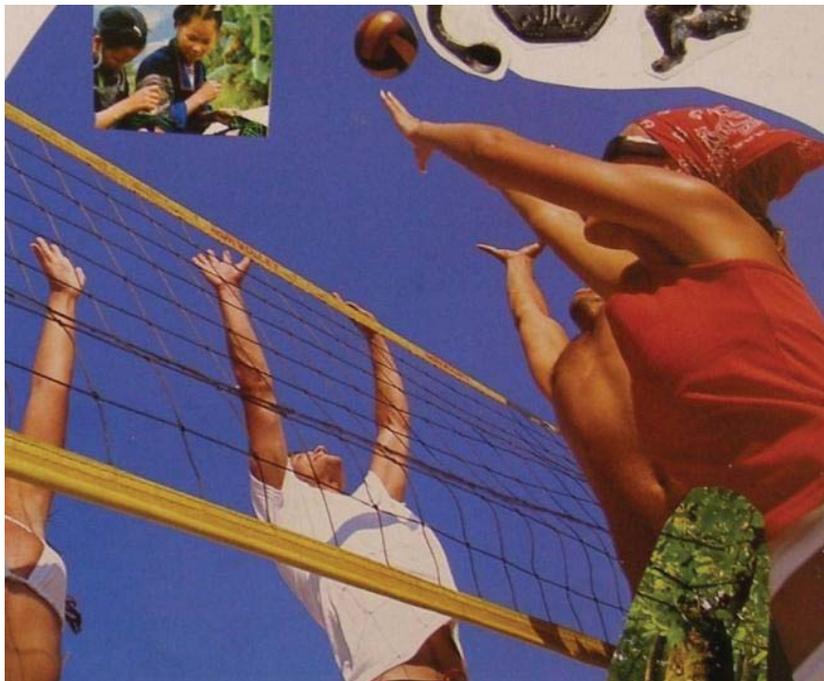
Image 6.7. Extract 1 from LDA2-Mayu

Prior to arriving in New Zealand, Mayu had no expectation that she would play competitive volleyball. Her identity as a volleyball player and team member was something that emerged from her experience living in New Zealand. It became one of the highlights of her time in New Zealand that she was able to "communicate with town people" [I3-111] and travel to play volleyball. However, her interactions with her volleyball teammates were not completely unproblematic. She confessed that sometimes she could not understand what they were saying [I1-49] and that they argued, which caused some tension and stress amongst the team members [I2-73]. In spite of this, the negative aspects and the conflict were outweighed by Mayu's feeling that she had a life and communicative opportunities outside of her university environment, where she could see more of New Zealand and make new friends [I3-111]. For Mayu being on a local team represented a move away from a life on campus dominated by Japanese students and a move toward becoming "more New Zealand" [I2-10].

Midway through year Mayu had ambitions to move on from her community team to play with a team from another university in same town. According to Mayu, her community team was a C-grade team, but she had aspirations of becoming an A-grade player [I2-109]. This vision of herself as an A-grade player was affirmed by the other university's team captain who suggested she make the shift.

A few weeks prior to our final interview Mayu found herself a part-time job in a Japanese restaurant in town, working four evenings a week. The job offered Mayu a much wanted opportunity to participate in the wider community. When I expressed my concern about whether, because it was a Japanese restaurant, she would have the opportunities she desired to speak English, Mayu happily told me that the restaurant was actually owned and run by a Thai family [I3-78] who did not

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speak Japanese, only English and Thai . Mayu was finding the experience "very positive and I can get money!" [I3-86]. She enjoyed the easy conversations with customers who were curious about her, with questions such as "Where are from?", "How long have you been here?", as well as answering their questions about the menu options. The job meant that Mayu was spending less time with her homestay family, especially her homestay sisters who she felt were "still annoying" [I3-142]. So while her vision of herself as a member of a kiwi family dissipated somewhat toward the end of the year, her image of herself as a participant in a wider community strengthened.

6.2.5   Future self as a journalist

"so I know what it is inside me. Now I am doing polishing to get the diamond." [I2-20]

Connected to Mayu's vision of herself as a global citizen, was her dream to become a journalist. Increasingly, throughout the year, Mayu's vision of herself as a journalist became stronger and clearer. In the LDAs, and subsequent interviews and journals, Mayu presented a number of images to represent her desired future self as a journalist, her development as a language student in New Zealand and the impact her vision had on her study choices.

In LDA2, Mayu drew various images of her desired future self: on an airplane; taking a photograph, carrying a notebook and pen, and looking through binoculars (Image 6.8, below). Mayu explained that the images represented her dream to "work in many countries [and] to go and report their countries issues to Japan" [I1-136].
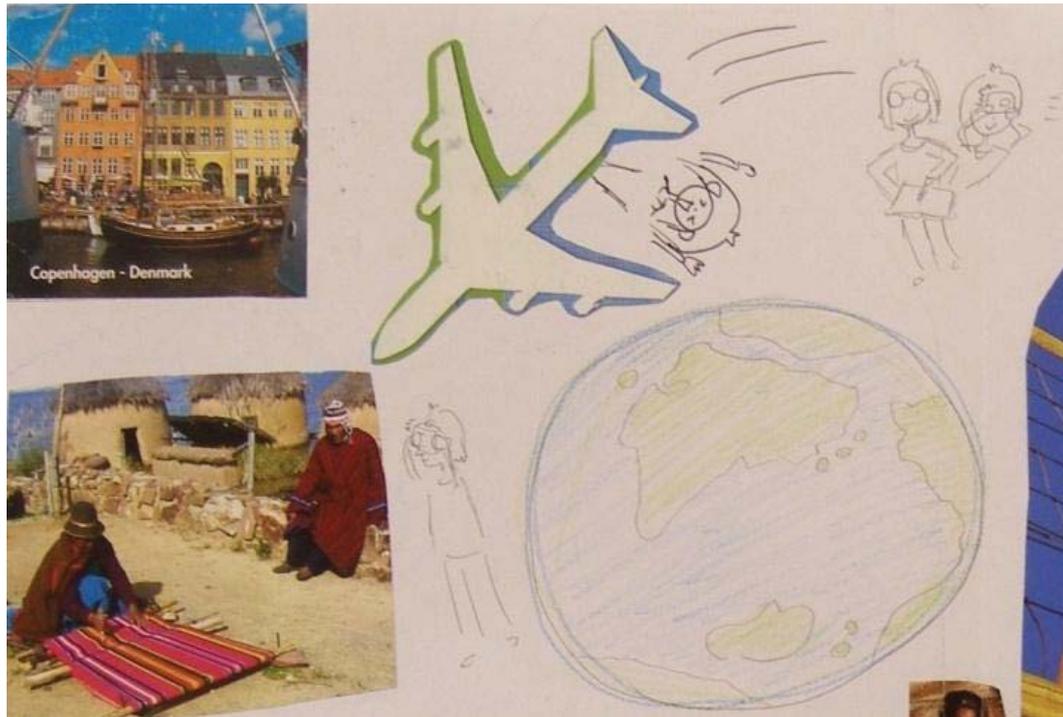
Image 6.8. Extract 2 from LDA2-Mayu

To realise her future imagined self as an international journalist, in addition to studying English, Mayu felt she needed to "learn global issues" [I1-139]. It is for this reason that Mayu chose to undertake a Bachelor of Global Studies in New Zealand [J2]. Mayu also felt that she needed to study Japanese. Her feeling was that her Japanese writing skills were currently insufficient to write news articles [I1-139], explaining that in order to work as a journalist in Japan she would need to possess an excellent command of Kanji and that job applicants would be tested on both their English and their Japanese proficiency. So it seems that in order to become the person she envisaged, Mayu felt she needed more than just English language studies and subsequently spent a lot of her time reading Japanese news articles.

In our second interview, at the end of her first semester in the degree programme, Mayu told me that she saw herself as a diamond in the rough, a metaphor which she borrowed from a classmate's LDA6. Mayu explained that she

felt that inside all students is a beautiful stone that has to be found and polished, that is, "to study or improve something" [I2-16]. This metaphor of the uncut gem resonated with Mayu because she felt that she had identified her future job "... so I know what it is inside me ... now I am doing polishing to get the diamond" [I2-17]. Even so, Mayu expressed her lack of confidence about knowing whether the diamond she is "shaping" and "polishing" inside of her is what will help her achieve her goal to become a journalist [I2-20].

Reflecting on her development throughout the year, in our third and final follow-up interview Mayu brought along two images; one which represented herself at the beginning of the year and the other that represented her at the end of the year. The first image, which was taken from a magazine, was of a baby monkey. In the picture the little monkey looks very vulnerable, timid and worried, with its tiny hand placed in its mouth (see Image 6.9, below). Mayu explained that little monkey represented a time when:

> I was a little unsure. I had already decided my major and I want to
> study something, I want to be something. I want to be a journalist or
> something. But I was not sure, like, I can take major really or I can be
> journalist really. My English level is a little bit lower than other
> students, so I was worried about my English is too low. [I3-1]
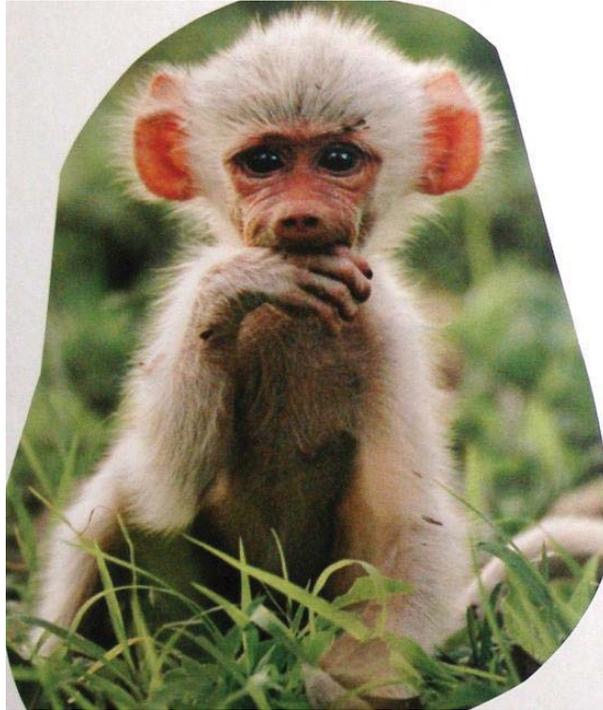
Image 6.9. Extract 1 from Now and Then-Mayu

The big ears represented Mayu's efforts "to be careful" [I3-3], that is, to try very hard to follow what goes on in class and around her, and her eagerness to study content courses, such as environmental studies, which she felt it related more directly to her goal [I3-4]. In LDA6, Mayu represented her feeling of excitement with a picture of a group of young people cheering, next to which she wrote: "Let's go to journey!! We are going to be a language student!!"

To represent her development as a learner throughout her first year in her degree programme, in our final interview Mayu brought along a second image which she had drawn herself (Image 6.9, below). This drawing was of a cave person standing upright outside of a cave, holding a primitive weapon and with a fire burning. As Mayu explained, she felt she had improved during the year and was beginning to feel "like [a] human" [I3-7] and that her future is clearer for her now, referring to her goal to become an international journalist.

The image of herself standing outside of the cave reflected her feeling that she has emerged from a dark place, where she was unsure about her future, and though she was still nervous about her study pathway and her plans for a future job, she felt stronger [I3-26]. For Mayu, the weapon and the fire represented the tools she was using to achieve her goals, the most useful of which was her will and determination [I3-28] (her personality self-concepts) which enable her to "just start walking" [I3-29].

Image 6.10. Extract 2 from Now and Then-Mayu

Despite this growth in strength, Mayu was still nervous that she had so many uncertainties: she particularly had some doubts about whether she could become her imagined future self, feeling that her English language level was too low and that she was not going to graduate from a well-known Japanese university. However, she was buoyed by her recent discovery of a news organisation whose policy was to recruit from a broader spectrum of graduating students:

Actually, they said they don't care what kind of university, because when we do, like, test and interview we don't say ... we don't tell them the name of the university. It says, but actually, lots of employers [employees] are from very famous universities. Like Tokyo university and very famous. But it says they want to change to get different types of employers because they just get elite and it doesn't work very well. [I3-17]

Mayu finally felt like she had a real chance to enter the job market in Japan in her chosen field.

6.2.6 Summary

Mayu's story revealed a multitude of self-concepts. These self-concepts related to her early days as a language learner and user in Japan and Denmark, as well as her current context in New Zealand. In addition to these past and present self-concepts, she also presented images of her desired future self: as a student of international studies, as a global citizen, as a member of New Zealand family and as a journalist. A number of themes emerged from her narrative which shaped these self-concepts. Mayu referenced significant others (teachers, friends and homestay family), places (Japan, Denmark and New Zealand), learning experiences (studying in Japan, Denmark and New Zealand), leisure activities (playing volleyball) and work (part-time job) when talking about her various self-concepts as a language learner and user. She also referenced her beliefs about language, particularly when discussing her negative self-concepts as an English language student in Japan and later as a Danish student, as well as her academic self-concepts and personality self-concepts (her will and determination). Through the images created during the LDAs, and supported in her journal and interviews, Mayu revealed a number of positive and negative emotions (for example, sadness, frustration, excitement, joy and disappointment) as she described herself as a language learner, her language learning history, her goals and motivations. At times Mayu's various images of

herself were challenged by people and events along her learning trajectory; for example, other Japanese students, her homestay sisters and the policies of potential employers.

6.3   Introducing Luc

Luc was a young man from New Caledonia, who at the time the study began was 20 year old. When I first met Luc he had been in New Zealand for just over one year. Prior to entering the degree programme, he studied in the English Preparation Programme with many of the other students in our current class.

In class Luc stood out to me not just because he was one of only two male students in the class, but also because of his engaging personality.   Luc was very popular with the other, mostly female, students in the class because of his gentle personality and willingness to engage in conversations on just about any topic. Although he was quite shy, at the beginning of each class he would enter the room and say hello or non-verbally acknowledge the presence of the other students in the class. The girls liked to try out their limited French language skills and he indulged them by responding to them briefly in French or assisting them with their pronunciation.

Luc struck me as a deep thinker, someone who was extremely reflective about his own experiences, what he could learn about himself and others through his life experiences. I found out that he liked to read, listen to music and go to the movies and spent a good deal of his spare time wondering through the shops in town, looking at books and CDs. Despite being quite shy he often engaged in conversations with store clerks about music.

Luc was a slightly built young man, with shoulder length wavy hair. He could possibly be described as 'geeky' and was not at all fashionable, often wearing track pants, worn out sneakers and a t-shirt. He could often be seen walking around campus with drum sticks in his hands or tucked under his arm. Luc lived and breathed for playing the drums and had a very clear vision of himself working in the music industry as a drummer or in some other capacity.

I discovered that Luc comes from a small, close-knit family, consisting of his father, a hairdresser, his mother, a secretary at a travel agency, and a younger brother. His family and his girlfriend, who was a college student back in New Caledonia, featured in many of his conversations with other students in class and in our interviews together. In his early days as student in New Caledonia, Luc struggled to fit in with what he saw as a rigid system. It was his family and their support which buoyed Luc through these difficult times and enabled him to seek out his own path in life.

6.3.1   The misfit: self as a student in New Caledonia

"I can criticise everything in the French system" [I1-59]

Luc's self-concepts as a language learner and user were most definitely influenced by his experiences as a student within the school system in New Caledonia. Luc represented this period of time in his LDA1, an excerpt of which is shown in Image 6.11, below.   When discussing his learning history in the school system in New Caledonia, Luc seemed to be presenting a self-concept as somewhat of a misfit: a square peg being asked to fit into a round hole.
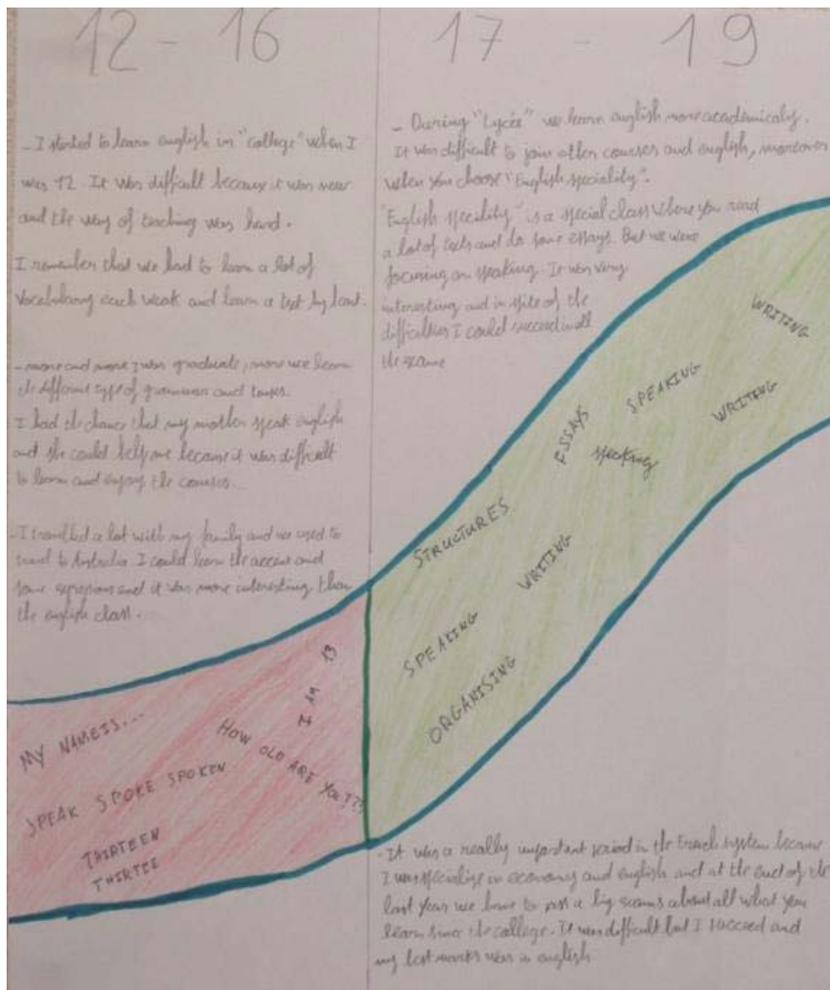
Image 6.11. Extract from LDA1-Luc

His school years in New Caledonia had been extremely difficult: he first began studying English at the age of 12, and despite his difficulties he continued his English language studies through high school.   Throughout this period Luc was in conflict with the French system of education, which he saw as promoting elitism [I1-54]. He railed against a system that he felt put undue pressure on students "to be an adult" [I1-37]. The message he took from these experiences was that if you could not achieve to a high level academically, then you would never be successful in life:

> if you can't do that, you can't live or you can't survive. It is very strong and that is, each teacher, each administrator, say that if you don't have this level, you can't do anything in your life. In my, when I was younger, it was always in my head. [I1-55]

Luc even went so far as to describe the teachers in French system as "dictators" [I2-115]. Though Luc didn't keep a copy of the poster from LDA7, in our second interview he recalled his metaphor for a language teacher. For this activity he found a picture of Mount Rushmore in a magazine which he used to described what he thought a language teacher ought to be like: a president who "makes a good society", just like the language teacher tries "to make good the students" [I2-115]. For Luc, however, in the French system, "teachers are teachers and students, simply students. But in my mind we are all humans and a sort of hierarchy is not good to enjoy learning" [J3].

