

**INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF INCORPORATING CULTURAL
ELEMENTS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING TO ENHANCE
JAPANESE COLLEGE STUDENTS' L2 VISION AS INTERCULTURAL
SPEAKERS**

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis concerns an exploratory practice (EP) project conducted at a two-year college in north east Japan, which was severely affected by the earthquake of March 2011. The focus of research is a 13-week EFL course for 25 first-year college students, specifically designed to enhance their future visions of themselves as L2 users (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014). This study examined opportunities that the course created for the students' vision development in the classroom and the factors that may have contributed to these opportunities. The data came from 1) students' written narratives, 2) semi-structured interviews, 3) teacher/researcher reflections, field notes and audio- and video- recordings of the classes, and 4) course evaluation questionnaires. Findings show that the course was beneficial for enhancing students' appreciation of their language-relevant futures and the thesis engages with the factors that contributed to these findings by 1) tracing the trajectories of L2 learning and intercultural experiences of selected interview participants, 2) examining group dynamics and pedagogy adopted for the course, and 3) piecing together an understanding of the role that the teacher played in mobilising one focal participant's future vision. The key contribution of this EP inquiry turned out to be more far-reaching than originally envisaged; however, pointing to the broader role that language education can play in young people's lives. The thesis concludes by discussing educational and research consequences of this finding.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 MOTIVATION FOR THIS STUDY

The motivation for this study comes from my interest in both foreign language and intercultural learning. My first tangible intercultural contact was with an Italian pen friend Simona, who I started writing to when I was 12. I had just started learning English at school and I was keen to try out what I had learned at school when I wrote to her. Writing and reading in English was very exciting. It opened a whole new world to me. I did not know much about Italy before that, but after I started exchanging letters with Simona, Italy became an interesting place to me because she was there. In fact, Simona became someone who represented the non-Japanese world and I was so excited that I was connected to ‘the other’ world, and it felt like I found a new part of myself using English to communicate with Simona. Some words and phrases that did not make sense to my little brother (because he was too little to read in English) did make sense to Simona. The Italian letter pads, envelopes, and stamps looked so foreign and exotic. Sometimes she would enclose some photos or cute little stickers. I have kept them in a special box for a long time. These visual images as well as the excitement I gained by exchanging letters with Simona probably had a strong impact on my interest in language learning motivation and cultural learning. My experience is one example that Pavlenko & Norton (2007) explain that: “the learning of another language,

perhaps more than any other educational activity, reflects the desire of learners to expand their range of identities and to reach out to wider worlds (p. 670).

More than thirty years have passed since then, but my ‘encounter’ with Simona affected my life and my work with language and culture. I have been teaching English for about 20 years in Japan, and I have also taught Japanese in Australia for several years. During my experience in learning and teaching foreign languages, I have always been fascinated by the interrelationship between language and culture. In some cases, maybe you are interested in ‘the other’ who lives in Italy, and that can make you want to learn the language. In other cases, you are interested in Italian cooking and that might also make you want to learn Italian. To give another example, many would have had an experience encountering a foreign word which cannot be translated into the mother tongue or vice versa. For example, a Japanese word *senpai*, literally means ‘senior associates’ or ‘older students’, and *kohai* means the opposite ‘junior associates’ or ‘younger students’. If you are not familiar with the Japanese culture, it is hard to grasp the meaning of these words. As Japan is a Confucian-based society, in school and organizations, you have to be aware of the hierarchy and act appropriately. *Senpai* is supposed to be a good role model for a *kohai* and provide good guidance. *Kohai* shows respect to *senpai* and serves him/her. However, you cannot be a *senpai* just being older than somebody who is called a *kohai*. If you are 25 years old but have played soccer

longer than somebody who is 30 years old, you can still be a *sempai* for the 30 years old. The English translation of these words does not represent these complicated concepts that are culturally loaded. As Moran observes, "... language and culture are clearly fused; one reflects the other" (p. 35). Many language teachers would agree with this idea and understand that language is part of culture and that when we teach a language, we are teaching culture embedded in language at the same time. As language is "one of the dominant threads in all cultures" (Hall, 1981, p. 36), and "is a window to the culture" (Moran, 2001, p. 6), without understanding the influence of culture on language and the way people's communication is shaped by culture, an L2 learner who does not learn L2 culture can end up as a "fluent fool" (Bennett, Bennett & Allen, 2003) who cannot behave appropriately in a social context.

In this global age, promoting intercultural understanding and competence is considered essential, and it is also stated in the Japanese government's educational policy. In 2003, the national plan to 'cultivate Japanese who can use English' was announced by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT). 'Globalization', 'cultural diversity' and 'international understanding' have been buzz words for the past couple of decades in Japan, where English is regarded as a key to reach out to the rest of the world. While there is a need to 'cultivate Japanese who can use English' in the global world, many language teachers in formal education system experience a dilemma because they also

sense their responsibility in having to teach English to students for passing university entrance exams (Sakui, 2004). At the same time, to many Japanese learners, English is a mandatory school subject that they do not need to use for daily interactions. Therefore, it is difficult for them to visualise themselves as potential L2 users in intercultural settings. This is why I embarked on this study project investigating the effect of incorporating intercultural elements in English language teaching to enhance the L2 vision of Japanese college students as intercultural speakers. It assumes that students' vision of themselves as competent "intercultural speakers" (Byram, Nichols, & Stevens, 2001) can be developed through activities structured around this goal. To this end, a special course which included activities and tasks for enhancing students' L2 vision as intercultural speakers was designed for the first-year junior college students who majored in international cultural studies and were interested in foreign culture and languages.