Even as he studied in New Zealand, the experience as a student in New Caledonia impacted on him. In LDA5 Luc described "French teaching" as a negative influence on his learning (see Image 6.12, below). It was not that Luc did not like to study in New Caledonia; it was that he could not relate to the method of teaching or understand the material that was being presented to him. Luc explained that "the way of teaching was hard" [LDA1] and involved learning by heart vocabulary and grammar. He felt that "many teachers think that they can teach English because they learn English without learning how to learn before" [LDA5]. As a result, "it was difficult to learn and enjoy the courses" [LDA1].
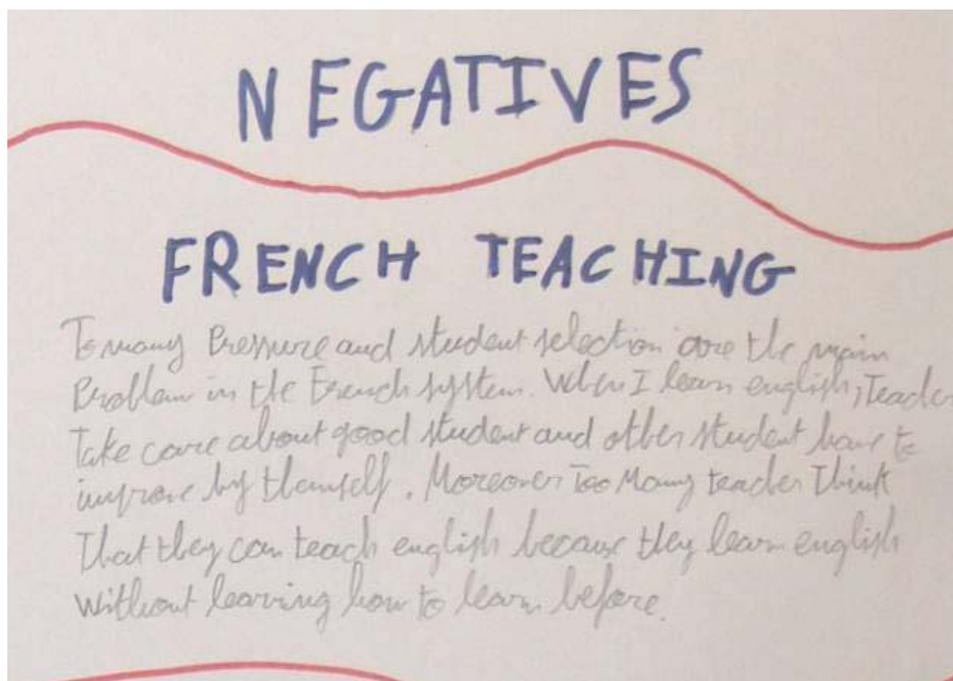
Image 6.12.   Extract from LDA5-Luc

During the period in the French school system, Luc did not feel that he could become the self he wanted to become. In LDA2, Luc drew an image of himself playing the drums, representing his goal to become professional musician (see Image 6.13, below) underneath which he wrote "I Will do anything to make my dreams come True". Luc was frustrated and angry as he felt his dreams were being stifled:

> ...because in the French system, we can't do this for example. You can't do anything to make your dreams come true. [I1-68]

> When you say that in France or in New Caledonia, everyone will watch you "Oh, you are strange, you are crazy people". [I1-69]

ANOTHER GOALS:
MUSIC

After my studies I really want to go to a professional music school to work as a drummer, it is one of my dreams.
If I could join a band it will be fabulous and I could travel around europe or maybe the world. But before that I have to practice hard and finish my studies.
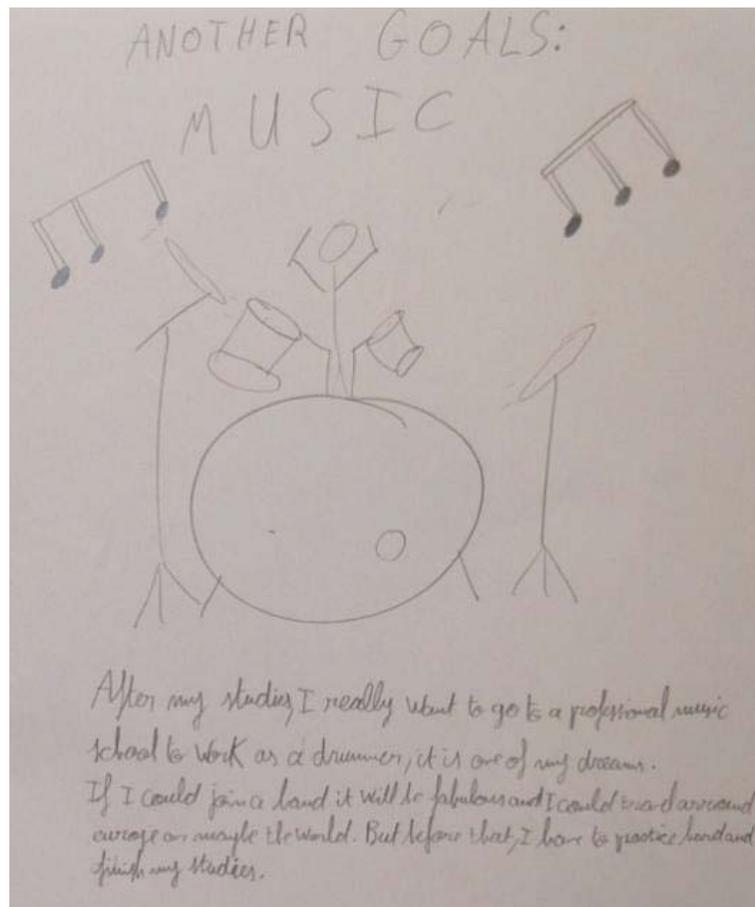
"I Will do everything to make my dreams come True

Image 6.13. Extract 1 from LDA2-Luc

Despite his struggles, Luc persisted and even specialised in English and economics in high school. Luc took some very challenging courses as part of his "English speciality" which involved reading "a lot of texts and do some essays. But we were focusing on speaking" too [LDA2]. Luc's perseverance paid off and in his final year of high school he succeeded in passing "big exams about all what you learn since the college" [LDA2], with his best grades being in English.

6.3.2 Freedom: self as a traveller

"I felt free for once without pressure of French's system" [LDA1]

Travel played an important role in Luc's life and it had an enormous impact on the development of his self-concepts. Travel provided respite from the pressures and confines of school and offered him the sense of freedom that he had been longing for. Luc was fortunate that his mother worked in the travel industry and as a schoolboy he had the opportunity to travel often. Compared to the English he was studying at school, which Luc described as "only learning, not applying" [J1], the English he observed and used during his travels, where he could learn the accents and expressions and where "I can learn, um, about life" [I1-49], was far more interesting.
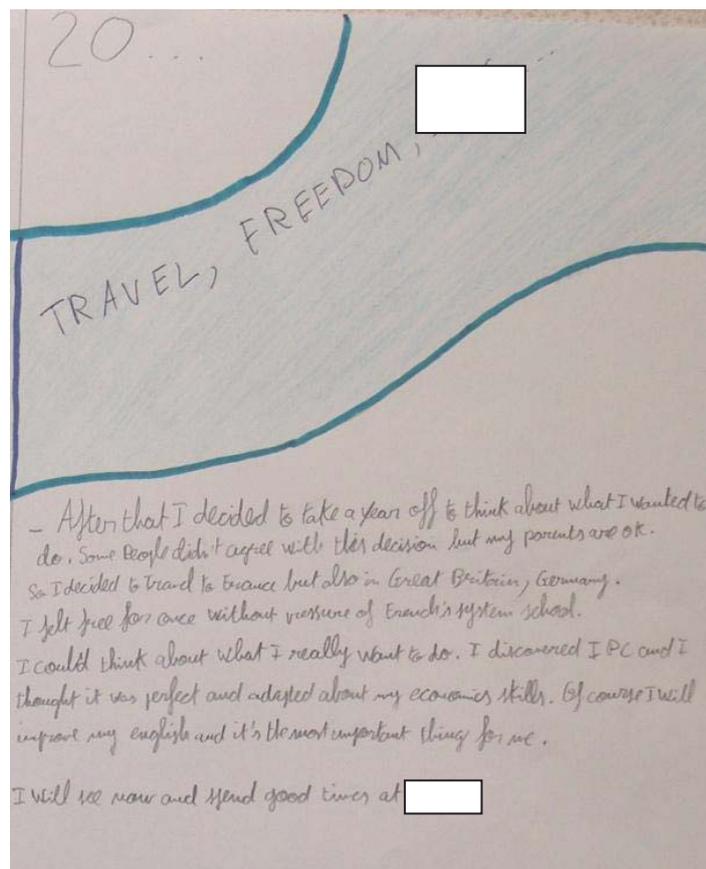
Image 6.14. Extract 2 from LDA1-Luc

At 19, rather than enter university, Luc took the year off and travelled through Europe and the United States. It was an opportunity to break away from the pressure of the formal education system in New Caledonia and "think about what I really want to do" [LDA1]. This was a brave move for Luc, especially considering the feedback he encountered from people around him, who did not agree with his decision not to attend university immediately after high school. According to Luc, "in the French society, to take a gap year gives a bad image of the family" [J1]. Even in his travels, however, Luc felt a sense of difference or otherness between himself and some of the people he encountered; "that no one can open his mind" and that people were doing "the same thing every day", which was "too crazy" for Luc to fathom [I1-49].

By Luc's own admissions, he did not have many goals in life, but his goals were very "precise" [J2]: to become a professional musician and travel around the world [LDA2]. In LDA2 Luc revealed that he would like to continue his adventures by travelling to South America (see Image 6.5, below). Luc was fascinated by Aztec and Mayan civilisations, "these big old architectures, such as temples and ancient towns" [J2]. His excitement and imagination were most certainly stirred by the book he was reading in French at the time, titled 'Fingerprints of the Gods: The Evidence of Earth's Lost Civilization' by Graham Hancock (which I learned later inspired the blockbuster disaster movie '2012'). Luc explained that:

> I really want to go to Mexico and Peru, etc, but more now, I am very excited about my book that I am reading. It is talking about Aztec people and the myth. [I3-91]
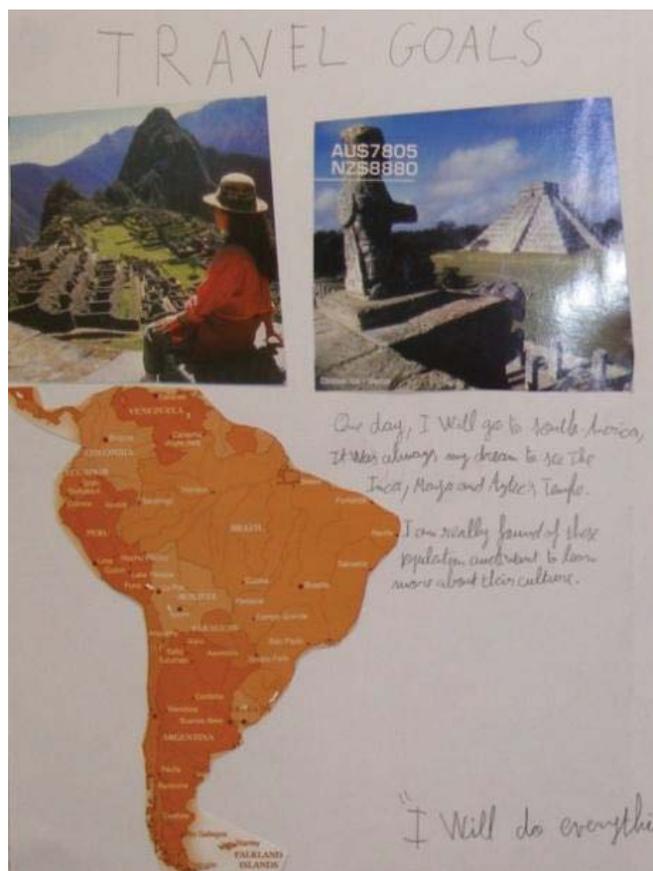
Image 6.15. Extract 2 from LDA2-Luc

6.3.3 The lion: self as a university student in New Zealand

"I am a lion!!! YEAH!" [LDA6]

Through his travel experiences Luc renewed his interest in studying English saying he "saw that English was primordial to work in this world" [J1]. Combining his desire to continue his English studies with his desire to continue his travel experiences, and his parents' desire for him to continue his education, after his gap year Luc and his mother began to look for overseas universities. In their research they discovered the Institute which Luc thought would be "the perfect way for me, that followed my economics courses" [J1] and would allow him to continue his English language development. Luc entered the Institute in 2007 and studied in the

English Preparatory Programme for one year before entering the Bachelor of Global

Studies in April, 2008.

Luc was extremely satisfied with his decision to study abroad and he

embraced the opportunities it afforded him:

> Now English is on my own life and I read, learn, write, speak and think
> in English. I like it and I saw more and more that this skill could help
> me to find a good job, but also to learn more about people and myself.
> [J1]

Capturing his increased confidence in himself as a language learner and an

international student, in LDA6 Luc presented an image of his language learner self as

a lion (Image 6.16, below). Metaphors abound in the poster he created: a lion as a

metaphor for himself as a language learner; his prey as a metaphor for developing his

English language skills; becoming a better hunter as a metaphor for the strategies he

utilised to develop his language skills.
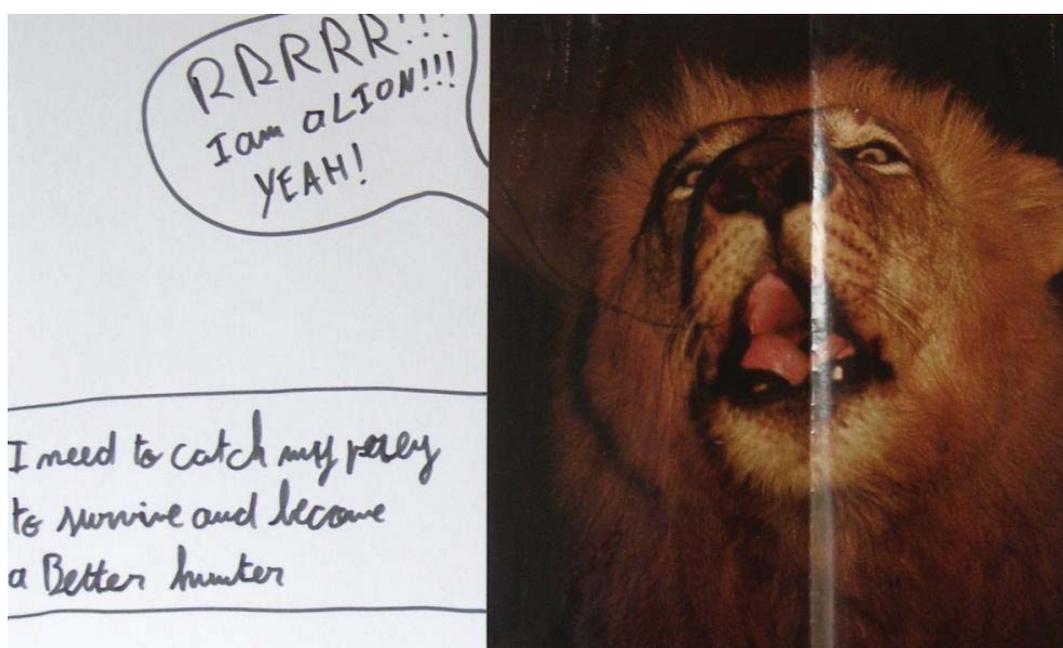
Image 6.16. Extract from LDA6-Luc

The metaphor of a lion stemmed from his early days as an international student in New Zealand. Like many students who go abroad to study in English, Luc expected to become bilingual very quickly [I2-96]. Upon realising that becoming bilingual would not simply happen by attending lectures, he was significantly motivated to change his behaviour: "I was really frustrated. I decided to do more" [I2-95]. Luc's main strategy for improving his language skills (to catch his prey) was to take every opportunity to go off-campus to visit the music and model toy stores, watch a movie or shop for groceries. Luc frequently initiated conversations with shop clerks, paying attention to their accent and use of expressions:

> When I go to town I always go to my music shop to buy some CD's and I always speak to Andy the seller, because we like the same style, same kind of music. And we talk for about 20 minutes. [I1-22]

> Yeah, yeah, it's good. And he has a New Zealand accent, but something like American, so I think it is more difficult. [I1-23]

In discussing his emerging identity as an English speaker, Luc referenced his French identity. Not only did Luc want to acquire the English language, he wanted to acquire the identity of being 'English' because it represented a certain standard of language proficiency. For Luc, being proficient meant that he would be able to "feel I am English, not French, without ... maybe I can keep my French accent ... without mistakes in my [English] language" (I1-14). The connection Luc made between English language and a possible English identity for himself was mirrored in his comments on his identity as a French speaker in New Caledonian:

> I am um, yes, I consider myself French, because I speak French. [I1-63]

> But for me they ... France is not France, France is France with New Caledonia. You are Caledonian because you live in New Caledonia, but you are French because you speak French. [I1-14]

Luc also referenced his social and personality self-concepts when describing his strengths as an English speaker: he described himself in his AE classes as talkative ("I talk too much" [I2-143]), a self-concept supported by his AE2 teacher who often told him: "[Luc], it is not your turn, please let others ..." [I2-122]. This was mirrored in Luc's description of his personality as becoming more talkative and developing increased social confidence to overcome shyness. As a result Luc was not afraid to speak and he believed this contributed to the improvements he felt he was making in his English [I1-22]. In his other academic courses Luc also feels he has overcome his shyness and confidence and is now able to participate more in class [I2-53; J3].

Though Luc became increasingly confident in his English speaking skills throughout the year, he felt his vocabulary level was weak:

> Um ... I think I can speak English with someone in the street and have a big conversation with someone. I need more specific vocabularies. (I2-149)

This self-concept of having a weak English vocabulary was mirrored in his academic self-concept. Luc felt that his biggest challenge in his degree programme was to learn the vocabulary associated with his economics and international relations courses. His concern about his vocabulary level stemmed from his beliefs about learning. When discussing the language learning process, Luc felt that his role as a learner in the process was to "Um, I think, um, if I say learn each day new vocabulary" [I1-94].

Luc's L2 self-concept as being good at speaking and his personality/social self-concepts were also connected to his beliefs about language learning. He believed that the best way to learn English was to interact with others, particularly with target language speakers:

So I think the best way is to live in an English country. To ... and maybe each year to go in Australian or New Zealand house, you know, with family. [I1-86]

Because I have a friend who very, who likes to study, but they always spend time in the library and study. They read a lot in English, but they can't talk often and so, I think it is bad. Just find activities other than, I don't know, playing PlayStation in their room. [I2-101]

He felt that his conversations with Andy from the music store and with members of his band improved his vocabulary and slang, which further improved his speaking ability [I1-128].

6.3.4 Self maturing

> *"I don't feel we are students. I don't feel that teachers are teachers. But human experiences."* [I2-116]

In the transition from school to university in New Zealand, Luc seemed to be maturing and enjoying more adult relationships with those around him. In contrast to his days in the formal education system in New Caledonia, he appreciated a very different, more egalitarian, relationship between himself as a student and the teachers in New Zealand. This was in sharp contrast to the relationship with his teachers in New Caledonia who he likened to dictators. Luc not only pointed out the differences between the education systems and teachers, but also differences and changes within himself.   In our final interview at the end of Luc's first year in the degree programme, he presented two images; one which he felt represented himself at the beginning of the year and the other representing himself at the end (Image 6.17, below).

The first image Luc chose was of a young, wide-eyed boy in a classroom. Comparing himself as a student in the French system, where there was so much pressure to be an adult, in New Zealand Luc felt he was allowed to be a child [I3-36].

By this Luc meant that he was interested and curious about the new courses he was

studying and eagerly anticipating his second year in the degree programme where he

could focus more on his economics and international relations subjects [I3-37].

> And just very interesting when he learns something new. Yeah, that's ...
> I don't have the pressure of "you have to do that", "be an adult", "be
> responsible".
> [I3-39]

> In class, we definitely have the ... we can dialogue the things you can't do in
> the French system. [I3-40]

In New Zealand he felt there was no conflict between himself and the teachers,

which reminded him of his earlier years of schooling, as an enthusiastic youngster

being taught by kind teachers who "never be angry about you" [I3-37].

Image 6.17. Extract 1 from Now and Then-Luc

Luc chose the picture of a frog on a lily pad to represent himself at the end of his first year, explaining that as a student he was about to jump to the next level, just as the frog has to jump from one lily pad to the next in order to get where it wants to go. As Luc explained, for the frog the lily pads are quite small, so it has to be careful not to fall into the water. Similarly, as a student Luc felt "we need to be more serious to jump to there" [I3-47]. Luc could imagine himself successfully completing his studies in New Zealand: "I will not fall in the water. I think I have the level to finish things no problem." [13-55].

At the end of his studies in New Zealand, Luc believed that he would "have a solid foundation to start working ... I think I could start a sort of process to develop the way of my dreams to travel and be a drummer" [J3]. However, for Luc studying at university was not so much about developing a career; for him it was simply to "learn something ... learn what you want, what you like" [I3-121].   Luc's aversion to the notion of settling into a job, other than being a musician or being involved in the music industry, is most certainly a continuing legacy of his time as a student in New Caledonia, where:

> You need a job, you need a goal. When you are 12, we tell you what we want to do. And if you don't know you have the pressure because you don't know, which is very bad. I really don't know what I will do. Seriously, I am young. [I3-118]

Luc was certain that on completing his degree he would move on from New Zealand and continue to chase his dreams and his girlfriend, who planned to enter a university in France.

> I think I will leave [the Institute] after my [next] two years, because of my girlfriend. She will go to France and I will follow her. I will see if she succeeds or not. Definitely if she succeeds I will come with her. Definitely. [I3-107]

6.3.5   The band: realising a dream

"I really want to go to a professional music school to work as a drummer; it is one of my dreams" (LDA2)

As presented in LDA2 (Image 6.8, below) and later discussed in our interview, Luc had long held the dream to become a professional musician:

> Moreover, if I could join a band it could be fantastic but maybe this dream is too difficult to realise. I will do the best that I can because for me, the drums are more than a hobby, they are a passion and I know that I can work like that, but the music industry is so difficult and it is impossible to live only as a drummer probably. [J3]
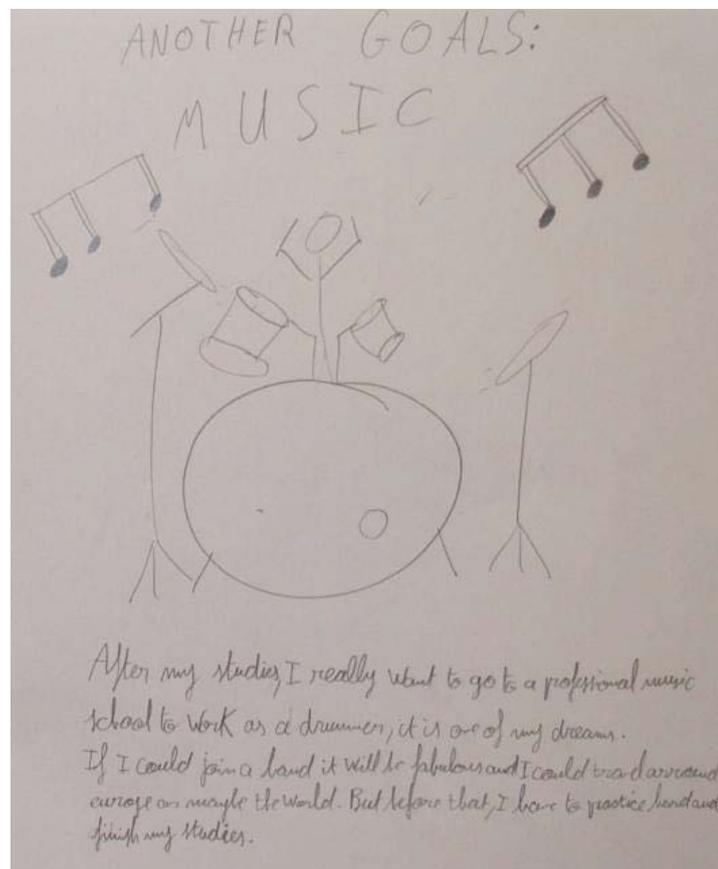
Image 6.18. Extract 3 from LDA2-Luc

In one of Luc's trips into town a serendipitous conversation with a music store clerk placed Luc on a new trajectory. Just two days prior to our first interview

Luc had connected with members of a heavy metal band who where in need of a new drummer and invited him to join their band:

> It's a crazy story because I lost my drumsticks and I had to buy another pair. So I went to the shop and the seller say "do you want a bag?" and I say no, because I don't care about that. So I got the shop and I walked to Mango music shop for CD. And the seller look at me and say "Oh, you play drums?". "Yes since two years." "OK, OK." And the day after I received a text, I know you like metal band, heavy metal ... do you want to? Of course, yes. [I1-11]

This opportunity put Luc in a new realm in terms of professionalism, compared to playing with his friends in a tribute band in New Caledonia, and closer to realising one of his ideal selves. The band were paid to play at a regular venue in town, they travelled around the region, wrote their own music and planned to record their original music. Not only did this opportunity move Luc closer to realising his future self as a professional musician, it also put him into a new language community.

Membership of the band, which was made up of 25-30 year old New Zealand males, not only brought him closer to achieving his goals of becoming a professional musician, it afforded Luc the opportunity to become a better speaker of English:

> It change completely my way of speaking. Uh, a lot of vocabulary and slang. [I3-14]

Luc wanted to be an authentic, fully participating member of the band, not just the foreign student playing with the band:

> Yeah, um, I know I have to speak more quickly as them, because I don't want to feel the French drummer. I want to feel the drummer of the band. I want ... it's a kind of improvement of my English. I want to feel I am English, not French, without ... maybe I can keep my French accent. [I1-14]

Luc became a frequent visitor to the band members' homes, where he enjoyed interacting with their families and talking about music and learning about New Zealand life and attitudes from New Zealanders and comparing these things to his

own country (I2-62). Luc laughed as he compared his English proficiency to that of the band members' young children who spoke "better English than me" [I2-61]. Certainly by the end of the year Luc had noticed the development of his speaking skills, proudly noting that:

> it change completely my way of speaking. Uh, a lot of vocabulary and slang. A lot of slang. [I3-14]

The celebration of his 21st birthday organised by the band members signalled to Luc that he was becoming a bone fide member of the group:

> Because we are more and more close with the member. Moreover, on Saturday we will, uh, celebrate my birthday. [I2-14]

Another event which confirmed to Luc that he was a full member of the band, and also that he had a 'voice' as a student member of the Institute occurred just a couple of days prior to our final interview. While rehearsing at the Institute's gym for an upcoming concert, the band came under attack from a complaining student who vehemently expressed her dislike at having to listen to their heavy metal music. Luc found himself in the middle of the conflict, trying to appease the band members and the complaining student.

> I explain everything like this to the guitarist. I was happy because he understood me. He changed. [I3-6]

> Because I know what the band thinks and said to her, because I have the voice of [the Institute]. [I3-8]

While disappointed with the unpleasant exchange between the band and the other student, and with having to mediate the conflict, the incident affirmed his competence as an English speaker and his membership in different English speaking communities.

6.3.6 Self and family

"I think my big advantage is that I have fabulous parents" [J4]

For Luc, his family is the most important community to which he belonged. Luc's concept of self (as a language learner, as an international student, as a drummer) was most definitely influenced by his family, in particular his parents. Luc's mother, as a proficient speaker of English, gently fostered his language development both at school and when they travelled overseas as a family. Luc attributed his ability to "learn by myself what is important and not important" [I1-51] to the fact that his parents never pushed him to do something, including studying English.

In regards to Luc's motto to "do anything to make my dreams come true", he received a great deal of encouragement from his family, despite the backlash he faced:

> Of course, my parents because they don't care what anyone says about me. I respect more my parents because they understand me. There are a lot of conversations in my family, in my home, so it is good to understand everyone. [I1-78]

Luc's parents stood by him during his school days in New Caledonia when "my teachers don't trust me, my parents believe in me and they push me up. I succeed because of them." [J4]. In dealing with his decision to not enter university in New Caledonia, it was Luc's mother who encouraged him to study abroad:

> My mother is very unhappy when I say I want to stop school after the French ... because I don't want to go back in the French system. Too many pressure, too many things. And, so my mother say, you will go to a foreign country. I say why not, but I will have to see. [I3-143]

In our final interview together, Luc actually brought along a third picture, which he chose because it represented his learning journey as a whole. The picture

(Image 6.9, below) was of a pathway through a forest.   There are certainly similarities between this image and the image of a flowing river which he drew in LDA1 as metaphors for his learning journey. As Luc explained, "all the things are a pathway ... kind of divine things" [I3-68] and "the only one people that can guide me is my parents" [I3-69].
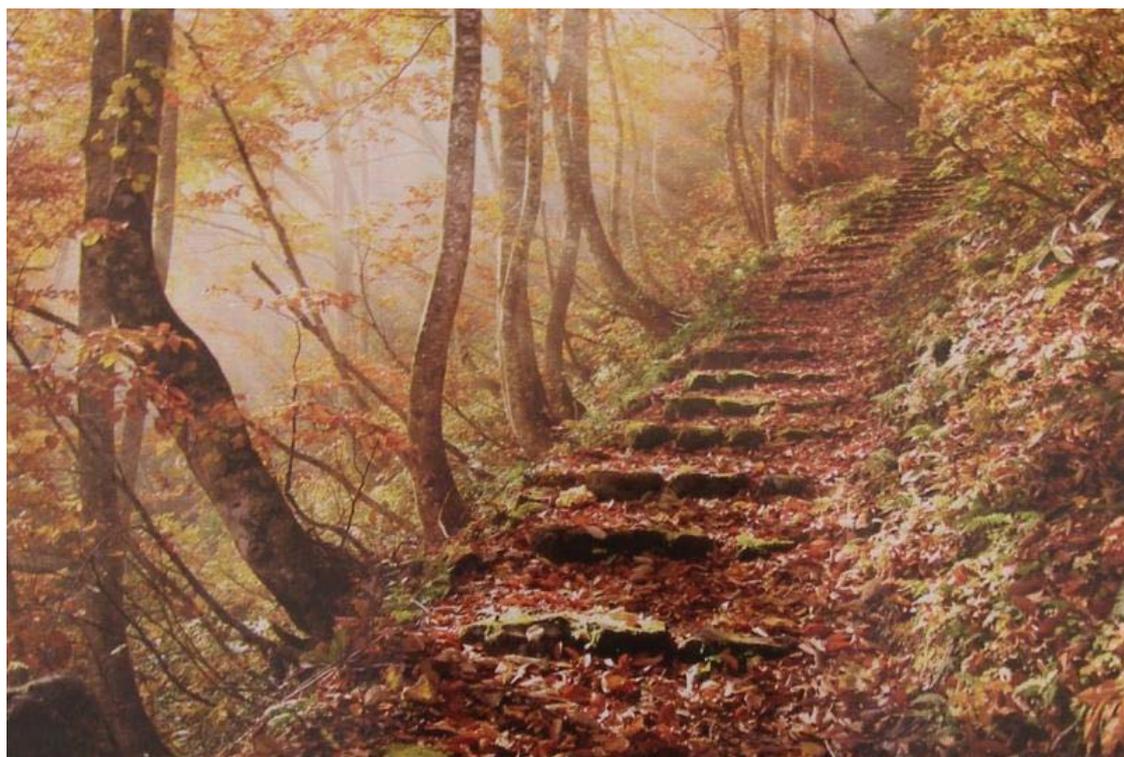
Image 6.19. Extract 2 from Now and Then-Luc

6.3.7   Summary

Luc's self-conceptualisations as a language learner and user changed as he moved along his learning trajectories. In the early days, as a student in New Caledonia, his L2 self-concepts were quite negative, no doubt influenced by a number of negative language learning experiences in this context. His L2 self-concepts evolved as he matured and gained greater independence.   As he recounted more enjoyable and interesting experiences in diverse contexts, such as travelling to

Australia and the USA, living and studying in New Zealand and being a member of the band in New Zealand, Luc presented more positive self-concepts. When discussing his L2 goals and motivation, Luc spoke of his desired future self as an bilingual, travelling the globe and making music. At times along his learning trajectory, however, Luc's desired future selves were challenged, particularly by the values of the learning institution in New Caledonia. In contrast, his L2 self-concepts (including these future oriented self-concepts) were validated through more positive interactions with significant others, particularly his family and girlfriend, along with his band members, people he met in the community in New Zealand (such as the music store clerk), teachers and peers. Luc was passionate as he described himself as a language learner, his language learning history, his goals and motivations, expressing a range of emotions such as frustration, anger, relief, satisfaction, joy, anticipation and excitement.

6.4   Introducing Rie

Rie was a shy, softly spoken 20-year old from Japan. She had a gentle personality and, as I was to find out, was quite a talented musician, playing both the piano and the saxophone. I often encountered Rie in the cafeteria, either studying alone or with a small group of friends. She seemed to prefer the cafeteria to the library as a place of study because, as she explained, the quietness of the library only made her sleepy. The cafeteria where all students dined (there being no other catering offered on or near campus) offered her an opportunity to mix with other students. Rie could also be found in the recreation centre practicing the piano. As the year progressed, and her confidence grew, she was not so shy about playing the

piano in the recreation centre and often had a small audience of students who were taking a break from their studies.

Rie was a member of the Institute's Ultimate Frisbee team, a very successful team that competed in tournaments throughout New Zealand. This offered Rie an opportunity to participate in organised activities off-campus, without which I doubt she would have ventured into the wider community.

While she seemed to lack confidence in her language ability, at the same time Rie demonstrated determination and motivation to succeed in her studies. She worked hard to overcome her natural shyness in order to participate in classroom activities and interact with her classmates.

Rie did not have any specific career aspirations; she seemed to be happy to find a job in which she could use her English language skills and which would afford her the opportunity to travel, even if that meant simply earning enough money to fund her travels. I believed her ultimate goal in life was to simply be happy and help others to be happy.

I did not pry too much into Rie's family life, only enough to find out that she has an older brother who is a carer for elderly people in Japan. He was most definitely a role model for her and, as Rie explained, "he is very kind, so I watch him and I think I have to learn something and more study" [I1-119]. As for her parents, in LDA4, where we discussed positive and negative influences, Rie's parents were definitely on the positive side of the equation. As she explained, "my motivation goes up when I talk to my family" [LDA4] and when "I learn English and when I speak English fluently, I want to take my parents to New Zealand" [I1-125] to thank them for their support.

6.4.1 Self as a language student in Japan

"My English teacher was not so great. Just said, 'blah, blah, blah'" [I1-49]

Rie's English language learning journey started when she was a twelve-year old in her final year of elementary school student in Japan. The enjoyment she felt for studying English in these early days as a language learner faded quickly in the following year when she entered junior high school.

> I was really interested in English when I was 12, but after entering
> junior high school we learned phrases, so I couldn't understand. [I1-45]

This was an unhappy period of time as a language learner for Rie because just could not understand what she was being taught and as a result scored poorly in English. In LDA1 Rie drew a picture of herself as a junior high school student to represent her feelings of unhappiness and confusion (shown in Image 6.20, below).
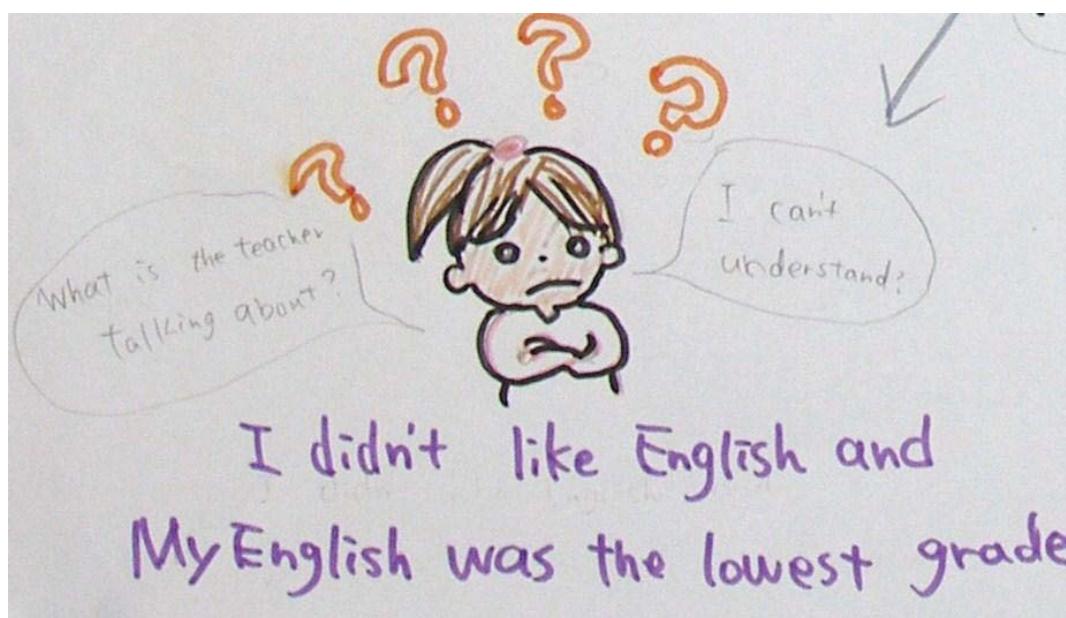
Image 6.20. Extract 1 from LDA1-Rie

The situation did not improve as she progressed through to high school, with the focus of her English language studies being primarily on preparing for the

inevitable university entrance exam. Rie depicted herself as a diligent, hardworking

high school student (Image 6.21, below); however, while her determination was high,

her feelings toward her English language studies hit an all-time low.
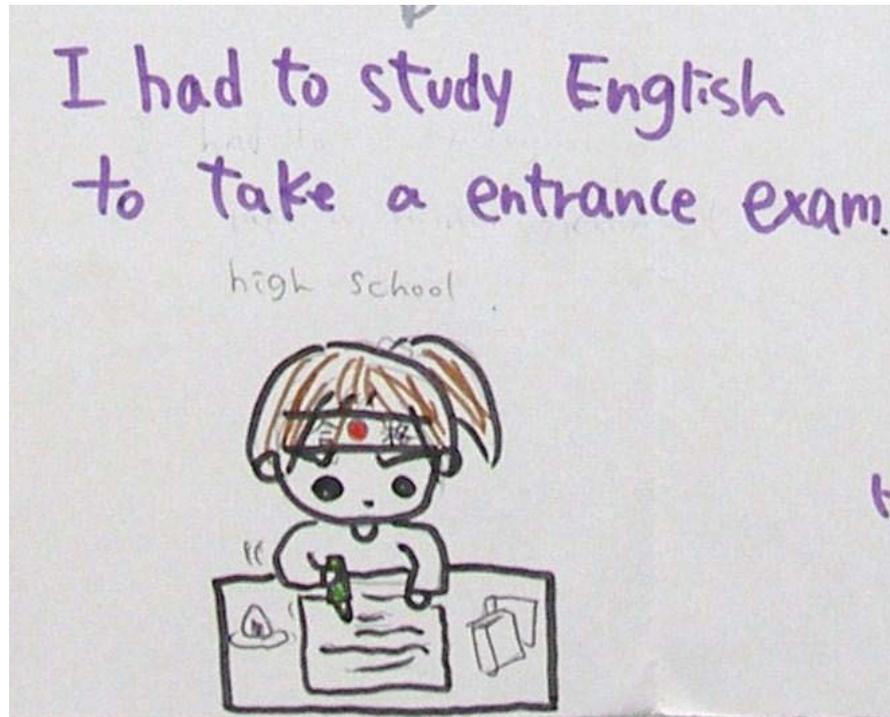
Image 6.21. Extract 2 from LDA1-Rie

The degree to which Rie's interest in English plummeted was in proportion to

the age of her teacher: an 80 year old gentleman, whose "speaking was not so clear"

[I1-55], leaving her unable to understand his lessons. Again, Rie was in a situation

where she could not understand what she was being taught. Thankfully the situation

turned around in the last year of high school when she studied English with a new,

much younger and "very intelligent" teacher [LDA1] and her enjoyment of English

and her confidence as a student rose dramatically. Despite being unsuccessful in

entering a university in Japan, Rie decided to study abroad in order to continue her

journey as an English language student.

6.4.2 Self as an international friend

"I want to be around international culture ... and I want to know Kiwi" [I1-34]

Prior to arriving in New Zealand, Rie had high expectations about her first ever study abroad experience. Rie had imagined that she would be surrounded by and interact with New Zealanders and other international students with whom she would develop strong friendships. She also imagined being engaged in conversations and as a result her English skills would improve exponentially [I1-39]. As illustrated in LDA1 (Image 6.22, below), Rie was extremely hopeful that as a result of her study abroad she would "speak English fluently" and be able to "help someone by using [her] English skills". When Rie spoke of her imagined future self as a proficient speaker of English, she did so by comparison to her current perceived L2 abilities. To become a fluent speaker, she believed that she needed to interact with others and speak English more frequently (I1-61). However, as Rie put it the "need is high, actual is low" (I1-62).
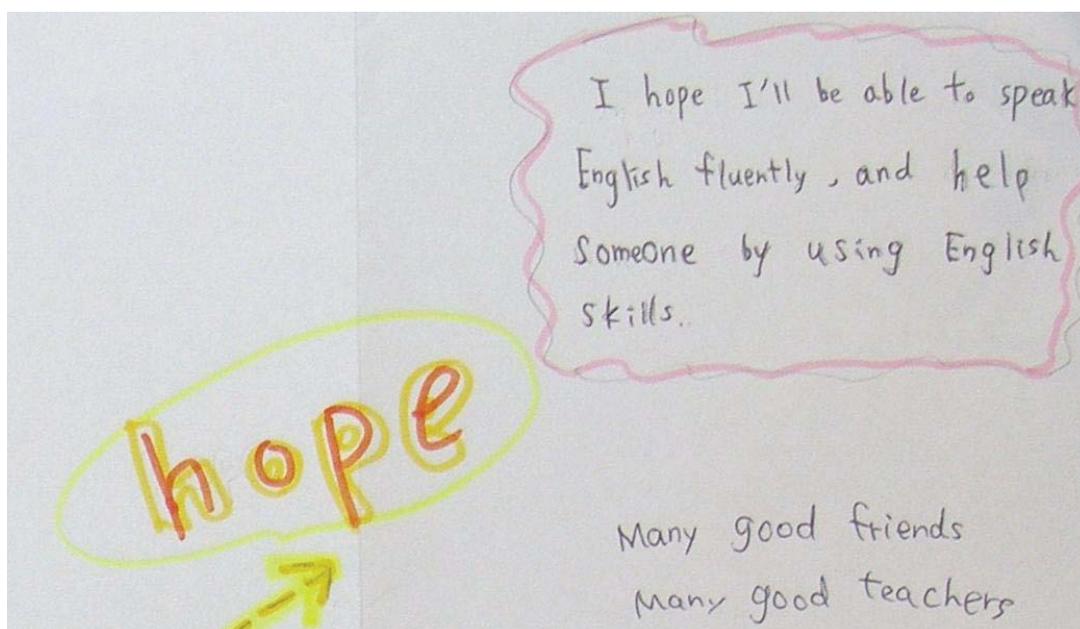
Image 6.22. Extract 3 from LDA1-Rie

One of the biggest disappointments for Rie was realising that she was not in the language immersion context that she had previously imagined. One of the barriers she felt impeded the achievement of her desired future self as a proficient speaker of English was the significant number of Japanese students enrolled at the Institute. In LDA4 (see Image 6.24, below), she listed "too many Japanese" as one of the most negative influences and felt there was "no big difference between [New Zealand] life and life in Japan" [J4]. Rie explained that she tried to speak in English with her Japanese friends, but admitted that she often fell back in to conversations in Japanese because it was easier to express her feelings about "deep things" [I1-6], such as news or the pressures of the assignment workload [I1-131].
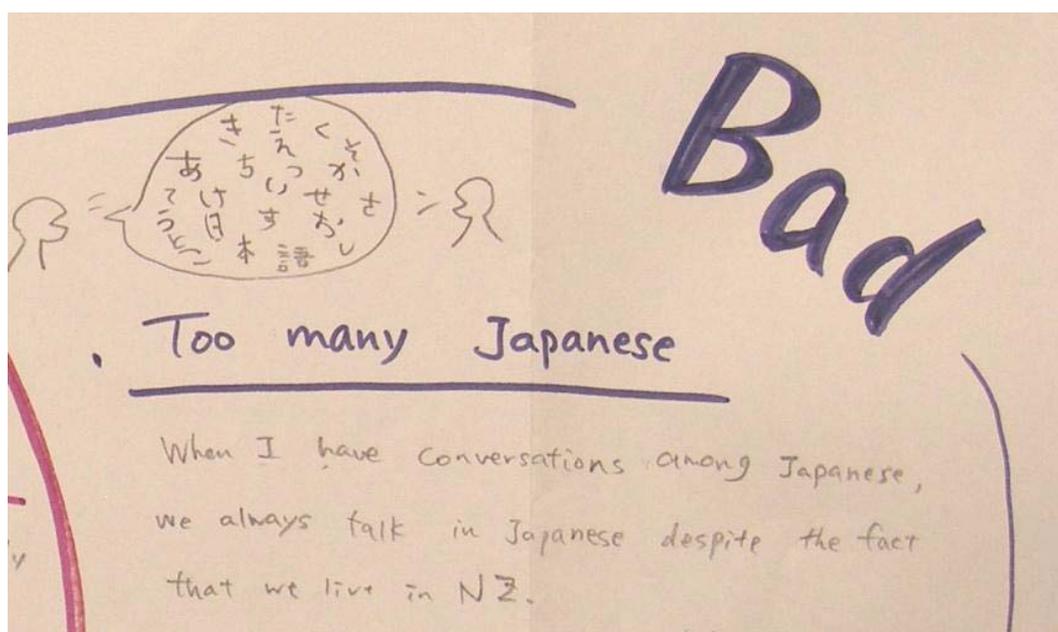
Image 6.23. Extract 1 from LDA4-Rie

Rie recognised that she needed to make an effort in order to acquire Kiwi friends and engage in more conversations in English [I1-61], but often found that the Kiwi students were more interested in practicing their Japanese with her [I1-64]. Though there were many non-Japanese international students on campus, she found it

difficult to mix and engage in conversations with them [I1-40].   Another barrier to becoming her desired self related to the living arrangements on campus: only a few non-Japanese students lived in her hall of residence [I1-7], thereby limiting opportunities to interact with other international students.