It is important that the most fundamental concept in this study "vision" is briefly explained here. It is informed by a growing body of L2 motivation research, which has adopted a concept of *possible selves* (Markus & Nurius, 1986) as the key component of theorising L2 motivation, the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2005) being one of the best known examples. It is the idea that we are motivated if we have a clear future image of ourselves. This concept of 'vision' has been successfully adopted in sport psychology, and

an example of a prominent Japanese gymnast Kohei Uchimura who envisioned himself as a brilliant gymnast when he was very young is given in a later section. To Dörnyei & Kubanyiova (2014), vision is “one of the highest-order motivational forces, one that is particularly fitting to explain the long-term, and often lifelong, process of mastering a second language” (p. 4). Although this idea of ‘vision’ has had a strong appeal among L2 motivation researchers and practitioners, there has been little knowledge about how it can be promoted through general classroom interaction practices. This study intended to address this issue by discovering the effect of the intervention vision-based English course on students’ L2 motivation by utilising a pedagogical approach that has vision at its centre. Details of this concept, how it works in motivating people, and how it relates to other relevant theories such as possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and the L2 Motivational Self System (Dörnyei, 2005) is given in 3.2. The concept of vision is elaborated in Chapter 3.

Another major reason to initiate this project was rooted in the immediate context of my teaching situation. Because the region in which I practise language education experienced a life-altering event for the whole community, my intention to focus on future vision got stronger in times when so many of my students’ futures were shattered. In the end, it turned into a desire to do something meaningful for my students. I live in the north-eastern part of the main island of Japan, which was badly affected by the Great East Japan

Earthquake occurred in March 2011. About 15,890 people were killed and 2,590 are still missing. More than 400,000 houses were destroyed by the quakes or were washed away by the tsunami (data as of Feb 10, 2015, The Japanese National Police Agency). The disaster caused immense damage and sufferings to the people who lived in the affected areas. It is beyond the scope of this paper to give details of this catastrophe. See Thompson (2012) for an example of an ethnographic report on the local people's perspective of the disaster. However, experiencing the aftermath of the earthquake made me think deeply about what I wanted to do to help my students hold on to hope, faith, and visions of themselves for the future. I did not want to teach English just for exams or other technical purposes. Some of my students who were from the coast had suffered terrible experiences: their houses had been washed away by the tsunami and they had lost families and friends. In addition, damage caused by the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant was enormous. I heard many stories of students giving up their study at school or studying abroad to help families and communities recover from the disaster. I hoped that the vision-based course might offer students a sense of future within a more global community of L2 speakers and increase their intercultural understanding even though most of them severely lacked the resources to pursue actual L2 encounters by going overseas. This was the motivation behind my desire to start the research project.



FIGURE 1.1 OTSUCHI TOWN (10 DAYS AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE AND TSUNAMI)

Source: Asahi Shimbun Digital (Photo by Takahiro Kawamura, 2011)

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND RESEARCH APPROACH

This study, although clearly motivated by my personal desire to make a difference to the particular students in the particular community, addresses questions of broader relevance to L2 motivation research. It seeks to understand the role that an English language course can play in enabling students to envision themselves as intercultural L2 speakers. In order to appreciate and empirically document this role, however, it was important for this study to understand the students' starting points. That is, this research aimed at uncovering what the course participants, the college students of English as a Foreign Language in this specific setting in a North Eastern prefecture in Japan, were already bringing into their course; what visions, if any, they had already entertained or even pursued in their L2 study

and L2 interactions and what past or current experiences may have shaped those visions. This, I believed, was a crucial starting point that could pave the way for a deeper understanding of the participants' engagement with the course and of its impact on the students' visions. To sum up, the two overarching questions that guided the present inquiry are:

1) What L2 visions and L2 vision-related experiences do the course participants have when they begin their college life?

2) How is this L2 vision impacted by English course components that aim at facilitating their L2 vision as intercultural speakers? Because the primary purpose of this study was cultivating the participants' L2 vision through a specially designed English language course, the second research question came naturally. Then, it was necessary to understand the students' initial visions in order to identify any change or development of their visions, and that is why the first research question was set.