In order to develop the international friendships she so desired, Rie felt she needed to overcome her shyness which in her view impacted on her ability to interact with others [I3-11].   There appeared to be a connection between Rie's self-concept as a weak speaker of English, her social self-concept and her L1 self-concept.   Rie explained that because she was very shy she had very few friends [I1-8], and while she desired to interact and have conversations with others, she found this very difficult [I1-40] even when speaking in Japanese [J5].   Her shyness also extended to speaking in class where she found it difficult to interact in English and Japanese:

> I3-62:   I don't speak Japanese or English in class. I don't speak anything.
> Other Japanese students often talk with them in Japanese.
>
> JK: Is that because you are shy or that you don't want to speak Japanese?
>
> I3-63: Shy, but also I don't want to speak Japanese.

Disappointed, yet undeterred, Rie resolved to take part in activities on campus as a way "to establish the relation with international people" [J1]. Midway through the year, Rie joined the Tahitian dance group, which became one of the highlights of her first year in the degree programme [I3-79]. The group was made up of young Tahitian and New Caledonian female students who got together two or three times a week to practice their dance routines and prepare for various events, such as the Institute's annual cultural festival and student concert. The group often spoke French, which rather than deter Rie made her feel curious about the French language and became an access point to conversations with the other members. By

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the end of the year, Rie finally felt that she had "made friends from another country" [I3-85].

Another activity that opened up opportunities for interaction with others was playing the piano. Rie was quite an accomplished piano and saxophone player and had performed at several concerts arranged the Institute's student association. It was one of Rie's goals, as presented in LDA2 (see Image 6.25, below), to play the piano "to my heart's content" [Journal 2]. To her surprise, her playing she drew people toward her who were curious and appreciative of her talent:

> ... and when I am playing, some international students and Kiwi people come to me and "Can I listen?" [I1-57]

Image 6.24. Extract 2 from LDA2-Rie

Reflecting on her first year in the degree programme in our third and final interview, Rie captured her feeling of hopefulness with Image 6.25, below. She chose this image to represent herself at the beginning of the year because the man's

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face looked "like a child ... um, happy and funny" [I3-1]. She felt this matched her

happiness at entering a new stage in her learning journey when she entered the

degree programme and was looking forward to the year ahead. Rie spoke of her

happiness, excitement and nervousness as she embarked on her degree studies:

> Um, I was looking forward to learning English or something with
> international students. I really wanted to learn new things, so I was
> excited. [I3-3]

Image 6.25. Extract from Now and Then-Rie

Though Rie had become more confident in her language skills as the year

progressed, she still perceived herself as weak in some areas. In particular, Rie felt

her speaking skills were quite weak, especially compared to other international

students: "Everyone speaks more than me and ... um ... I don't have confidence" [I3-

111]. While her friends often reassured her that her speaking was improving, she felt

her speaking skills were weak compared to her listening, reading and writing skills

[I3-131]. Rie attributed her lack of speaking skills to having a weak vocabulary [J5]

and, as mentioned earlier, to her general shyness [J5], which was a recurrent theme in our discussions.   Despite her perceived weaknesses, Rie felt she was able to persevere because she actually liked English [J5].

Her positivity about her language skills continued to grow and by the end of the year Rie felt that she was less shy than earlier in the year [I3-11] and had become more sociable (I3-29). This turn in her social self-concept seemed to match her more positive L2 speaking self-concept. Rie felt she could "speak more smoothly" (I3-132) with her international friends, though she could still not interact with others in English in her classes (I3-132).   Overall, by the end of the year Rie was enjoying the experience of studying in New Zealand and expressed feelings of happiness at the friendships she had made and the positive relationships she had developed with teachers.

6.4.3   Self and 'the real world': expectations and realities

"Real world? I seldom go to town. I have no chance." [I1-90]

Rie was hopeful that she would become a fluent speaker of English as a result of her experiences studying and living in New Zealand. She clearly represented this hope in LDA1, where she detailed the ups and downs in her language learning history (Image 6.26, below). To achieve this, Rie believed that she needed "to have more conversations and make a Kiwi friends, and often speak English" [I1-61].
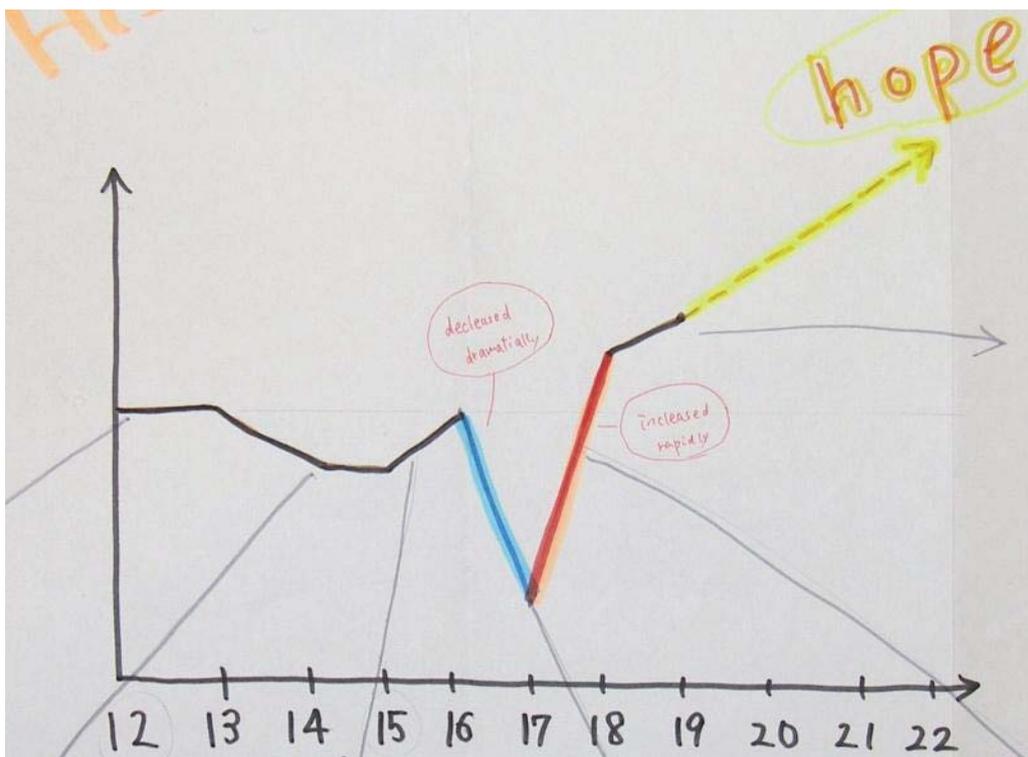
Image 6.26. Extract 3 from LDA1-Rie

Of the three main domains for learning a language which she identified in LDA3 (Image 6.27, below), Rie was most focused on the "real world" [I2-64]. The "real world" she envisaged was to go abroad and interact in community and social situations with native speakers of English. Rie drew on the notion of the "real world" again in LDA6 where she likened a language learner to a wild bird which needs "a warm place to be alive" in order to flourish or grow. This warm place was an environment outside the classroom context with "many native speakers and some good opportunities" [I2-7] to interact. Unfortunately for Rie, she felt the opportunities she imagined having as a student in New Zealand never really eventuated.

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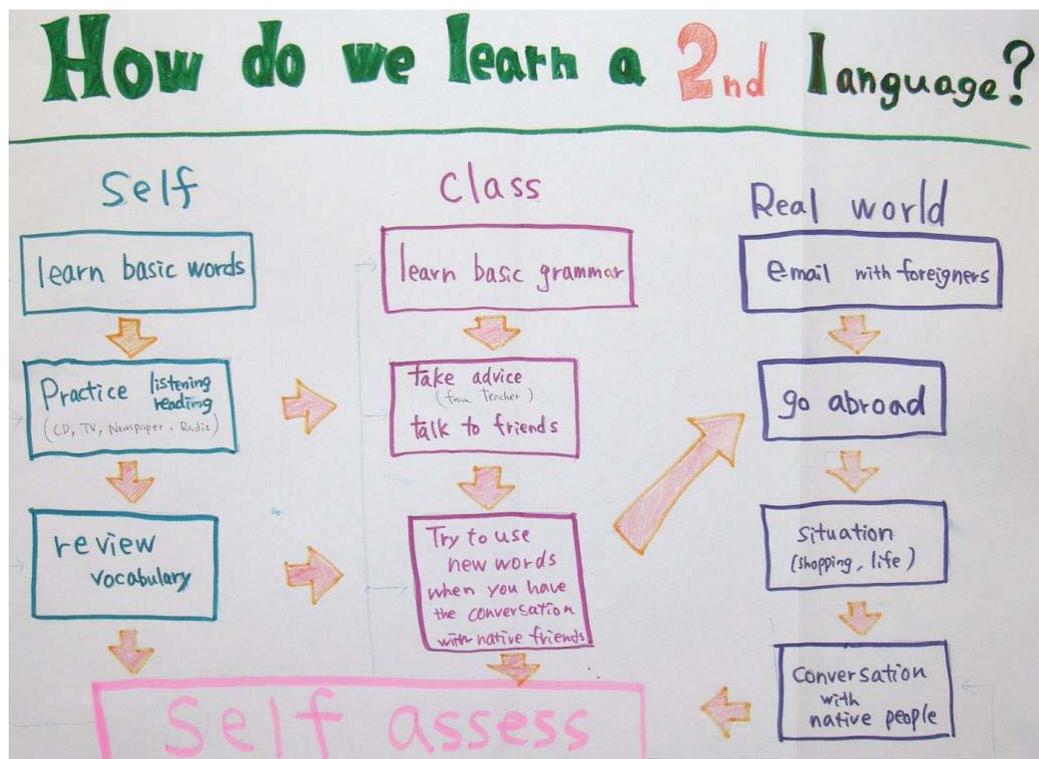
Image 6.27. LDA3-Rie

Prior to arriving in New Zealand, Rie held images of herself interacting with New Zealanders outside of the school context and to have an opportunity "to know Kiwi" [I1-34] and even "to go to the native house and home visit" [I1-35]. Rie believed that "everyone has to have the chance to do" [I1-36] a homestay, however, she was discouraged from seeking out this opportunity by the Institute. Unfortunately, given the small number of homestay families available for the relative size of the international student community, the Institute had a number of criteria for evaluating students' applications for homestay placement, including a strong English proficiency level and above average academic results. Though Rie wanted to apply she did not, expecting that she would be unsuccessful.

Rie felt that another way to improve her English and interact with New Zealanders was to get a job [I2-90]. Holding Rie back was her lack of confidence in interacting and communicating with New Zealanders outside of the university

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environment. She rated herself as a "three", on a scale of one to ten, in her ability to communicate with people in the wider community [I2-30]. Her low confidence was eroded further by difficulties she has experienced in her interactions with people in the local community:

> Um, when I go to the cafe and I say something "coffee", "hot chocolate", but the cashier says "What? What?" I can't understand, they said. So I was very sad. (I1-30)

While Rie was critical of herself when such interactions occurred, blaming herself for communication difficulties, on many occasions she felt negativity was directed at her by people who "don't like Asians" [I1-31]. By the end of her first year in the degree programme Rie had still not found a part-time job, and as she was planning to return to Japan for the summer vacation, she gave up her pursuit [I3-42].

Rie's desire to acquire real world experience eventually led to a change in her programme of study midway through the year.   After a semester of studying in the degree programme, Rie decided to transfer to the Diploma in Global Studies programme, majoring in environmental studies. Part of her decision to change programmes was her lack of confidence in her ability to successfully complete the content courses in the degree programme. The main reason, however, is that the diploma courses were far more experiential, with students regularly going on field trips. Rie excitedly recounted one such trip to the aquarium at a nearby university where she "saw many marine animals and ... shaked hands with the octopus" [I3-46]. Whether or not Rie will pursue a career using her diploma is of secondary importance to having opportunities to "talk and listen to other person's speech" [I3-20].

Rie referenced her language learning beliefs when she spoke of her negative self-concept as a speaker of English.   She felt that in order for her to learn the

language, she needed opportunities to use the language and she partially attributed her weak speaking skills to the lack of opportunities to use English in the "real world" [I1-90].   Similarly, Rie recalled how as a student in Japan she did not have opportunities to use the phrases and vocabulary she was learning, therefore she was unable to remember what she had learned in class and deemed herself as being unsuccessful [I1-56].   This belief about language learning was mirrored in Rie's academic self-concept. One of the other reasons Rie felt she was struggling academically in the degree programme, and which prompted her to change programmes, was that she felt that the degree courses did not have enough real-world application [I3-42].

6.4.4   Future, imagined self as a charity worker

"My ultimate goal is to help anyone even if it is a little bit things" [J2]

Rie's purpose for studying English abroad and choosing the environmental studies major was linked to her image of her future self. Rie wanted to learn about environmental and other issues faced by developing countries so that one day she could visit some of these places as an international aide-worker. Rie hoped that one day she would be able to "speak English fluently and help someone by using English skills" [LDA1], particularly helping children [I1-69]. In LDA2, Rie presented a number of images to represent her future imagined self. The first was a collage of travel pictures, as seen in Image 6.28, below. Rie explained that her ultimate aim was travel to different countries and take photographs in order to educate others about the problems they are facing; "to tell them what I feel and share emotion with them" [Journal 2] and thereby encourage others "to think about to do something" [I1-

71]. In addition, and perhaps spurred on by her successful contributions to the

Institute's charity concert, Rie envisaged herself :

> ... tak[ing] place in a charity concert and help someone by donating. It
> can enable me to grant my hopes: doing my hobbies and helping people.
> [J2]
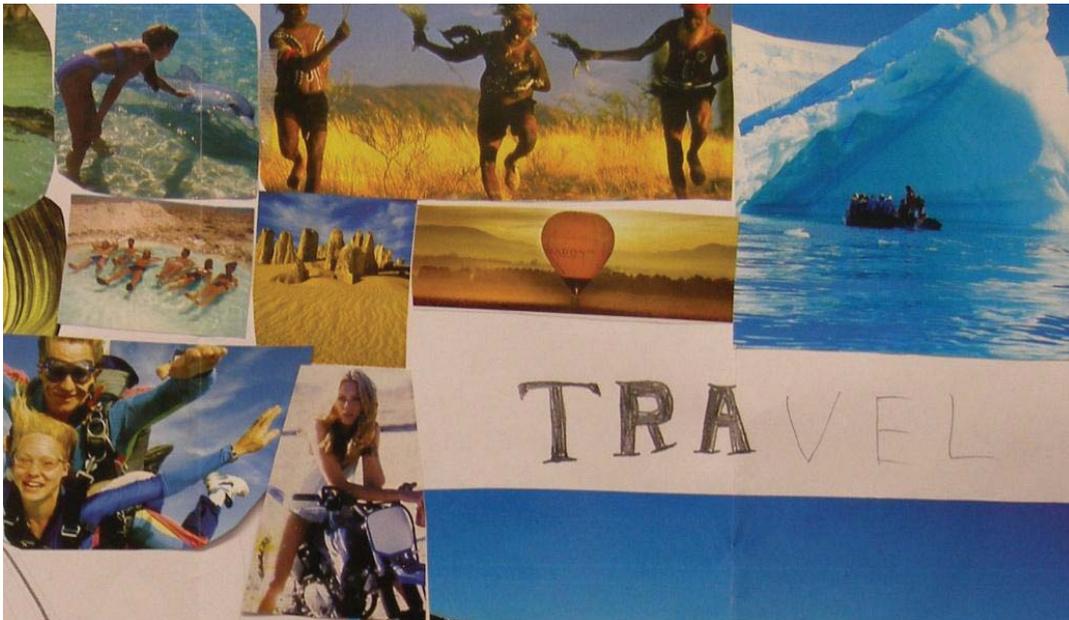
Image 6.28. Extract 2 from LDA2-Rie

To achieve her goals, Rie felt that she needed to "learn ... about many

countries" [I1-72], about the environmental issues and challenges that many

countries face, such as poverty. Rie felt that the types of courses she was

undertaking in New Zealand, including her English language studies, would help her

achieve her goals [I1-72]. Rie's decision to change programmes mid way through

the year did not alter her goals, and at the end of the year, as a result of her

interactions with the group of Tahitian and New Caledonian students, Rie had added

the pacific islands to her list of desired destinations.

6.4.5 Summary

Through the narrative created in the LDAs, journals and interviews, Rie revealed many self-conceptualisations as a language learner and user. Her L2 self-concepts were shaped by her language learning experiences in Japan and New Zealand. In her earlier days as a student in Japan, she saw herself as an unsuccessful language learner. As Rie moved along her learning trajectory, particularly as she transitioned from high school to university in New Zealand, she began to have more positive learning experiences which in turn positively impacted on her L2 self-concepts. When speaking of her L2 self-concepts, Rie often referenced others (friends, student peers and teachers) and other experiences (interacting with locals who could not understand her, joining the Tahitian dance group and playing the piano at the Institute). She also referenced her social, academic and L1 self-concepts as she described herself as a shy, explaining that she found it difficult to speak and participate in class in either English or Japanese. Rie spoke of her imagined future self as a person who would travel and raise awareness of the issues faced by people in developing countries, and in doing so she referenced her possible self-concept as a proficient L2 speaker. Rie spoke of her beliefs about language learning when presenting her L2 self-concepts. In particular, Rie believed that to become the proficient L2 speaker she desired to be, she needed access to real world situations and people. Unfortunately, she felt that these opportunities had not fully eventuate studying and living in New Zealand, which prompted her to withdraw from the degree programme and enter the diploma programme. Her imagined future self as a proficient L2 speaker, being immersed in an L2 rich environment and having international friends were challenged internally (by her negative self-concepts as a language speaker) and externally (by the dominance of Japanese students on-campus

and New Zealand students who preferred to speak Japanese with her).   Through the
LDAs, her journals and in the interviews, Rie vividly expressed a range of emotions
as she described her self-conceptualisations as a language learner and user along her
learning trajectory; from sadness, frustration and nervousness to excitement, joy and
hope.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings which were presented in Chapter Five and Chapter Six, with specific reference to the research questions. The first section discusses the multi-modality of the LDAs and the types of interactions and understandings the LDAs afforded the learners, which contributed to the quality of the classroom life. Drawing on the three student cases, the second and third sections of this chapter discuss the dynamic and ecological nature of learners' self-conceptualisations as language learners and users, which were made visible through the LDAs and supported in the learners' journals and interviews.

7.2 Research Question 1: Quality of the classroom life

In this section the findings of the study are discussed in relation to Research Question 1 which sought to understand the ways in which, within an Exploratory Practice approach, the LDAs contributed to the quality of classroom life. The key principles which guide Exploratory Practice were defining in this study. In particular was the sustained attention to the quality of the classroom life, evident in the classroom relationships and the willingness of the learners to engage in the co-construction of their identities and emotions. Thus, involving everyone was key as the learners worked toward developing mutual understandings of their language learning experiences and of themselves as language learners. The discussion begins by examining the multi-modality of the LDAs and the different meaning potentials they presented. This is followed by a discussion of two affordances which appear to

have made the most salient contributions to the classroom life: connections and emotions.

7.2.1   Modality

Central to sociocultural approaches to understanding language learning and learner development, is the notion that human behavior is a mediated activity (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).   This study contributes to the relatively small body of work in second language learning that uses visual methods, combined with more traditional verbal and written methods, as the meditational means in the construction of the learners' critical reflections and narratives.   The LDAs were a powerful tool in gaining access to the learners' narratives which were constructed at two levels: the visual representations, which told the learners' stories in their own right, and what learners said and wrote about them.

The multi-modality of the LDAs appears to have added to the depth and complexity of the learners' narratives which might not have been revealed through a single mode of enquiry.   For example, in LDA1 many of the learners graphically or diagrammatically illustrated their language learning histories and their development as language learners.   The graphs and diagrams, along with the accompanying explanations, both in the classroom discussions and in the text or additional drawings, provided a greater depth of understanding of the learners' own interpretations or explanations of their successes and failures (for example, the nature of the learning environment or the methods of particular teachers).   The activity also provided space for the learners to express their emotional responses to these critical moments in their language learning history.

One picture did not provide a complete understanding of the learners' experiences. In LDA2, for example, the learners presented a variety of images that represented their language learning goals and motivations.   In the images of themselves, of other people, places and objects, the learners provided insights into their imaginings of their future selves within different imagined contexts. Conspicuously absent from the images, with the exception of one student, were specific references to their goal to acquire English. However, the multi-modality of the LDAs afforded the learners opportunities to discuss the significance of their goals in greater depth and revealed the learners' motivations for studying English. It was through the discussions in class, both during and after the activity, and in their journals that they explained how English was connected to their future oriented identities.

Further, the LDAs confirmed that the learners' goals and motivations were not solely linked to their future orientations, but are rooted in their past identities and imaginings. For example, in LDA2 Mami presented a number of images of historical places to represent her travel goals. Underneath the images she wrote:

> When I was a child I wanted to be an archaeologist. I'm still interested in the remains of an ancient city, so I want to go to Egypt, Greece and Machu Picchu in the near future!

Thus, the multi-modality of the LDAs allowed the learners to present their trajectories of self, from their past conceptualisations to their present and imagined selves, confirming the dynamic nature of their self-conceptualisations.

Similarly, one LDA did not tell the whole of the learners' stories. That the LDAs were ongoing throughout the course enabled the learners to reflect on and present their accounts of their language learning experiences on multiple occasions; it thus afforded more in-depth access to the learners' narratives than might have

come from a single activity. In LDA3, for example, the learners presented their understandings of how languages are learned, representing the complexity of their language learning beliefs. They illustrated their beliefs about stages of language development and the contexts in which they believed different aspects of their learning occurred. Several of the learners distinguished between learning in the classroom and learning in the *real world*: the latter representing travel, work and other social situations, where *real English* occurred, versus the former where the focus is on grammar and vocabulary. In subsequent LDAs they presented additional layers to their belief systems. For example, in LDA4 and LDA5 they presented their beliefs about the realities language learning and their struggles in that process, taking into account elements within their learning and social environments which both provide and impede the access to the *real world* and therefore their language development. In LDA6 and LDA7, in their metaphors for language learners and teachers, the learners illustrated their beliefs about their roles and their teachers' roles within the learning process, further adding depth to their expression of their beliefs about language learning, showing the complexity of their belief system.

To summarise the discussion so far, the multi-modality LDAs, and that they were ongoing throughout the course, enabled the learners to be directly involved in a sustained manner in the construction of their narratives. Further, it enabled the learners to describe or explain matters, such as their beliefs about the language learning process, their identities as language learners and the emotionality of their learning journey, which do not easily lend themselves to normative approaches to understanding the language learner and learner development.

The challenge in discussing the findings as they relate to this research question is that what constitutes quality of the classroom life is understood

subjectively by classroom participants.   Quality may be felt differently by participants depending on their sense of purpose, their willingness to participate and communicate, their enjoyment, the connections they make with others and connections they make between life inside and outside of the classroom (their personal life, their social life, their study life in other learning areas).

The multi-modality of LDAs encouraged the students to reflect on and make metaphors about themselves, their learning trajectories and the significance of their experiences as language learners and users. In doing so, the LDAs afforded students opportunities to understand themselves as language learners (their identities), share their emotions, their L2 beliefs, their L2 goals and their motivations. The discussion now focuses on two affordances which appear to have made the most salient contributions to the quality of the classroom life: connections and emotions.

7.2.2   Connections

7.2.2.1 Connecting past and present

By reflecting on their language learning trajectories the learners were able to make connections between their past and present language learning experiences. This was most evident in LDA1. They saw language learning as difficult and themselves as weak learners in their early days as language learners, where language learning was often an unenjoyable and frustrating experience. Many of the students attributed their perceived lack of success to a lack of purpose for language learning, the focus on exam preparation, and on learning grammar and vocabulary over language use, the instructional methods used by their teachers.

In contrast they represented their current language learning experience more positively. By situating their present learning experiences against the past they were

able to articulate their perceived strengths and weaknesses relative to the past, and to visualise their growth and development in terms of becoming more competent language learners and users. They were also able to reflect on the contributing factors for their development (and at times lack of development) along their learning trajectory, including significant others (such as teachers, parents and peers) and environmental factors (such as teaching methods, living conditions, institutional policies).

In their reflections on their learning experiences, past and present, the learners were also able to articulate the language learning strategies they used to respond to the challenges of language learning, such as their choices of language learning materials and other sources of language input, the ways in which they assess their language development and the ways in which they placed themselves in environments which they felt would enhance their learning, such as studying abroad, travelling, undertaking a homestay experience, joining clubs and working part-time. This illustrates the ways in which contextually situated approaches to language learner development can provide opportunities for learners to better understand the strategies they use to manage their language learning both inside and outside of the classroom (White, Schramm & Chamot, 2007).

7.2.2.2 Connecting to identities

Reflections on their past and present language learning experiences enabled the learners to explore their identities as language learners and users. In LDA1, for example, the learners mapped their identities against their language development over time: the lazy learner, the weak learner, the frustrated and confused learner, the more confident learner, the improved speaker and the learner with good

pronunciation. In LDA 5 they connected to other aspects of their identity in order to explain their L2 self-concepts: the person with determination who never gives up, the diligent student, the negative thinker, the easy going person who likes to speak with people, the volleyball player, the traveller and the international friend. In LDA6 the learners metaphorically represented their L2 identities: the lion that is chasing after his prey; the learner on a journey and who becomes part of a new culture and the fat but happy person. In the activities they situated their understandings of their various selves within particular social and learning environments and within their interactions with others in these environments: with friends in club activities, with peers and teachers at school, with family in foreign countries. This highlights how the learners' identities are "constructed by means of several other identities that interact with each other" in complex ways (Menezes, Barcelos & Kalaja, 2008, p. 221). When looking at the question of the quality of the classroom life, by engaging with their multiple identities learners are able to weave together the various aspects of their personal lives, integrating these into their classroom lives.

7.2.2.3 Connecting to future selves

In addition to making connections between their past and present language learning, the LDAs afforded learners opportunities to engage in the construction of their identities as future language learners and users. This was seen in LDA1 where many of the learners discussed and visually presented their hopes of becoming proficient English speakers. Their visions of their future selves extended beyond their language learning goals; Rie saw herself as helping people by using her English skills and developing meaningful friendships, Mayu visioned herself as an international journalist reporting the news to a Japanese audience, Tomi and Marie

saw themselves working in different capacities in the aviation industry, Luc

imagined himself as a musician and world traveller. This revealed their reflections

on their hopes, desires and goals and illustrated how learners were invested in the

development of not only language skills within the language classroom, but also how

they were invested in imagined communities extending beyond the classroom.

The creation of positive images serves to improve learners' capacity to

regulate their behaviour (Oyserman et al., 2004). However, to be effective the

positive self-concepts must contain strategies on how to behave in order to reach the

goal. Mayu's comment that the LDAs and the pictures created during the activities

helped her to remember her language learning goals seemed to indicate that the

LDAs were in line with Dörnyei's (2009) conditions to enhance motivational and

regulatory impact of possible selves by providing opportunities to strengthen their

visions and discuss language learning processes and strategies through which to

become the desired self.

7.2.2.4 Connections to their classmates

Another indicator of the quality of the language classroom was the

meaningful connections the learners made with each other during the LDAs. The

observed behaviour of the learners in the classroom indicated that they were

interacting as what Dörnyei and Murphey (2003) have termed a 'mature group',

which is characterised by the group's level of cohesiveness. Examples which

indicate that they were operating as a cohesive group include making each other feel

welcome and supported, paying attention to each other, being willing to participate in

LDAs and cooperating with each other, being flexible and frequently changing

workgroups, actively participating in conversations and being willing to share personal details and to participate with each other in out-of-class activities.

In addition, throughout the LDAs the learners offered each other emotional support and engaged in the construction of each other's identity. For example, during LDA5, many of the students found it difficult to identify their strengths as language learners. Through their discussions with their classmates they were able to see themselves differently as language learners:

> Moreover, talking with my classmates, I could know my characteristics, which I had not noticed. [J10-Rie]
>
> My strength is I always speak out my mind in the class. It is told by one of my classmates. [J5-Mayu]
>
> I can't realise what my strengths and weaknesses are by myself. Moreover, some students told me my strengths and their opinions help me to be happy. [J10-Mayu]

In LDA6 the learners assisted each other in their construction of their metaphors by passing to each other images they had found in the magazines which they thought matched the other student's conceptualisations of language learners. Further, while Mayu presented a number of different metaphors for language learners during the activity, it was Kiki's metaphor for a language learner that she identified with more closely and which she then acquired as a conceptualisation of herself. In these ways, the learners were engaged in the co-construction of each other's identities. When students feel part of a community or group that values their knowledge and identities, they starts identifying more with the class and find it a place they enjoys going to. This creates "an effective ecology for learning" (Hawkins, 2005, as cited in Murphey & Carpenter, 2008, p. 20) or "an affinity space" (Gee, 2004, as cited in Murphey & Carpenter, 2008, p. 20) acceptance and empowerment happen naturally.

7.2.3 Emotions

Quality of the classroom life is concerned with engaging the whole person in learning, which includes how the learners feel about themselves, their emotions and their attitudes (Arnold, 1999, as cited in Gieve & Miller, 2006, p. 29). The LDAs gave voice to the learners' emotions and offered a way for me as the teacher-researcher to discover the emotional states of the learners and the trajectory of change in their emotions. They afforded the learners opportunities to share their emotions, not only toward language learning (past and present), but also the overall experience of living and studying abroad and toward their goals and motivations and their self-related emotions. The students' willingness to communicate, share and at times work with these emotions in a productive way points to quality of the classroom life. In the personal narratives which emerged through the LDAs the students' emotions were extremely visible. The students particularly referenced their emotions, both positive and negative, when talking about:

- their interactions with others, such as family, friends or an influential teacher;
- periods of transition, such as moving from elementary school to junior high school, or from high school to university;
- events, such as travel and study abroad;
- how they felt about themselves as a language learner (that is, their L2 self-concepts);
- opportunities and challenges they faced studying and living in New Zealand;
- their hopes for the future.

Research into affect in second language learning has tended to focus on the causal relationship between learners' negative emotions, particularly anxiety, and success in language learning (Swain, 2013). The findings from this study match new and emerging perspectives on emotions in second language learning. Underpinned by sociocultural theory, emotions are seen as being socially and culturally derived (Swain, 2013). The findings highlight the interpersonal and communicative

dimensions of language learners' emotionality (Imai, 2010) and how the learners' emotions, rather than being fixed, arise in relation to particular tasks, settings, opportunities and interactions (Bown & White, 2010).

The learners also expressed a variety of emotions when presenting their self-conceptualisations as language learners, confirming the relationship between emotions and identity. In their descriptions of themselves as poor language learners, for example, many of the students drew images of themselves appearing unhappy or sad. The connections the learners made between their emotions and their future imagined selves were palpable. They imagined themselves as happy, hopeful, excited, working in jobs they found interesting, enjoying good times with friends or family and participating in exhilarating activities and adventures.

The emotion of hope was strongly expressed in the LDAs, particularly as learners looked to their imagined selves as language learners and users. Being able to see and feel the possibilities for one's future, being able to pursue one's goals and the ability to imagine possible routes to these goals can be both empowering and agentive for learners (Murphey & Carpenter, 2008). In his theory of hope, Snyder (2002, cited in Murphey & Carpenter, 2008, p. 20) explains:

> Hopeful thinking necessitates both pathways and agency thought. From the beginning of any one instantiation of hopeful thinking, the pathways and agency thoughts feed each other. Therefore, pathway and agency thoughts are iterative as well as additive over a given goal pursuit sequence.

When a person's pathways or goals are blocked and agency thoughts are blocked, either as a result of their own or other's thinking, the person can begin to feel powerless and therefore less able to exercise agency and pathway thinking in the future. The implication for classroom language learning and teaching is the necessity

to create opportunities for agency and pathway thinking for learners and for teachers to work with learners to model, confirm, support or validate this thinking.

7.3 Research Question 2: Learners' self-conceptualisations

The LDAs afforded a unique opportunity to explore and understand the learners' L2 self-concepts, which certainly enriched not only classroom life but also professional life for me as a language teacher and researcher. In this section the findings of the study are discussed in relation to Research Question 2 which sought to understand the learners' self-conceptualisations as language learners and users as they participated in learning and social contexts (past, present and imagined future). A deeper analysis of the three student cases, through the lens of sociocultural theory, revealed the dynamic and ecological nature of the learners' self-concepts. In this study it was evident that social relationships within and across a number of settings were central to learners' self-conceptualisations: through the internalisation of the sociocultural environment it was evident that the learners formed and reformed their sense of themselves and the world around them. Thus learners' self-concepts can best be represented as an ecology of interrelated factors, both internal and external to the learner.

7.3.1 A dynamic and ecological model of learners' L2 self-concepts

The dynamic and ecological nature of the learners' L2 self-concepts which emerged from the findings is represented in Figure 7.1 (below) and elaborated on in the following discussion. The model presents the learners as situated within a complex system of interrelationships between three nested environments: the learner, context and temporality.
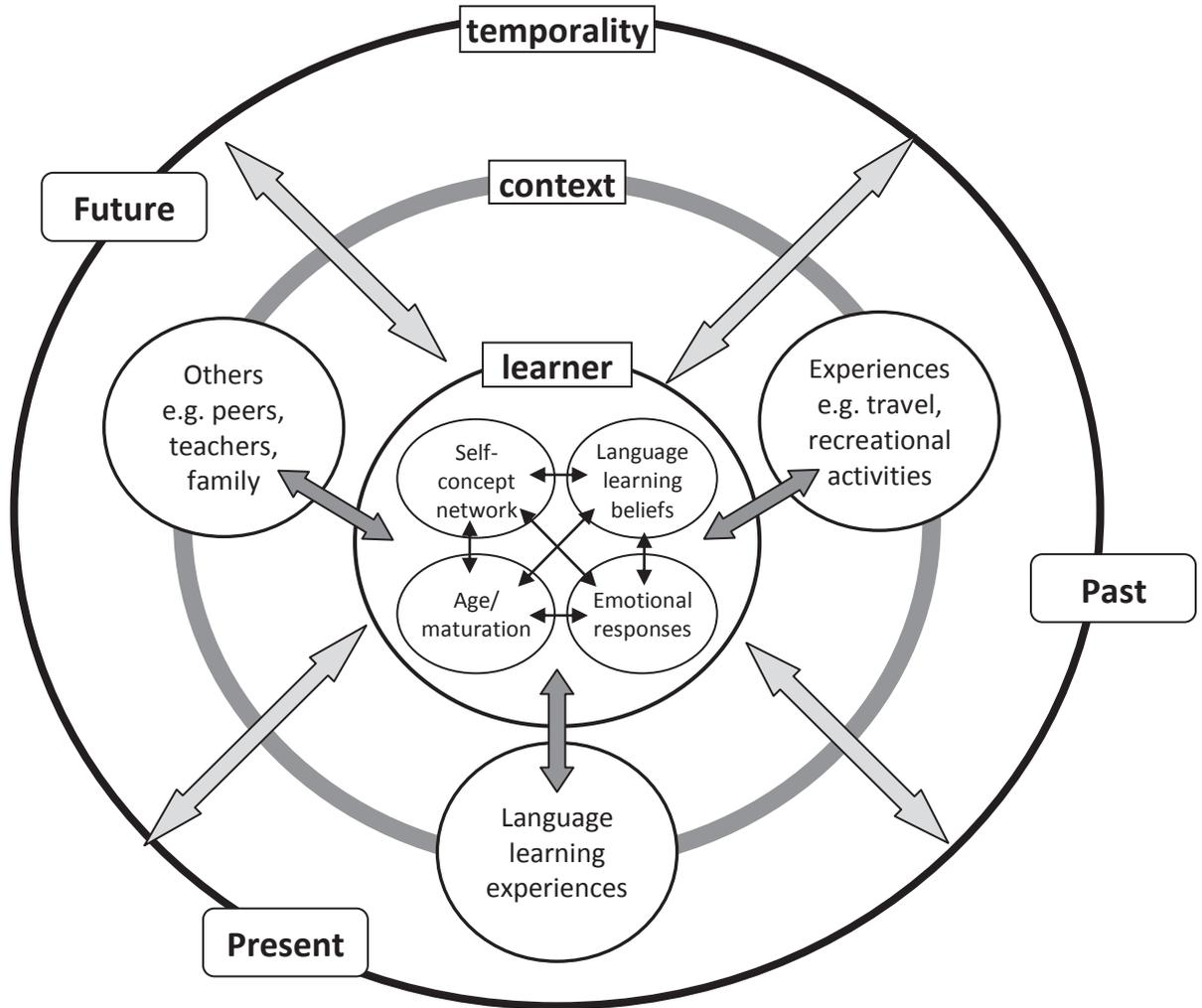
Figure 7.1. Model of the dynamic, ecological nature of the learners' L2 self-concepts

Based on the findings of the study, at the core of the model is the individual learner's self system, which can be seen as made up of a network of self-concepts, along with other internal elements of the self, namely the learner's language learning beliefs, emotions and maturation. The relationships between these elements are multidirectional and reciprocal representing how the learners' L2 self-concepts are influenced by other internal elements of the self.

Sitting around the core are contextual elements which are external, yet connected, to the learners' self system: significant others, language learning experiences, other salient experiences. These elements are banded together to represent their interconnectedness.   The finding suggest that the learners' L2 self-concepts exist within the interplay between the learner's self system and the social and learning contextual environments in which the learner participates and interact. The reciprocal relationships between the learner and the contextual elements are represented by the two-way arrows.

The dynamic or temporal nature of the learner's self-concepts is illustrated in the outer layer of the model. From the study it was evident that the learners' self-concepts are formed through their experiences and interactions with others in social and learning contexts and the connections the learner makes between the past, present and imagined future. Constant reflection and interpretation of interactions and experiences result in a constant re-organising of self (Oyserman et al., 2004), forming trajectories of self. The connections between the learner's self system, context and temporality which emerged from the findings are represented by the reciprocal arrows which intersect the three layers of the model.

7.3.2   The learner

7.3.2.1 Self-concept network

In their accounts of their language learning experiences the participants referenced their L1 and in some cases L3, academic, family, social and possible self-concepts when talking about themselves as language learners, which suggests that the learners' L2 self-concepts are connected to a network of other self-concepts, as depicted in Figure 7.2, below.   The implications for language programmes which

seek to develop learners' awareness of themselves as language learners is the importance of considering how they think and feel about themselves in other social and learning domains.
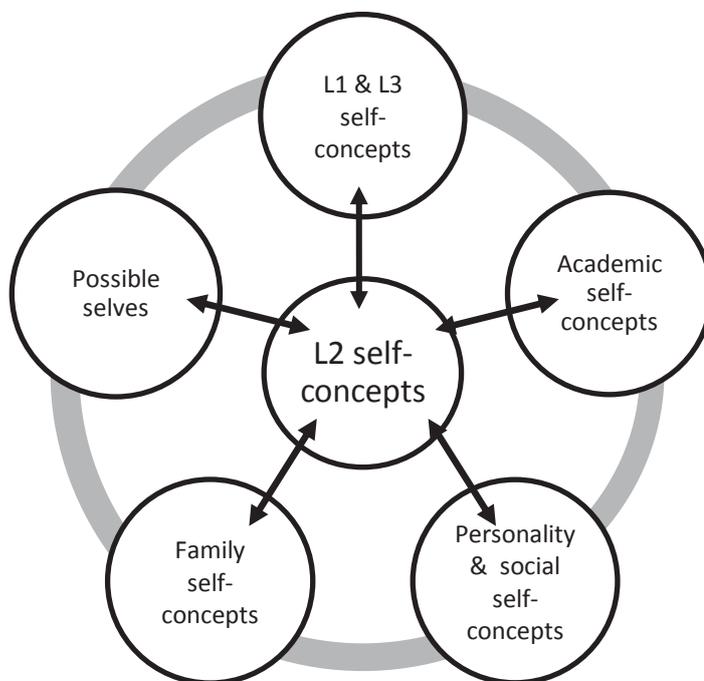
Figure 7.2. L2 self-concept network

On a number of occasions the learners compared their L2 self-concepts to other language self-concepts, either their first language or another foreign language, often judging or comparing their ability in one language to another. For example, Rie cross-referenced her perceptions of herself as a speaker of English and Japanese, her native language. Rie found that in her classes she was unable to speak either English or Japanese, which she explained was a result of her shyness and that she did not want to interact in her classes in Japanese: "I don't speak Japanese or English in class ... other Japanese students often talk with them in Japanese" [I3-62] ... "Shy, but also I don't want to speak Japanese" [I3-63].

There were several instances where the learners referenced their general academic self-concepts when talking about themselves as L2 learners. Mayu, for example, talked about how nervous she was about her ability to be successful in her academic courses. In particular, she was worried about whether her English skills would be sufficient [I2-94]. She found it difficult to follow the lecturers [I3-5] and found writing essay assignments challenging, pointing out that her English grammar was deficient [I3-104]. At the same time she was interested in the subject matter of her academic courses, which actually renewed her interest and confidence in studying English. Mayu felt that by studying environmental and international relations courses she was improving her English [I2-92].

Mayu also drew on her sense of her personality as being determined and strong willed to describe her feeling of being a successful language learner and her belief that she could become a journalist in the future [I3-28]. In our final interview, Mayu explained the fire and stick in the image she brought along to represent herself at the end of the year were symbolic of her will and determination to succeed in reaching her goals.

There was some evidence of the connection between the learners' L2 self-concepts and their family self-concepts. Of the three participants, Luc spoke the most about his family and their influence on his language learning (and other) experiences. Luc most certainly had very positive self-concepts as a member of his family, seeing himself as being supported, trusted, valued and loved by his parents. He drew on these self-concepts to explain his self-concepts as a learner: "But I think my parents never push me to do something. And I think that is why I can learn by myself what is important and not important" [I1-51]; "I succeed because of them" [J4]. Rie also referenced her perceptions of herself as a motivated language learner when talking

about her family. She described her family as a positive influence on her language learning self-concept, stating that her "motivation goes up when I speak to my family" [LDA4].

The learners in this study constructed various conceptualisations of themselves as L2 users in imagined future contexts. In discussing their possible selves, the learners compared their current L2 self-concepts to their *ideal selves* and *ought to selves*: the attributes that they would ideally like to possess and the attributes that they believe they ought to possess (Higgins, 1987; Dörnyei, 2009). For example, when Rie spoke of her imagined future self as a proficient speaker of English, she did so by comparison to her perceived current L2 abilities.   To become a fluent speaker, for example, Rie believed that she needed to interact with others and speak English more frequently [I1-61].   However, as Rie put it: "need is high, actual is low" [I1-62]. Similarly, in order to develop the international friendships she so desired, Rie felt she needed to overcome her shyness in speaking.   This discrepancy has implications for the learner's motivation and emotions. If learners feel the gap between the current L2 self and the *ought to self* is too large, it may negatively impact on their motivation, leading to negative feelings about themselves as language learners (Dörnyei, 2009; Mercer, 2011). In Rie's case she was positively motivated to join social clubs as a means to meet other international students and by the end of the year she felt she could "speak more smoothly" [I3-132] with her international friends.

7.3.2.2 Beliefs about language learning

Learners' beliefs about language learning are (re)constructed through their interactions and participation in social and learning contexts. With the social

(re)construction of individuals' beliefs comes the concurrent (re)construction of their identities as the individuals reorganise their sense of who they are in relation to the social world (Norton, 2000). Rie, for example, spoke of her negative self-concept as a speaker of English and her belief that in order for her to learn the language, she needs opportunities to use the language. In part, she attributed her weak speaking skills to the lack of opportunity to use English in the "real world" [I1-90]. Similarly, Rie recalled how as a student in Japan she did not have opportunities to use the phrases and vocabulary she was learning, therefore she was unable to remember what she had learned in class and deemed herself to be an unsuccessful learner [I1-56]. This belief about the importance of real-world application of learning was mirrored in Rie's academic self-concept. One of the reasons Rie gave for why she was struggling academically in the degree programme, and which motivated her to change programmes part way through the year, was that she felt that the degree courses did not have enough real-world application. This example illustrates the agentive power of learners' beliefs, including their self-beliefs.

7.3.2.3 Emotional responses

Another element in the formation of the learners' L2 self-concepts was emotions. Emotional responses arise from the individual's self-evaluations and self-reflections (Leary, 2007), playing a major role in determining the connections among experiences and interactions (Markus and Wulf, 1987). The findings reveal a number of instances where the participants referenced their emotions in relation to their L2 self-concepts. When they spoke of their experiences as school students in their respective home countries where they saw themselves as weak or unsuccessful learners, they recalled their unhappiness, frustration and lack of enjoyment in

learning English. In contrast, the participants referenced more positive emotions in relation to their L2 self-concepts when transitioning between key stages in their learning experiences.   Mayu, for example, drew herself appearing very happy on her return to Japan from Denmark after her study abroad experience. This corresponded to Mayu's perceptions of her increased abilities as an English learner. Again, when recalling entering her degree programme, Mayu spoke of her feelings of happiness: "and if I study environment then I can improve my English too. I feel very happy" [I2-92]. In SLL research emotions are often seen as the causal variable influencing language learning, that is, students with negative emotions toward language learning have a high affective filter, which keeps out input (Swain, 2013). In contrast, the findings suggest we should look at this relationship differently and focus on the quality of the language learning experiences and their impact on the learners' emotional development and their perceptions of themselves as language learners.

7.3.2.4 Age/maturation

Learners' self-concepts are formed through interactions with others and the environments in which these interactions occur and their reflections and interpretations of such interactions. As individuals mature, they have greater opportunities to pursue desired activities, greater agency for themselves and are better able to understand themselves and how others perceive them in relation to new experiences (Harter, 1999). The three participants' reflections on language learning experiences referenced particular times in which they crossed that threshold into young adult life and how this impacted on their L2 self-concepts. Luc, in particular, spoke of his growing sense of freedom experienced during his travels first with his

family, and then again travelling solo during his gap year.   From his travel experiences Luc felt that:

> English is on my own life and I read, learn, write, speak and think in English. I like it and I saw more and more that this skill could help me to find a good job, but also to learn more about people and myself. [J1]

7.3.3   Context

7.3.3.1 Language learning experience

The findings suggest that the learners' language learning experiences affected their L2 self-concepts, both positively and negatively. Each of the participants, in their respective accounts of their language learning histories, made reference to their language learning experiences related to their self-concept formation. Both Mayu and Rie, for example, spoke of their initial enjoyment of English in junior high school; however, once the focus of the English classes turned to grammar or exam preparation they both viewed themselves as weak language learners.   Luc's experiences were similar to Mayu & Rie's, particularly when in his earlier school days; however, enrolling in a specialty English programme in high school afforded him an opportunity to also focus on his speaking development which he found interesting and began to feel more successful as a language learner.

Interestingly, while the participants referenced their L2 self-concepts when describing their past formal learning experiences, Mayu and Luc also referenced their L2 self-concepts in their accounts of their informal language learning experiences, for example when travelling (Luc) and when interacting with her homestay family (Mayu).   These informal experiences seemed to have had a positive effect on their development as language learners and on their L2 self-concepts, in contrast to their formal language learning experiences.

7.3.3.2 Other experiences

Each of the participants, in their respective accounts of their language
learning histories, made reference to their travel experiences and their participation
in recreational activities, which they recounted as significant and related to their self-
concept.

Both Luc and Mayu referenced changes in their L2 self-concepts in their
accounts of their travel experiences. Additionally, for both these learners, their travel
experiences afforded them an opportunity to discover a purpose for learning English,
which they had not had in their respective school settings. In his early days as a
language learner Luc found learning English "difficult because it was new and the
way of teaching was hard" [LDA1].   Through his travel experiences with his family
while still a school student, which exposed him to more naturalistic English ("accents
and your expressions"), his English classes held greater interest for him [LDA1].
Luc was effusive in his description of the impact resulting from his gap year
experience, which he spent travelling through Europe and the USA, on his L2 self-
concept:

> I saw that English was primordial to work in this world ... Now English is on
> my own life and I read, learn, write, speak and think in English. I like it and I
> saw more and more that this skill could help me to find a good job, but also to
> learn more about people and myself. [J1]

Similarly, Mayu recounted changes in her L2 self-concept as a result of her study
abroad experience in Denmark. As a school student in Japan, Mayu disliked
studying English and described herself as being one of the worst students in the class
[LDA1; J1]. After a year living and studying in Denmark, Mayu felt that she had
greatly improved as both an English language student and in her other subjects:

... my English was much improved, and then I got highest score in the class, also the other subjects I got higher score! I was very happy to go to English class, before I hate to go to the class. [J1]

Each of the three participants enjoyed one or more recreational activities. These activities afforded them varying opportunities to interact using English, which impacted positively on their L2 self-concepts. The highlight of Mayu's first year in the degree programme was acquiring a part-time job and playing volleyball which took her off-campus and interacting with New Zealanders in English, experiences which she described as "very positive" [I1-86]. Luc felt he had made great improvements in his speaking abilities as a result of being exposed to Kiwi English from his fellow band members, particularly vocabulary and slang.   Luc also referenced his self-concept as a drummer when discussing his language learning confidence. In our final interview, Luc represented himself as a learner through the image of frog jumping along the lily pads, which were his metaphor for his learning journey. He was confident that he had the level required to successfully complete his studies [I3-55], adding that: "I don't want to slowly. When you have the level you have to push yourself. It is the same with drums. If always do something that you can, you will never progress" [I3-59].   Though Rie did not have the same opportunities to interact with native speakers as did Mayu and Luc, she spoke of her interactions with her fellow members in the Tahitian dance club, as being one of the highlights of her year [I3-71]. Because she was the only Japanese student in the club she had to speak English, "so it is good" [I3-72].

7.3.3.3 Others

The findings from the three student cases revealed the role of other people in the development of their L2 self-concepts.   As Markus and Wurf (1987, p. 305) have

identified, "people also learn about themselves from others, both through social comparisons and direct interactions". Just as the participants recounted significant experiences in their language learning history, they also made explicit references to people who had a significant impact on their L2 development and their L2 self-concepts.

Rie, for example, spoke of her difficulty understanding her elderly male teacher in high school which contributed to a dramatic decrease in her perceived abilities as a language student:

> Um. Uh, he was 80 years old, so his speaking was not so clear, so I couldn't understand. (IK-I1-55)

In contrast, Rie noted a dramatic increase in her interest in English when, in her final year of high school she was taught by a younger, female teacher (LDA1). In particular, Rie felt the female teacher's teaching style easier to follow (LDA1) and better matched her learning style:

> First I teach, I am taught something and try to use word or something. If I don't use what I learned, maybe I can't remember. (IK-I1-56)

For Mayu her encounter with an American language teacher at her high school confirmed her perceived lack of skills as a language student and user. Though somewhat negative in that it perhaps reinforced negative L2 self-concepts, the encounter was significant for Mayu because prior to this experience she could not see any purpose for learning English. Her encounter with the young American teacher contributed to her thinking about the possibility of studying abroad.

Family do not feature prominently in Mayu and Rie's accounts of their language learning experiences, therefore it is difficult to determine the role, if any, family have had on the development of their L2 self-concepts. In contrast, the significant others in Luc's language learning history were most definitely his family,

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in particular his mother. Luc seems to imply that because he started learning

English when he was younger, at the urging of his mother, his English skills are

better than others who may have started later in life:

> So, I think it is more difficult, not for all people, but when you start when
> you 15, or something, it is more difficult. But it is like an instrument, if you
> start early it is easier. So maybe the best way is to start early, and I started
> very early because of my mother. [I1-85]

The participants referenced their L2 self-concepts in their accounts of their

interactions with their university peers (that is, international and domestic students in

the BGS programme). For example, Mayu explained that she did not feel confident

interacting with other international students outside of class because she felt their

vocabulary was more extensive than hers [I1-15] and they spoke too quickly for her

to follow [I1-7]. Rie said she was not confident to participate in her Academic

English class because her fellow students spoke so much [I3-111], making her feel

less competent. In other instances the participants received direct feedback from

their peers on their L2 abilities. Luc, for example, received positive feedback from a

third-year Tahitian student, who he regards as having superior L2 skills:

> Yesterday, [Maria], one of my friends, said I have progressed in writing,
> because she always checks my mistakes. And yesterday she said I have
> improved a lot. Because she is in [AE] 5. A very good level. She have 945
> in TOEIC. [I3-65]

Mayu explained that she finds it difficult to determine her strengths as a language

learner, but receives positive feedback from her peers:

> ... sometimes during the lunch time I say I can't do very well something, but
> friends tell me 'oh, you can do it' or something like that. It ... they saw me
> strengths. [I2-74]

Another group of people the learners referenced in relation to their L2 self-

concepts were native speakers. In some instances interactions with native speakers

of English reinforced negative self-concepts. Rie, for example, found it difficult to communicate with town's people, citing her experiences in the coffee shop:

> Um, when I go to the cafe and I say something "coffee", "hot chocolate", but the cashier says "What? What?" I can't understand, they said, so I was very sad. [I1-30]

In other instances the participants' interactions with native speakers were used to assess their L2 abilities, for example, Mayu, who explained:

> Not sure. But I think my English is kind of Kiwi English now. But not so sure. [I2-9]

> So ... or when I am speaking with a Kiwi or a native speaker, then I can know my English is clear for them or not. [I2-82]

Luc attributed his perceived success as an English speaker and the acquisition of more naturalistic English, to his interactions with his fellow band members, who were all New Zealanders:

> And I feel more confident because I am not scared about the understanding. I am scared about what I want to explain about what I feel, but about what the members say I can understand easier. [I1-14]

> Because it is native speaker and, yeah, too many people here doesn't come to activities with native people. And it change completely my way of speaking. Uh, a lot of vocabulary and slang. A lot of slang. [I3-14]

7.3.4 Temporality and trajectories of self

The findings from the student cases highlight the temporal nature of the learners' L2 self-concepts. The findings also point to the role of the learners' possible selves in the formation learners' trajectories of self and suggest that the learners' identification with their imagined future selves provided the motivational trigger for the learners' language learning decisions and actions. In this way the learners' possible selves acted as roadmaps, propelling and guiding the learners along their learning trajectories.

7.3.4.1 Possible selves and investment in imagined communities

The learners' motivation can be seen as aligned to Norton's (2000) definition of investment. The findings suggest that the learners were motivated to invest in learning English not simply to be proficient in the language, but with the desire to acquire a range of symbolic resources, including education , friendship, culture, and material resources, such as money to travel and jobs.   From their accounts of their language learning experiences the learners were not always interested in pursuing English. As younger language learners they were required to study English as part of their formal schooling.   While they initially possessed an interest in English, which they illustrated in their LDA1 posters, this interest waned.   It was around their mid-teens that their interest and motivation to learn English grew as they began to imagine the possibilities for themselves beyond their immediate learning and social environment: meeting new people, travelling, studying abroad, and jobs.

However, for Luc and Rie in particular, their language learning motivation was not to integrate with a specific target language community. In fact, none of the three participants has remained in New Zealand or another English speaking country, with Luc moving to France, Mayu undertaking postgraduate studies in Europe and Rie returning to Japan to look for a job. The participants, through their English language studies, were in pursuit of identities as global citizens that did not solely rest with English or New Zealand as an English speaking country.

Mayu's motivational trigger to study English was when she began to imagine herself as a member of a global community. This future oriented image of herself propelled her to live and study abroad, first in Denmark and later in New Zealand to undertake an international studies programme.   As part of her membership to a

global community, Mayu believed that she would acquire multiple social and cultural identities. Mayu spoke of her desire to acquire New Zealand family and culture, however, she was equally motivated to retain her acquired Danish language and culture and her identity as Japanese.   In New Zealand she began to see the possibilities for herself as a journalist reporting on world news to a Japanese audience.

Luc's motivation to study English was aroused when he began to see the possibilities for himself outside the French school system and he began to imagine himself earning a degree in an English speaking country.   He felt that English was necessary for his travel plans and while he had a broad sense that English was very important to him, for example to get a job that would enable him earn money and to travel, that job was not one necessarily using English and that travel destination was not necessarily an English speaking country.   Luc had 'the world' set in his sights. When Luc spoke English he wanted to 'feel' English and for people to see him as English, not French, which he saw as a measure of his English proficiency. Yet Luc wanted to be able to keep his French accent as an identifier of being a French person who spoke English.

Rie was motivated by her image of herself as a member of an international social network, through which she hoped to form friendships, travel and gain knowledge of other countries. While this network included native English speakers, it did not solely rest with people from English speaking countries. Rie didn't speak of 'becoming' New Zealand as Mayu did, and while she in part measured her proficiency against her ability to successfully communicate with New Zealanders, she also measured herself against her ability to communicate with other international students and her success in acquiring international friends.

7.4   Research Question 3: Negotiation of self

The third dimension of the study sought to understand how the learners negotiated their selves along their learning trajectories. The discussion so far has presented formation of the learners' self-concepts as relatively unproblematic; however, the findings suggest that at times the pursuit by the learners of their desired L2 selves was markedly constrained by others or elements within the various learning and social environments in which they participated.

All three learners had expectations or imaginings of being immersed in an international culture on-campus.   They imagined that they would quickly become bilingual and be immersed in language and opportunities to engage in authentic conversations. They also imagined access to the wider social community in New Zealand, through which they would gain opportunities to further develop and use their L2. At times, however, they struggled for access to social networks of participation they desired as part of their imagined L2 selves.

For Rie and Mayu the dominance of Japanese speakers on campus limited their opportunities to develop their L2 as they had previously imagined. Mayu sought opportunities off-campus and began to cultivate new identities as a member of the volleyball team, as a member of a New Zealand family and later as a part-time restaurant worker. Undertaking a homestay experience, Mayu anticipated that she would acquire a position within a family environment, as had been her experience in Denmark. However, the family members failed to behave in the ways she had anticipated, which led her to contemplate abandoning the pursuit of this particular identity.

Rie experienced unsatisfactory interactions in the wider community which left her feeling that her communication skills were inadequate and that she was marginalised because she was Asian.   As a result she sought out more opportunities to interact with social groups on campus. Rie began to foster a new identity as a member of the Tahitian dance club and cultivated an identity as a musician, playing the piano for fellow students in recreational settings. Both of these new identities gave her access to wider social groups, though not to the native English speaking groups she had earlier imagined she would be part of.

The learners' experiences seem to be consistent with Pavlenko's (2001) assertion that when individuals view their identity as less than satisfactory they may attempt to negotiate that identity by modifying their self-images or changing their group membership in order to view themselves more positively. However, Mayu and Rie's actions may not necessarily represent their conscious repositioning of their selves; rather they could be seen as opportunities which arose serendipitously in the environment that afforded the learners opportunities to try out new identities. As Bruner (1990) suggests, individuals are able to experiment with new identities as they attempt to construct and reconstruct who they are.

Our identities are formed through participation in social and learning communities. Equally so, we define ourselves through our non-participation. That is, our identities are constituted as much by what we are as what we are not (Wenger, 1998). Luc's experiences in the New Caledonian school system, though negative, were certainly instrumental in shaping his sense of who he was and was not as an individual and as a learner. His legitimacy as a student (and as a member of the broader school context) in New Caledonia was challenged to the extent that he could not imagine himself continuing his studies and becoming a university student New

Caledonia. Luc's images of his future self as being a professional musician or working in some capacity or another in the music industry were not validated, except within his family. His ideological conflict with 'the system' eventually led him to seek learning opportunities and a place for himself as a student elsewhere. In essence he was motivated *not* to participate further in the education system in New Caledonia. Supported by his family, and shaped by his vision of his possible self as a world traveller, he placed himself on a new learning trajectory and began to reconceptualise himself as an international student in New Zealand.

One of Rie's greatest challenges came when she decided to withdraw from the degree programme. The absence of opportunities to engage in the meaningful interactions she desired and the lack of real-world applications of knowledge in the degree programme prompted this change in her learning trajectory. Similar to the participants in Norton's (2001) study, Rie was no longer invested in the practices of the degree programme as they did not return to her the symbolic resources she desired: access to real-world language and the wider community in New Zealand. Rie chose *not* to participate in the degree programme and placed herself on a new learning trajectory in the diploma programme.

7.5   Summary

The main aim of the study was to explore the ways in which, within an Exploratory Practice approach, the Learner Development Activities (LDAs) contributed to the quality of the classroom life. While acknowledging the varying levels of engagement by learners in different activities, the findings of the study suggest that the multi-modality of the LDAs contributed to the quality of the language classroom life by affording the learners opportunities to work together in a

sustained manner to develop understandings of themselves as language learners. Through the LDAs the learners were able to co-create their own stories of themselves as language learners and users. In doing so, the learners reflected on and shared their learning experiences in ways which acknowledged their less successful experiences, but also focused on their development as language learners – and crucially the opening up of new possibilities. In the telling of their stories, they were able to express the emotionality of their various social and learning experiences, including their interactions with others, the challenges they faced and successes they enjoyed and how they felt about themselves at different stages along their learning journey, highlighting the affective impact of their experiences on their self-conceptualisations as language learners. The LDAs allowed the learners to step back and view themselves within the larger contexts of their lives, bringing the outside world into the language classroom and acknowledging the learners as whole beings. The LDAs also afforded space for the learners to imagine their future selves, thus providing opportunities for pathway thinking and potentially empowering them by beginning to develop their sense of agency. The acts of working together as a cohesive group in the construction of their stories and their identities fostered a classroom environment which both valued and supported the learners.

Contributing to the quality of the classroom life, the LDAs also afforded opportunities to explore and understand the learners' self-conceptualisations as language learners and users as they participated in various social and learning contexts, acknowledging that how language learners feel about themselves is as important as the act of language learning itself. The LDAs, supported by the learners' journals and interviews, revealed the complex, dynamic and ecological nature of the learners' L2 self-concepts. Their L2 self-concepts could be seen in the

interconnection of elements within the learners' self system and the reciprocal relationship between their selves and elements within their socio- cultural environments. There was an evident dynamic dimension to all of this: the learners' L2 self-concepts could be seen as trajectories of self which were formed and reformed through the connections the learners made between their past, present and imagined future. The formation of the learners' L2 self-concepts was at times a site of struggle as their pursuit of their desired L2 selves was constrained by others or elements within the various learning and social environments in which they participated, but which at times allowed them to experiment with new identities.

The discussion in this chapter highlights the importance of recognising language learners as complex individuals, with unique identities, goals, motives and feelings, which in turn reflect the complex social and contextual relationship in which they are situated. Thus pedagogical approaches to developing language learners must fully engage learners as whole people and present opportunities for learners to make meaningful connections with broader aspects of their identities and life experiences, beyond the language classroom. The implications of the findings for pedagogy, research and theory are discussed in the concluding chapter.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the presentation of the investigation. To begin, the limitations of the study are acknowledged, followed by implications of the study for theory, research and classroom practice. The chapter ends with a focus on the participants who were central to this study, looking beyond the time frame of the research to where they are now on their various trajectories.

8.2 Limitations of the study

As with all research, there are several limitations to this study, which need to be addressed. Firstly, the research involved a small group of participants and represents a localised and contextually situated approach to both pedagogy and research. As such it was responsive to the particular characteristics of the environment. Therefore, it is not possible to make assumptions with regard to the findings beyond the specific group of participants and the specific teaching and learning context in which the study took place. If the LDAs had been repeated with subsequent Academic English classes, involving more student participants, the research could have yielded richer information with a wider data set, but this was beyond the scope of this detailed classroom-based, exploratory practice study. To obtain broader generalisations about language learner development was not the focus of this enquiry. Further to this, the study was reliant on the learners' willingness to participate in the LDAs, follow-up interviews and journal entries. While their engagement in these activities may be seen as a testament to the unfolding quality of the classroom life, participants in future studies may not be as generous, thus

providing limited opportunities to see into their life-worlds and inner selves. Thirdly, the findings are limited due to the essentially subjective nature of what constitutes quality of language classroom in any given setting at any particular point in time. The analysis of the findings was reliant on the participant-researcher's interpretation and is thus subject to bias or a particular interpretation. However, this is entirely congruent with the Exploratory Practice approach taken here, from which conclusions are drawn later in the chapter. Finally, the data relied on self-reports by the learners which may be influenced by the particular conditions of the day, by wanting to portray themselves in a particular manner or by wanting to behave in ways which they felt might please their teacher, who was also the researcher.

8.3   Implications for theory

A key theoretical implication for this study is that the socio-cultural framework applied here extends our understanding of language learner development. In the field of second language learning, learner development has traditionally been approached from psychological perspectives, focusing on, for example, individual learner characteristics or differences, such as motivation and attitudes, and the development of language learning strategies. The sociocultural theoretical framework which underpinned this study represents an approach to understanding learner development from a more ecological perspective, where context is not a separate variable (Ushioda, 2006), and is seen as being constructed through social interactions with others and which takes into account the particular social, cultural and historical settings in which language learning and learner development occur. The theoretical framework provided a means to understand the complexities of learner development by focusing on internal aspects of language learners as well as

contextual or situational factors which are central to learner interactions and experiences. As the findings of the study suggest, what learners think and feel about themselves as language learners and users is intrinsically connected to how they think and feel about themselves in other areas of their lives, their beliefs about language learning and their emotions. These internal factors were mediated by factors within the learners' various social and learning environments - people, situations and experiences – which, in a reciprocal relationship, impacted on the formation of the learners' sense of self. The sociocultural framework also accounted for the development of learners' sense of self along their learning trajectories as the learners made connections between past, present and future (imagined) experiences, rather than viewing learners' development as a single snapshot in time.

Another theoretical implication of this study is that the findings appear to support challenges to the long-held concept of integrative orientation which asserts that language learners' motivation is derived from their identification with target language speakers (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). The findings suggest that the learners in this study were not solely motivated by a desire to integrate with the target language community in New Zealand. Rather, their identification with visions of themselves in the future as proficient L2 speakers, interacting within a broader, global community, appears to have provided the motivational basis for their language learning. This seems to support Dörnyei's (2009) theory of the motivational L2 self system which asserts that language learners' possible selves function as incentives for language learning behaviour, highlighting the powerful interconnection between learners' self development and their motivation.

However, moving beyond these understandings of self and motivation as psychological constructs, this study contributes further to our understanding of

language learner development in that the sociocultural framework illuminated the role of the social contexts in which the learners' motivation and self/identity were embedded. The findings suggest that learners' identification with visions of their possible selves, and thus their motivations, were situated in the various social and learning contexts in which they participated or imagined they belonged. Additionally, from the findings we can conclude that learners were not simply motivated to *become* someone, but that in that process of that *becoming* the learners would acquire resources which they valued, such as language, education, friendships, travel and jobs. Further, the learners' conceptions of themselves as language learners and their desires for the future were mediated by the attitudes and behaviours others, such as family, friends and peers, and features of the learning and social environments, such as institutional policy, power structures, which enabled and at time constrained them. This seems to support Norton's (1997; 2001) concept of investment which presents a different theoretical lens through which to examine the complexities of and the dynamic interdependence between the language learner, identity and learning and social experiences.

8.4   Implications for research

Several implications emerge from this study in relation to both approaches to research and areas for further investigation.

8.4.1   Research methods

Firstly, the study illustrates the potential for teachers to engage in research into their own classroom practices in ways which value the social dimensions of language learning. The Exploratory Practice approach encouraged the teacher-researcher and learners to work in a sustained manner as co-participants in the

development of their emic understandings of themselves and their teaching and learning experiences, thus strengthening the agency potential of all participants. In particular, as seen in this study in the various connections the learners made between life in the classroom and other dimensions of themselves and their lives, Exploratory Practice focuses on the humanness of teaching and learning. Further, it compliments sociocultural theories and research frameworks, by encouraging qualitative methods of investigation to understand the complexities of classroom teaching and learning, and as such does not seek to make generalisations. Rather, it values the uniqueness of human situations (Allwright, 2003; 2006) and aims for in-depth understandings.

Secondly, and connected to the focus on developing emic understandings of the complexities of learning, the study contributes to the relatively small body of work that highlights the significance of learners' stories. This study illustrates the power of the learners' narratives which emerged through the Learner Development Activities, the learners' journals and semi-structured interviews. In particular, the learners' visual representations of their learning experiences were an effective medium through which to capture and understand complexities of the learners' self-conceptualisations, experiences, beliefs and emotions, and the dynamic interplay between the learners and contextual factors, adding significant depth to the learners' stories. As acknowledged in the discussion of the limitations of the study, the Learner Development Activities, as both a pedagogical tool and a research instrument, were particular to the setting. Importantly, this study serves to inspire teachers and researchers to seek mechanism to engage learners in the creation of their own stories in ways which are responsive to the particular contexts in which learners participate.

8.4.2 Future research

As noted in the discussion of the limitations of the study, the investigation into language learners' development and the learners' self-conceptualisations was highly situated. Similarly, the model of the dynamic and ecological L2 self-concepts, drawn from the findings, is limited to a particular group of learners in a particular environment. It is recommended that future research involve the successive applications of the pedagogical approach to learner development taken in this study with different groups of learners within the same institution and programme of study. This would contribute further to understandings of the ways in which learners derive meaning from their experiences as language learners and users and factors internal and external to the learners which impact on their development as language learners and their L2 self-concepts, thus validating the model.

Essential to the Exploratory Practice approach and the creation of the learners' narratives was the sustained manner in which the participants engaged with the process. The longitudinal approach to the investigation revealed the learners' self-concepts to be dynamic constructs, formed and reformed along their learning trajectories. While the study took place over the first year of the learners' academic programme, no doubt as they continued along their programme of study they encountered and engaged in an array of other learning and social experiences, all of which would impact on their development as language learners and their L2 self-concepts. Thus the implication is that future research should extend the period of investigation, where possible, over a much longer duration of the learning programme.

The findings of the study illuminated the range of emotions the learners' experienced and the interplay between the learners' emotions and their self-concepts

as they moved along their learning trajectories. In particular, the learners referenced a range of emotions in connections with their interactions with others, events or experiences, opportunities and challenges they faced, periods of transition and hopes and desires for their future, revealing their emotions to be dynamic and socially and contextually situated. Two key implications are suggested by the findings of this study. Firstly, it is unclear from this study how aware the learners themselves were of their emotional responses to their learning experiences or what processes or strategies the learners use (or not) to harness their emotions in productive ways. Further research is needed into the ways in language learners identify and work with their emotions in ways which positively impact on their engagement with learning opportunities. Secondly, in order to encourage such introspection on the part of the learner, further research would necessarily require methods which engage the learners in a sustained manner to reflect on their conceptualisations of themselves as language learners and explore their language learning experiences in relation to these self-concepts. Further, such approaches must acknowledge the dynamic interconnection between the learners' emotions and identity and the social and learning contexts in which the learners are situated.

8.5   Implications for language teachers

The findings of this study have important implications for language instructors, particularly in respect to their development as critically reflective practitioners and their classroom practices. The pedagogical approach to learner development and understanding learners' self-concepts was very much formed through my reflections on my teaching experiences, engagement in conversations with my teaching peers and review of the related literature. Engaging in the study as

a practitioner-researcher allowed me to explore the complexities of language teaching and learning and to understand more fully my own practices. As a result, the study as a whole, the Learner Development Activities and the outcomes of those activities have significant and personal meaning to me and are a reflection my agency and identity as a language teaching professional. The implication for teaching practice is that language teachers are uniquely placed to take advantage of the opportunities to promote learner development: this points to the importance of teachers dedicating time and space to critically reflect on classroom practices, to seek out ways to understand themselves and their learners which are meaningful for them and to identify learning opportunities which they feel will enhance the quality of the classroom life for themselves and their learners.

A key implication which arises from this study in relation to classroom practice is the necessity of providing space in the curriculum for learners to explore and share their language learning experiences, particularly when there is a focus on learner development. As language teachers we cannot control elements in the various environments in which learners participate which impact on their development, however, we can acknowledge these by bringing them into the language classroom. Further, acknowledging learners' goals and desires offers opportunities for pathway thinking which can develop learners' agency. In working together for understanding it is possible for language teachers to foster a classroom environment in which the learners and their identities are valued and supported. In summary, by incorporating reflective activities such as the ones which formed the basis of this study, teachers can afford opportunities for learners to participate more fully in the classroom by letting them and their identities, beliefs and emotional wellbeing become the focus of the classroom.

8.6   Journeys continue

To bring this study to its conclusion, this final section revisits the participants who were central to this study, looking at where they are now along their journeys.

After earning their degrees and diplomas most of the students returned to their home countries. I have heard that Tomi is engaged to be married and that Kiki is married and recently had her first child. Paweena returned to Thailand and works in marketing for an international trade company.   Rie returned to Japan where she has taken up a job as a sales clerk in a department store. I am not sure what role English plays in her life now; however, I do know that she continues to cultivate the international friendships she developed during her time in New Zealand. Luc moved to France with his high school sweetheart. They married and he found a job at a model toy store, first as a sales clerk then as a store manager. He occasionally uses English in his job, but fears he is losing his vocabulary, so he is looking for other employment where he can use his English skills. Luc continues to play the drums and he joined a new heavy metal band when he moved to France. His band has recently recorded and released a demonstration album and music video and he is confident that the band will someday be successful. Mayu returned to Europe and is undertaking a master's degree in journalism. The programme allowed her to study for one year in Denmark and she is now completing her second and final year in Germany. English plays a major role in her life, as all her courses are instructed in English, and she seems quite confident in her English skills.   Looking back on her time in New Zealand, she felt that she achieved some of her goals, particularly the experience of living abroad itself and developing international friendships. Mayu

plans to return to Japan soon and hopes to continue to learn and use English for work, to make new friends and to travel.

As the learners moved into the second year of their respective programmes, I moved to a position with another university managing academic pathway programmes and then returned to Australia where I have taken up a role at a university providing academic and learning support to students. I continue to engage in conversations with my teaching peers and have had a number of opportunities to share the findings of this study at conferences and in publications (see Kehrwald, 2013, for example). I doubt that I will ever have the opportunities to engage with learners in such an intimate and extended way as I had the privilege to with the group of learners in this study; it was a truly unique experience. However, as I continue to move along my professional journey I bring with me the understandings developed through my experiences with these students. As I interact with learners, whether working with groups or with individuals, I am always mindful that each of them brings to the current context a unique identity, formed through their various social and learning experiences, successes and failures, expectations, goals and hopes. I will always strive to assist learners to unpack their understandings of their learning situation and themselves as learners and to help them discover ways of working which are meaningful to them and their learning trajectories.

Do not follow where the path may lead.
Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail.
(Ralph Waldo Emerson)

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Appendix 1: Extract from Academic English Level 1 Course Outline

Course Description

This is the first of two complementary courses which will help you develop your English language skills, particularly in support of other content courses. This course is designed to accelerate the process of acquiring language skills that enable students whose first language is not English to engage fully in current and further study.

This course has been designed to be **learner-centred** in order to maximise personal development and growth. **Self-directed** study is therefore an important component, which enables students to take responsibility for their own learning. This is complemented by class work which will encourage interaction between students and teacher and will include **group and partner work** to promote learning from peers. Individual consultations with lecturer are intended to encourage the learners' strengths and support their weaker points.

Course Objectives

This course will help you to:

- identify effective strategies to stop procrastinating and get started by controlling your environment and emotions (1);
- identify personal strengths and weaknesses and develop and apply strategies to address those (1,3,7);
- identify your purpose in writing and the use of appropriate techniques with a view of a particular audience in mind, real or contrived (3,6,7,8);
- improve your writing skills for content courses and some other possible needs (3,7,8);
- apply appropriate strategies to a range of reading types (4,5);
- identify and use strategies for discovering, clarifying and expressing meanings from the chosen field of study and from different language registers (3,4,5,6,7,8).

Learning Outcomes

During this course, we will begin to understand the writing process more deeply by discussing the following questions:

- to what extent does the course help you to express yourselves both coherently and intelligibly in English in both written and oral communication given a range of purposes?
- to what extent have you mastered text organization techniques and can retrieve the appropriate one to suit your purpose?
- to what extent can you apply appropriate strategies to a range of reading text types to be able to retrieve, select, cognitively process, appraise and synthesise information so that you can understand more deeply the courses you are taking?
- to what extent can you recognise and infer meaning of a range of vocabulary through strategies such as the ability to utilise context, cognate words and affixes and to what extent have these strategies decreased your use of a bilingual or monolingual dictionary?
- to what extent have you been able to apply these strategies to your reading in your other courses?
- to what extent can you demonstrate receptive and productive use of English across all four skills to achieve personal goals you have in other courses or in your own personal language development?
- to what extent have you internalised the purport and function of text organising patterns and parts and to what extent are these useful in your other courses?
- to what extent can you critically appraise your own or someone else's writing, given different audiences and different purposes?

(Source: InstituteWeb, 2008)

Appendix 2: Ethics Clearance

Massey University

28 April 2008

Ms Jane Kehrwald
24B Ascot Street
PALMERSTON NORTH

Dear Jane

Re: **HEC: Southern B Application – 08/02**
         Exploring the ecology of learner and teacher beliefs

Thank you for your letter dated 21 April 2008.

On behalf of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B I am pleased to advise you that the ethics of your application are now approved. Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, reapproval must be requested.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Dr Karl Pajo, Chair
Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B

cc   Prof Cynthia White   Prof Philip Williams, HoS
     School of Language Studies   School of Language Studies
     PN231   PN231

Te Kunenga
ki Pūrehuroa

Appendix 3: Student Information Sheet – English

Exploring the ecology of learner & teacher beliefs
INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Students

My name is Jane Kehrwald and I am a Lecturer in the Degree Program at ☐
☐.

I am writing to invite you to participate in a research project I am conducting as part of my studies in the Doctorate in Philosophy (PhD) at Massey University, Palmerston North. The topic of my research project is about exploring English as a second language students' beliefs about language learning and their experiences as they enter and participate in a new language learning context. I am also exploring teachers' beliefs about language learning and teachers' experiences interacting with English as a second language students. The results of the study will be reported in my Doctoral Dissertation, as well as in professional journal articles and conference presentations.

Please be aware that you are under no obligation to participate in this research project.

Please also be aware that neither your grades nor your academic relationships with International Pacific College or members of staff, including myself, will be affected by either refusal or agreement to participate.

Below is some more information about the research project that will help you decide whether you would like to participate in the study or not.

Participant Recruitment:
You have been selected to participate in the project because you are an English as a second language student and you are entering a new language learning context (that is, the ☐).

All together I hope that 20-25 student will participate in this study. This will allow me to have a good representation of students.

Participation in the project will require you to discuss your beliefs about learning a second language and to reflect on your language learning experience (past and present). You can be assured that the discussions will take place in a friendly, supportive manner. Your ideas will be respected and will not be judged in any way.

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Project Procedures:

Though anonymity/confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, every effort will be made to do so. The following action will be taken to safeguard your identity and maintain confidentiality.

- The data collected through this project will be used for the purposes of the project only.
- No one else will have access to this data except me.
- The data will be stored securely in my office.
- Any electronic data will be stored on my personal computer, which is password protected.
- The final report will not include your name: you will be given a pseudonym.

- In accordance with Massey University policy, that data will be stored for 5 years, after which time it will be destroyed.
- At the end of each stage of the project you will be given a summary of the findings as they relate to you.

Participant involvement:

The project will take place in 2 stages. Stage 1 will occur in Term 1 and Stage 2 will occur in Term 2. Please note that you are welcome to participate in any or all parts of the project (for example, you may wish to participate in the interviews, but not the learning journals). In total, your involvement would be approximately 10 hours outside of class time.

Stage 1 would require the following involvement from you.

- I would like to use the posters, charts, collages and letters that you create as part of the learner development activities we do in class time as data for my project. These activities will occur as part of our in-class teaching/learning schedule, so do require any time outside of class.
- Participate in 2 x 45 minute interviews with me (in private) to discuss the work that you did in the above activities. The first interview will occur in the middle of Term 1 and the second interview will occur at the end of Term 1.

Stage 2 will require the following involvement from you:
- Keep a learning journal in which you record your experiences learning English in New Zealand. The learning journal will include your own ideas and reflections on your experiences. Topics or issues you may want to write about in your journal might include difficulties or successes you have experienced, learning activities that you have enjoyed or not enjoyed and changes in your learning goals. You wouldn't spend more than 30 minutes a week writing in your journal.

- Participate in 2 x 45 minute interviews with me (in private) to discuss in a little more detail the ideas you wrote about in your journal.

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Participant's Rights:

Please note that you are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- participate in any or all of the research activities described above;
- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study at any time;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;

- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded;
- ask for the audio tape to be turned off at any time during the interviews;
- discuss any concerns you may have about the project with ☐ Student Advisor, ☐, ph: ☐) and/or the ☐ (email: ☐, ph: ☐).

Project Contacts:

If you have any questions or concerns about the project and your involvement in it at anytime, please contact me:

> Jane Kehrwald
> Email: jkehrwald@ ☐
> Phone ☐, ext ☐
> Office ☐

Alternatively you can contact my research supervisor:

> Professor Cynthia White
> Email: c.j.white@massey.ac.nz
> Phone:06-356 9099, ext 7711

Committee Approval Statement:

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 08/02. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Karl Pajo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 04 801 5799 x6926, email humanethicssouthb@massey.ac.nz

Appendix 4: Student Consent Form – English

Exploring the ecology of learner and teacher beliefs

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the interviews being audio taped.

I wish/do not wish to have my audio tapes returned to me.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: .... Date: ....

Full Name - printed ....

Page 1 of 1

Te Kunenga
ki Purehuroa

Appendix 5: Student Information Sheet – Japanese

学習者と教師による学習観実態調査

調査内容

学生の皆様へ

はじめまして。私はジェーン・カーウォールドと申します。［　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　］（国際環太平洋大学）で学士学科（ディグリープログラム）の教師をしています。

現在パーマストンノース市のマッセー大学で博士号論文を書いていて、論文の調査内容は「英語を第二言語として学んでいる学生の学習観とその言語を使った場面での学習経験」です。更に、教師側の言語学習観と英語を第二言語として学習する生徒との相互作用経験についても研究を進めています。今回は、学生の皆様にこのリサーチプロジェクトに参加協力して頂きたいのです。

この研究の結果は、専門の論説記事や学会での発表と共に私の博士論文に記録されます。

学生の皆様には、この研究プロジェクトに関し全くの責任が無い事を約束致します。

この調査に協力したかしないかに関係なく、あなた個人の学業成績や、［　　　　　　　　　　　　　］［　　　　　　　　　］及び私を含めるスタッフの方々との関係に影響する事も一切ありませんのでご安心下さい。

以下は、このリサーチプロジェクトのより細かい情報です。協力して頂けるかどうか判断して頂けると思います。

参加協力者募集要項：

英語を第二言語として学習していて、そしてその言語を使った学習状況にいる（つまり、ニュージーランド［　　］の国際学科学士プログラムで勉強している）学生の方々。

十分なリサーチサンプルを集めるため、全部で２０〜２５名の参加者を募集したいと考えています。

参加者の皆様にお聞きしたいことは、第二言語学習に対する意見と、現在過去を問わず個人の言語学習経験を振り返って頂きそれらを教えて頂くことです。このディスカッションは堅苦しいものではなく、そして個人の意見には常に敬意を払い、決して評価はしません。

プロジェクト手順：

匿名又は個人情報は機密に守られる様に細心の注意を払いますが、完全に保証されない事をご承諾下さい。個人情報の保護は下記の通りに行われます。

Te Kunenga
ki Purehuroa

—このプロジェクトを通して集められたデータはプロジェクトでのみ使用されます。

—私以外このデータは誰にも公表されません。

—データは安全に私のオフィスに保管されます。

—電子データは私の個人的なコンピューターに安全に保管されます（パスワードでの保護付）。

—ファイナルレポートは個人の名前は記入しません。仮名を使わせて頂きます。

—マッセー大学の方針によりますと、集められたデータは５年間保存され、その後は自動的に抹消されます。

プロジェクトのそれぞれの段階で、個人に関わる調査結果は報告します。

参加協力者のプロジェクト手順:

このプロジェクトは、２段階に分けて行われます。１段階目（ステージ１）は１学期に、２段階目（ステージ２）は２学期に行われます。参加して頂く学生の皆様には、このプロジェクトでどの段階にも参加して頂いて構いません。（例えば、インタビューには参加したいが学習経験の日記は書かない　等。）授業時間以外に伴う参加時間は合計で１０時間程になります。

ステージ１では以下の協力をお願いします。

—このプロジェクトのデータ収集の為、授業内で学習者のポスター、グラフ、コラージュや手紙を学習発達アクティビティとして使いたいと思っております。これらのアクティビティは、クラス内時間で行われますが、クラス外でのアクティビティも必要とされます。

—上記のアクティビティを行った後、私の４５分ずつのインタビューに２回参加して頂きたいと思っています。初めのインタビューは１学期の中間に、２回目のインタビューは１学期の後半です。

ステージ２では以下の事項をお願いします。

—ニュージーランドでの英語学習の経験の日記をつけてもらうこと。日記の内容は、あなたの経験に基づいて何をどう感じたか。日記の内容は、例えばあなたが経験した困難や成功、学習アクティビティで楽しんだ又は楽しめなかったこと、そして学習目標の変化等が挙げられます。週に３０分以上、この日記に費やす必要はありません。

—日記の内容をもう少し掘り下げて、インタビューとして個人的にお話します。４５分ずつ、２回行います。

参加協力者の権利:

このプロジェクトに対する参加協力は、一切の義務はありません。もし参加を決定された場合、以下の権利があります：

- 参加者は上記に記された研究アクティビティの全ての段階もしくはどの段階にも参加できること。
- どんな特定の質問にも、回答拒否できること。
- 参加協力をいつでも辞退できること。
- 参加途中いつでもこのプロジェクトに対する質問をすることができること。
- 個人の実名は、プライバシー保護のため個人の許可が無い限り公表されないこと。
- プロジェクトの終わりには、調査結果を知る事ができること。
- 何回かに渡り行われるクラス内やインタビュー中に、いつでもオーディオテープの録音／録画を中止要請できること。
- 指導教官の 　　　　　　 先生(email: 　　　　　　　 phone: 　　　　　　 外線番号 832)もしくは国際学科のディーンの 　　　　　　 (email: 　　　　　　 phone: 　　　　　 外線番号 818)にどんな関心ごとも相談できること。

連絡先：

このプロジェクトに関する質問や意見等があれば、いつでも私（調査責任者）にご連絡下さい。

Jane Kehrwald

Email: jkehrwald@　　　　

Phone: 　　　　　　　

Office: 　　　　　　　

もし必要でしたら私の指導監督にも連絡して頂く事も可能です。

Professor Cynthia White

Email: c.j.white@massey.ac.nz

Phone: 06-356-9099 (ext. 7711)

委員会是認提示：

このプロジェクトは、Massey University Human Ethics Committee により書評、認可されています。Southern A, Application08 / 02。もしこのリサーチの指導についてご関心があれば、Dr Karl Pajo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 04-801-5799 (ext. 6926), email: humanethicsoutha@massey.ac.nz にお問い合わせ下さい。

Appendix 6: Student Information Sheet – French

Exploration de l'écologie d'apprentissage et des connaissances d'enseignement.

Circulaire

Je m'appelle Jane Kehrwald et je suis maître de conference à
[   ] pour les élèves de licence [   ].

Je vous invite à participer au projet de recherché que je dirige dans le cadre d'un doctorat de philosophie (PhD) à Massey University à Palmerston North. Celui-ci porte sur l' étude de la langue anglaise à travers la perspective d'étudiants de langue seconde, à examiner leur point de vue et experiences quand ils apprènnent une langue et entrent dans un nouveau contexte d'apprentissage. J'analyserai aussi la perspective des enseignants et leur experiences vis-a-vis des étudiants de langue seconde. Les resultats de mes recherches seront publiés dans mon mémoire de doctorat, dans des articles de journaux spécialisés et seront cites lors de conférences.

Vous n'êtes en aucun cas obligé de participer à ce projet de recherche.

Veuillez également noter que vos notes, vos relations avec [   ], moi y compris, ne seront nullement affecté par votre choix de participer ou non à mon projet.

Vous trouverez ci-dessous de plus amples informations, qui, j'espère, vous aideront à faire votre choix.

Recrutement de participants

Vous avez été sélectionnés pour participer à ce projet car vous étudiez l'anglais comme langue seconde et vous abordez cet apprentissage dans un nouveau contexte: [   ] J'espère que 10 à 15 étudiants se présenteront à moi. Ceci me permettra d'obtenir un échantillon représentatif des élèves issus des cours de remise à niveau d'anglais [   ]. Si vous acceptez de participer au projet, il vous sera demandé de discuter de vos connaissances sur le processus d'apprentissage d'une nouvelle langue et de réfléchir sur votre experience d'apprentissage passé

et présente d'une nouvelle langue. Je vous assure que les discussions prendront place dans un cadre convivial. Vos idées seront bien prises en compte et vous ne serez en aucun cas jugés.

L'élaboration du projet

Bien que je ne puisse pas guarantir l'anonymat et la confidentialité des participants, je ferai mon possible pour qu'il en soit ainsi. Les mesures suivantes seront prises pour sauvegarder votre identité et maintenir votre confidentialité.

- Les données récoltées pour mon projet ne seront utilisées que pour ce projet personnel.

- Aucune autre personne que moi n'aura accès à ces données.

- Les données seront entreposées en sécurité dans mon bureau.

- Toute donnée électronique sera enregistrée sur mon ordinateur qui est protégé par un mot de passe.

- Un pseudonyme vous sera attribué. Aucun nom ne sera mentionné dans le rapport final.

- En accord avec la politique en vigeur à Massey University, les données seront entreposées pour une durée de 5 ans, après quoi elles seront détruites.

- Un résumé de mes trouvailles vous sera fournit au terme de chaque étape du projet selon qu'elle vous concerne ou non.

Degré d'implication du participant

Le projet se fera en 2 étapes: l'étape une durant le term 1 et l'étape 2 durant le term 2.

Veuillez noter qu'il vous est possible de décider de participer à toutes les étapes du projet ou uniquement à certaines étapes (participer aux interviews sans participer aux learning journals par example). Votre participation comptera un total de 10 heures hors cours.

Durant l'étape une,

- J'utiliserai les posters, graphs, collages et lettres que vous créez en classe comme activité de développement d'apprentissage. Ceux-ci seront considérés comme des données pour mon projet et seront éffectués pendant notre planning d'enseignement-apprentissage en cours et hors cours.

- Vous participerez à 2 séances d'interview privée de 45 minutes chacune pour discuter du travail que vous avez fournit dans les activités décrites ci-dessus. La première interview aura lieu au milieu du term 1 et la deuxième à la fin du term 2.

Durant l'étape deux, il vous sera demandé

- De tenir un journal d'étude dans lequel vous noterez vos expériences d'apprentissage de la langue anglaise en Nouvelle Zélande. Vous y noterez aussi toute idée ou réflection personnelle en relation avec vos expériences d'apprentissage. Vous pourrez par example parler des sujets ou problèmes suivant: vos difficultés ou experiences réussis, parler des activités d'apprentissage que vous avez aimé ou pas, ou des changement dans vos objectifs d'apprentissage. Cela ne devra pas vous prendre plus de 30 minutes de votre temps par semaine à écrire dans votre journal.

- De participer à 2 séances d'interview privée de 45 minutes chacune pour développer les idées que vous avez noté dans votre journal en plus de détail.

Droits des participants

Veuillez noter que vous etes nullement obligé d'accepter mon invitation. Si toute fois vous décidez de participer vous etes en droit de

- Participer à n'importe quelle ou à toutes les activités décrites ci-dessus.

- Reffuser de répondre à une question en particulier.

- Vous retirer de l'étude à tout moment.

- Poser n'importe quelle question à n'importe moment de l'étude.

- Donner des informations tout en sachant que votre nom ne sera pas utilisé sauf si vous en donnez la permission au chercheur.

- Vous aurez acces au résumé des resultats du projet une fois qu'il sera conclu.
- Demander d'arreter le magnétophone à tout moment de l'interview.

- Discuter de tout problème ou inquietude que vous pourrez avoir à propos du projet avec le conseiller-psychologue chargé des étudiants à [ ] (email: [ ], tel: [ ]) ou avec la Dean des [ ] (email: [ ], tel: [ ]).

Qui contacter?

Si vous avez des questions ou inquiétudes concernant le projet ou votre degré d' implication dans le projet, je reste à votre disposition pour tout eventual entretien. Voici mes coordonées:

Jane Kehrwald
Email: jkehrwald@ [ ]
Phone: [ ]
Office: [ ]

Sinon vous pouvez aussi contacter mon superviseur de memoire:
Professor Cynthia White
Email: c.j.white@massey.ac.nz
Phone:06-356 9099, ext 7711

Sceau d'approbation du commité d'éthique humaine de Massey University

Ce projet a reçu le sceau d'approbation du Massey University Human Ethics Committee (commité d'éthique humaine de Massey University): Southern B, Application 08/02. Veuillez soumettre vos inquietudes sur le déroulement du projet de recherché au Dr Karl Pajo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 04 801 5799 x6926, email humanethicssouthb@massey.ac.nz

Appendix 7: Student Information Sheet – Thai

Massey University
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

โครงการวิจัยเรื่องการเรียนรู้ในภาษาที่สอง
กระดาษข้อมูล

สวัสดีค่ะ

ดิฉันชื่อ Jane Kehrwald ดิฉันเป็นอาจารย์สอนอยู่ในระดับปริญญาตรีที่ [   ]

ดิฉันขอกล่าวเชิญชวนผู้ที่สนใจเข้าร่วมโครงการของดิฉัน ดิฉันกำลังทำวิจัยเพื่อการศึกษาในระดับปริญญาเอกที่ Massey University, Palmerston North หัวข้อที่ดิฉันกำลังสนใจทำการศึกษาเรื่อง การเรียนรู้ภาษาที่สองนอกจากภาษาแม่ ในส่วนของเนื้อหาการวิจัยจะรวมถึงกระบวนทางการเรียนรู้ และประสบการณ์ที่ผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการนี้โดยตรง โครงการนี้ไม่ได้เพียงแต่สำรวจข้อมูลจาก นักเรียนเท่านั้น แต่ยังรวมไปถึงตัวอาจารย์ผู้สอนในห้องเรียน ในตอนท้าย ข้อสรุป และผลการวิจัยต่างๆจะถูกนำไปบันทึกลงในวิทยานิพนธ์ของดิฉัน

การทำวิจัยครั้งนี้ไม่มีกฎเกณฑ์ ข้อบังคับ และข้อผูกมัดใดๆทั้งสิ้น ทางผู้เข้าร่วมสามารถไว้วางใจได้มา ความคิดเห็นและข้อสรุป จะไม่มีผลกระทบ ในด้านต่างๆ ในกรณีที่ผู้เข้าร่วมเป็นนักศึกษาที่ [   ] เป็นที่แน่นอน

ข้อมูลดังต่อไปนี้เป็นข้อมูลเบื้องต้นที่ผู้สนใจเข้าร่วมโครงการสมควรทราบ โปรดอ่านด้วยความละเอียดและรอบคอบ

คุณสมบัติของผู้ที่สามารถเข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัย

- ผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการวิจัยจะต้องเป็นผู้ที่ศึกษาภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาที่สองนอกเหนือจากภาษาแม่ที่ตนเองใช้อยู่
- ผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการนี้จะมีอยู่ทั้งหมดโดยประมาณ 10 – 15 คน

ในช่วงระยะเวลาการทำโครงการทางผู้ทำวิจัยขอความร่วมมือทางผู้เข้าร่วมกิจกรรม โดยการร่วมคิดวิเคราะห์ วิจารณ์ รวมถึงเล่าประสบการณ์ตรงของตัวเองถึงการศึกษาภาษาอังกฤษเป็นภาษาที่สองทั้งในอดีตและปัจจุบัน ช่วงระหว่างการสนทนาจะดำเนิน ไปด้วยความเป็นกันเอง ในขณะเดียวกันทุกๆคำตอบ และความคิดเห็น จะไม่มีการ โดนวิจารณ์ ตำหนิ หรือโดยตัดสินว่าถูกหรือผิดเป็นอันขาด เพราะทางผู้วิจัยจะถือว่าทุกๆ ความคิดเป็นสิ่งสำคัญและมีค่าเป็นอย่างยิ่ง

กระบวนการในการทำวิจัย

ผู้เข้าร่วมทุกท่านสามารถมั่นใจในเรื่องการเก็บรักษาข้อมูลๆนี้จะไม่ถูกกล่าวถึงรายชื่อของผู้เข้าร่วมทุกๆท่าน

- ข้อมูลที่เราเก็บและวิจัยมานั้นมีจุดประสงค์เพื่อใช้ในการศึกษาอย่างเดียวเท่านั้น
- ผู้ดำเนินโครงการ คือตัวดิฉันจะเป็นผู้เดียวที่สามารถรับทราบและค้นหาข้อมูลทั้งหมดในการวิจัยครั้งนี้ได้
- ข้อมูลทั้งหมดจะถูกเก็บบันทึก และเก็บไว้ ณ ที่ห้องทำงานของดิฉันเท่านั้น
- ข้อมูลออนไลน์จะถูกเก็บไว้ในคอมพิวเตอร์ที่จะสามารถเข้าใช้ได้ด้วยรหัสส่วนตัวเองดิฉันเท่านั้น
- รายงานฉบับจริงจะใช้นามแฝงแทนชื่อจริงของคุณ
- ตามนโยบายทาง **Massey University** ข้อมูลที่ให้จะถูกเก็บไว้เป็นระยะเวลา 5 ปี และจะถูกทำลายหลังจากนั้น
- ในตอนจบของแต่ละขั้นตอนใน โครงการวิจัยนี้ คุณจะได้รับบทสรุปของโครงการวิจัยนี้เป็นระยะๆ

Te Kunenga
ki Purehuroa

ข้อมูลเบื้องต้นของโครงการวิจัยนี้

โครงการวิจัยนี้แบ่งออกเป็นสองขั้นตอนใหญ่ๆ ขั้นแรกจัดในภาคการศึกษาที่ 1 ขั้นที่ 2 จัดในภาคการศึกษาที่ 2 และยินดีต้อนรับสำหรับการเข้าร่วมในทุกๆกิจกรรมของโครงการนี้ (อาทิเช่น การเข้าร่วมสัมภาษณ์ แต่ไม่รวมถึง learning journals) โดยสรุปเวลาเข้าร่วมกิจกรรมนอกห้องเรียนคือประมาณ 10 ชั่วโมง

ขั้นตอนที่ 1 มีขั้นตอนการเข้าร่วมดังนี้
- โปสเตอร์ แผนภูมิ สื่อการเรียน การสอนต่างๆ ที่คุณทำขึ้นจะถูกใช้เป็นข้อมูลเพื่อโครงการวิจัยนี้ กิจกรรมเหล่านี้จะถูกนับเป็นกิจกรรมในห้องเรียน ดังนั้นอาจจะมีการรบกวนเวลานอกห้องเรียนบ้างเป็นบางครั้งคราว
- การสัมภาษณ์ส่วนตัวกับดิฉัน เป็นเวลา 45 นาที การสัมภาษณ์จะถูกแบ่งเป็น 2 ครั้ง ทั้ง 2 ครั้งจะพูดถึงกิจกรรมที่คุณได้ทำดังที่ได้กล่าวไปขั้นต้น การสัมภาษณ์ครั้งที่ 1 จะอยู่ในช่วงระยะกลางภาคเรียนที่ 1 ส่วนการสัมภาษณ์ครั้งที่ 2 จะเป็นช่วงปลายของภาคการศึกษาที่ 1

ขั้นตอนที่ 2 มีขั้นตอนการเข้าร่วมดังนี้
- เขียน learning journal ซึ่งก็คือบันทึกบันทึกที่คุณเขียนเกี่ยวกับประสบการณ์การเรียนภาษาอังกฤษในนิวซีแลนด์ บันทึกนี้ควรกล่าวถึงประสบการณ์ส่วนตัว ข้อคิดเห็นส่วนตัวของผู้เข้าร่วมเอง รวมทั้งยังสามารถกล่าวอ้างอิง ถึงความสำเร็จ อุปสรรคที่คุณได้พบ กิจกรรมที่คุณชอบและไม่ชอบ รวมถึงเป้าหมายในชีวิตที่คุณเคยตั้งเอาไว้ ควรใช้เวลาไม่เกิน 30 นาทีต่ออาทิตย์ในการเขียนบันทึก
- เข้าสัมภาษณ์เป็นการส่วนตัวเป็นเวลา 2 ครั้ง ครั้งละ 45 นาที กับดิฉัน ในการสนทนากันถึงรายละเอียด และความคิดเห็น ที่คุณใช้ในการบัน journal

สิทธิของผู้เข้าร่วม

คุณสามารถที่จะเลือกหรือไม่เลือกที่จะเข้าร่วม แต่ถ้าคุณตัดสินใจที่จะเข้าร่วมแล้วคุณมีสิทธิ์ที่จะ
- เข้าร่วมกิจกรรมการเรียนการสอน และ การวิจัยตามที่ได้กล่าวถึงขั้นต้น
- ปฏิเสธที่จะตอบคำถาม
- มีสิทธิที่จะถอนตัวได้ตลอดเวลาที่เข้าร่วม
- ให้ข้อมูลหรือข้อสรุปโดยที่ชื่อจริงของคุณจะไม่ถูกกล่าวถึงยกเว้นคุณจะอนุญาติ
- สามารถตรวจสอบ บทสรุปของโครงการได้
- ขอให้ยุติการบันทึกเสียง ได้ทุกเวลาขณะมีการสัมภาษณ์
- ปรึกษาข้อสงสัยหรือปัญหาต่างๆเกี่ยวกับ โครงการนี้ได้กับ ผู้ให้คำปรึกษาสำหรับนักเรียนตามรายละเอียดต่อไปนี้

| | (email: | | ph: | |) |

หรือติดต่อได้ที่หัวหน้าอาจารย์ฝ่ายวิชาการ

| | (email: | | , ph: | |) |

| |). |

หากผู้เข้าร่วมคนใดมีข้อสงสัย คำถาม หรือ คำแนะนำใดๆ ทางผู้จัดทำยินดีน้อมรับโดยสามารถติดต่อผ่านมาทางตามที่อยู่ข้างล่างนี้

Jane Kehrwald
Email: jkehrwald@
Phone:
Office:

หรือหากไม่สะดวกที่จะติดต่อมาทางที่อยู่ข้างบน

ทางผู้เข้าร่วมสามารถติดต่อผ่านมาทางอาจารย์ผู้ควบคุมการทำวิจัยครั้งนี้ได้โดยติดต่อผ่านมาทางตามที่อยู่ข้างล่างนี้

Professor Cynthia White
Email: c.j.white@massey.ac.nz
Phone: 06-356 9099, ext 7711

การรับรองข้อมูลทางคณะกรรมมาธิการ

โครงการวิจัยการศึกษานี้ได้รับการรับรองและตรวจสอบภายใต้ Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 08/02

หากทางผู้เข้าร่วมมีข้อสงสัยในเรื่องการรรับรองและการตรวจสอบของการทำวิจัยครั้งนี้สามารถติดต่อผ่านมาทาง contact Dr Karl Pajo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 04 801 5799 x6926, email humanethicssouthb@massey.ac.nz

Appendix 8: Learner Development Activities Handout

Academic English Level 1[9]
Learner Development Activities

self-directed

independent learning

goals

reflective

motivation

strengths & weaknesses

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[9] A pseudonym is used for the course name

To become a self-directed, independent learner you first need to be aware of your learning.

What are your goals? – What are your strengths & weaknesses? - How do we learn a language? - What is the teacher's job?

These activities are designed to help you reflect on your learning experience.

1. Language Learning History On the poster paper, draw a timeline to show your language learning history. Include on the timeline significant events in your learning history by drawing a picture representing these events and/or by writing a few sentences describing each of the events.
2. Goals and Motivations What are your dreams, your goals and your aspirations? What do you want to do? What do you want be? What DON'T you want to do? What DON'T you want to be? On the poster paper, create a collage of images to answer these questions.
3. The Language Learning Process Draw a diagram or flowchart (or any image you like) that shows the process of learning a second language.
4. Influences Step 1: On the poster paper, draw a picture of yourself as a language learner (that is, how do you see yourself as a language learner). Step 2: Think of the people, things or events which have influenced you in becoming the person you described in the picture. These influences can be positive or negative. You can draw a picture, attach a photo or write a few sentences to represent these influences.
5. SWOT Analysis On the poster paper, describe yourself in terms of your: Strengths – things you feel you do well Weaknesses – things you feel you don't do well Opportunities – things (including events and people) that are available to you and that will help you to achieve your goals Threats – things (including events and people) that might hinder you in achieving your goals
6. Language students are like …. Think of a metaphor to describe language students. Draw a picture or use a picture from a magazine that represents this metaphor.
7. Language teachers are like …. Think of a metaphor to describe language teachers. Draw a picture or use a picture from a magazine that represents this metaphor.
8. Great Expectations - Now and Then Think of the time before you came to [the Institute] and before you entered the degree program. What did you expect your experiences to be? What did you expect your life to be like? Now that you have been at [the Institute] a little while and have almost finished your first term, is the reality different from your expectations? On the poster paper, represent your expectations **before** and compare them to your reality **now**.

My goal

I have a lot of goals in the future. However I would like to write about my goals at

☐ .

I have a goal next summer. I want to play beach volleyball, because New Zealand has

very beautiful beach and it is popular in New Zealand and Australia. I really like to

play volleyball so I should try it. However I have to take two papers next summer so I

hope I have enough time to play volleyball.

In addition, I have a volleyball team in town and we are going to play national league

in Auckland in August. We are training with coach and we are playing at tournament.

I really hope that we can win at the national league.

My most important goal is to take International Relationship and graduate ☐ It is a

reason that I came to IPC. In the future, I want to be an International Journalist and I

want to report situations of other counties to Japanese.

It is my dream and my goal.

You seem to be having a well-rounded experience at ☐. By well-rounded I mean that you have academic interests & goals, as well as sporting interests.

How exciting to be on the volley ball team. They seem quite organised - they play in a league and compete nationally. It will be a great way for you to see New Zealand and meet a wide range of people. You seem well organised so I am sure you can balance study + sport.

In regards to your studies at ☐, what do you think you need to do in order to reach this goal?

Journalism will be an interesting job! other than language skills, what personal characteristics do you think you need to be successful? Do you have these now?

Play hard - study hard !! Jane.

Appendix 10: Teacher Information Sheet

Massey University
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Exploring the ecology of learner & teacher beliefs

INFORMATION SHEET

Dear Colleague

As you know, I am about to embark on my research project for Doctorate in Philosophy (PhD) program at Massey University, Palmerston North. The topic of my research project is about exploring English as a second language learners' emergent beliefs as they as they enter and participate in a new language learning context. I am also exploring teachers' beliefs about language learning and teachers' experiences interacting with English as a second language students. The results of the study will be reported in my Doctoral Dissertation, as well as in professional journal articles and conference presentations.

I am writing to invite you to participate in the research project. Below is some more information about the research project that will help you decide whether you would like to participate in the study or not.

Please be aware that you are under no obligation to participate in this research project.

Please also be aware that neither your relationships with _____ **nor other members of staff, including myself, will be affected by your refusal or agreement to participate.**

Participant Recruitment:
You have been selected to participate in the project because you are an _____ teacher, working with a group of learners who have entered a new language learning context (that is, Bachelor of _____ at _____).

All together I hope that about 5 teachers will participate in this study. This will allow me to have a good representation of _____ teachers.

Participation in the project will require you to discuss your beliefs about learning a second language and to reflect on your language teaching experience (past and present). You can be assured that the discussions will take place in a friendly, supportive manner. Your ideas will be respected and will not be judged in any way.

Project Procedures:

Though anonymity/confidentiality cannot be guaranteed, every effort will be made to do so. The following action will be taken to safeguard your identity and maintain confidentiality.

- The data collected through this project will be used for the purposes of the project only.
- No one else will have access to this data except me.
- The data will be stored securely in my office.
- Any electronic data will be stored on my personal computer, which is password protected.
- The final report will not include your name: you will be given a pseudonym.

- In accordance with Massey University policy, that data will be stored for 5 years, after which time it will be destroyed.
- At the end of each stage of the project you will be given a summary of the findings as they relate to you.

Participant involvement:

Participation in the project will require the following involvement from you. Please note that you are welcome to participate in any or all parts of the project (for example, you may wish to participate in the observations, but not the focus group)

- I would like to observe 2 of your [   ] lessons during Term 1. Each observation will be approximately 1 hour in length. The purpose of the observations is to observe your beliefs in action.

- After each observation, I would like you to participate in an interview. The aim of the interviews is to explore the beliefs, assumptions and theories of language learning which underpinned your lessons. Each interview will be approximately 1 hour in length and will be audio taped (subject to your agreement).

- Participate in a focus group session with your fellow [   ] teachers. The session will focus on how you conceptualize yourself as a teacher and how you conceptualize your second language learners. The focus group session will be approximately 1 hour in length and will be audio taped (subject to participant agreement).

Participant's Rights:

Please note that you are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- participate in any or all of the research activities described above;
- decline to answer any particular question;
- withdraw from the study at any time;
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation;
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission to the researcher;
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded; and
- ask for the audio tape to be turned off at any time during the interviews.

Project Contacts:

If you have any questions or concerns about the project and your involvement in it at anytime, please contact me:

        Jane Kehrwald
        Email: jkehrwald@
        Phone: , ext
        Office:

Alternatively you can contact my research supervisor:

        Professor Cynthia White
        Email: c.j.white@massey.ac.nz
        Phone:06-356 9099, ext 7711

Committee Approval Statement:

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, Application 08/02. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Dr Karl Pajo, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern B, telephone 04 801 5799 x6926, email humanethicssouthb@massey.ac.nz

Appendix 11: Teacher Consent Form

Massey University
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF LANGUAGE STUDIES
Private Bag 11 222
Palmerston North
New Zealand
T 64 6 356 9099
F 64 6 350 2271
www.massey.ac.nz

Exploring the ecology of learner and teacher beliefs

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I agree/do not agree to the focus group sessions being audio taped.

I agree/do not agree to the interviews being audio taped.

I wish/do not wish to have my audio tapes returned to me.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: _____   Date: _____

Full Name - printed _____

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