To address these questions, the data came from the following sources: 1) written narratives (some with photos) which were also course materials, 2) semi-structured interviews (audio-recorded and transcribed later), 3) field notes & audio- and video-recordings of the classes, and 4) course evaluation by the students. The written narratives

were also class materials which the students produced. Semi-structured interviews were conducted after the course had ended with eight participants. Field notes and digital recordings were made to help recall any moments that needed examined later. The former three sets of data were analysed qualitatively and the last one (course evaluation) quantitatively and partially qualitatively. In this qualitative-dominant study, I was the teacher of the course, who was also using the classroom for research, working to gain in-depth understanding on the students' L2 vision development. Therefore, it naturally lead to my decision to frame this study as exploratory practice (EP), which is defined by Hanks (2015) as “a form of practitioner research in language education which aims to integrate research, learning and teaching” (p. 2). As will be elaborated later, EP focuses on the improvement of the quality of classroom life, and it involves both teachers and learners working together in a normal classroom setting in order to gain deep understanding about learning (Allwright, 2003; Allwright & Hanks, 2009). For example, the use of the written narratives given on some class materials as one of data resources was also based on a principle of EP: “Integrating the work for understanding fully into existing curricular practices is a way of minimizing the burden and maximizing sustainability” (Allwright & Hanks, 2009, p. 154). Another rationale for defining this study as EP is because I had a desire to do something meaningful through my ‘normal’ work by teaching the specially designed course, and I also

wanted to understand its effect. It was also hoped that the understanding gained from the study would “provide a good foundation for helping teachers and learners make their time together both pleasant and productive” (Allwright, 2003, p. 114).

1.3 THE OVERALL ORGANISATION OF THE THESIS

This thesis consists of nine chapters and has three main sections. The first section (Chapters 2, 3 and 4) provides the theoretical backgrounds of the research, i.e. context of this study and literature review in the relevant fields. In the second section (Chapters 5), research methodology is explained and information about participants and settings are given. Finally, the last section (Chapters 6, 7 and 8) offers data analysis and findings gained from this study followed by reflection and future implications in Chapter 9.

To be more specific, in order to appreciate the specific educational, cultural factors that contributed to the shaping of this study, I will give an overview of the history of English education in Japan, and explain how the historical factors still affect how English is taught in Japan leaving some challenges in terms of foreign language motivation in Chapter 2. In Chapter 3, I will provide the conceptual framework underpinning my study, vision. It was hoped that the vision approach would be useful for motivating my students to use L2, and I will outline the history of L2 motivational research to explain how vision approach emerged

from it. In Chapter 4, the focus shifts to the role of culture in foreign language education, and rationale why cultural components were added to the English course in this study to enhance students' L2 visions as intercultural speakers is offered.

Chapter 5 introduces the design and method I employed in the current research project and give details of the research context including the summary of the vision-based course taught as part of the study, a profile of participants, data collection methods, and the approach for analysis.

Chapters 6, 7, and 8 offer the findings gained from the analysis. Presented in Chapter 6 is the findings related to the first research question, "What L2 visions and L2 vision-related experiences do the course participants have when they begin their college life?" I will explain how the students' visions might have been affected by some socio-cultural factors such as public discourse and educational policy, and students' intercultural and L2 learning experiences. In Chapter 7, I will discuss the findings related to the second research question, "How are the students' L2 visions impacted by English course components that aim at facilitating their L2 visions as intercultural speakers?" I will illustrate how my English classroom functioned as a community for intercultural communication, where the students had opportunities to use L2 to interact with their peers and developed their L2 visions. In Chapter 8, focussing on one participant whose data bring the themes discussed in Chapter 6

and 7 together in terms of the process of vision formation, I will highlight the role of a teacher in mobilising students' L2 vision and more holistic task to facilitate the students' reflection on their lives outside an L2 classroom.

In the concluding chapter, after summarising the findings based on the research questions, I will provide the limitations of this study and implications for pedagogy and future research.

2 THE CONTEXT OF THIS STUDY

In order to appreciate the specific educational, cultural factors that contributed to the shaping of this study, this chapter offers a brief overview of the history of English education in Japan, and how the historical factors still affect how English is taught in Japan and have caused some challenges. In 2.1, an overview of the Japanese education system is given. In 2.2, the history of English education is outlined and some current issues concerning English language education in Japan are discussed.

2.1 THE JAPANESE EDUCATION SYSTEM

According to the website of National Centre on Education and the Technology, Japanese students consistently rank highly in the OECD's Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), especially in reading literacy, math, and sciences. Among these areas, adult literacy rate (15 years and over) between 1995 and 2004) is 99% (UNESCO, 2017).

As the figure below shows, in the current Japanese education system, children start going to primary school at the age of six. Primary school is from grade one to grade six. Grades seven to nine are junior high school, and up to this level, education is mandatory. Most students go to senior high school, which are from grades ten to twelve. Approximately

half of the high school graduates continue studying at vocational school and tertiary institutions. At all levels, there are public and private schools. In contrast to some other countries, students in compulsory education (primary and junior high school) proceed to the next grade every year irrespective of their academic achievements. Therefore, neither gifted learners skip a grade, nor and slow learners repeat a grade. Classes are usually not streamed at these levels, and sometimes this makes it hard for classroom teachers to cater for different needs of learners, especially if the classes are large. In the government school system up to the junior high school level, textbooks are provided for free to all students and students learn under the same curriculum created by set by the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), advised by the Central Council for Education.

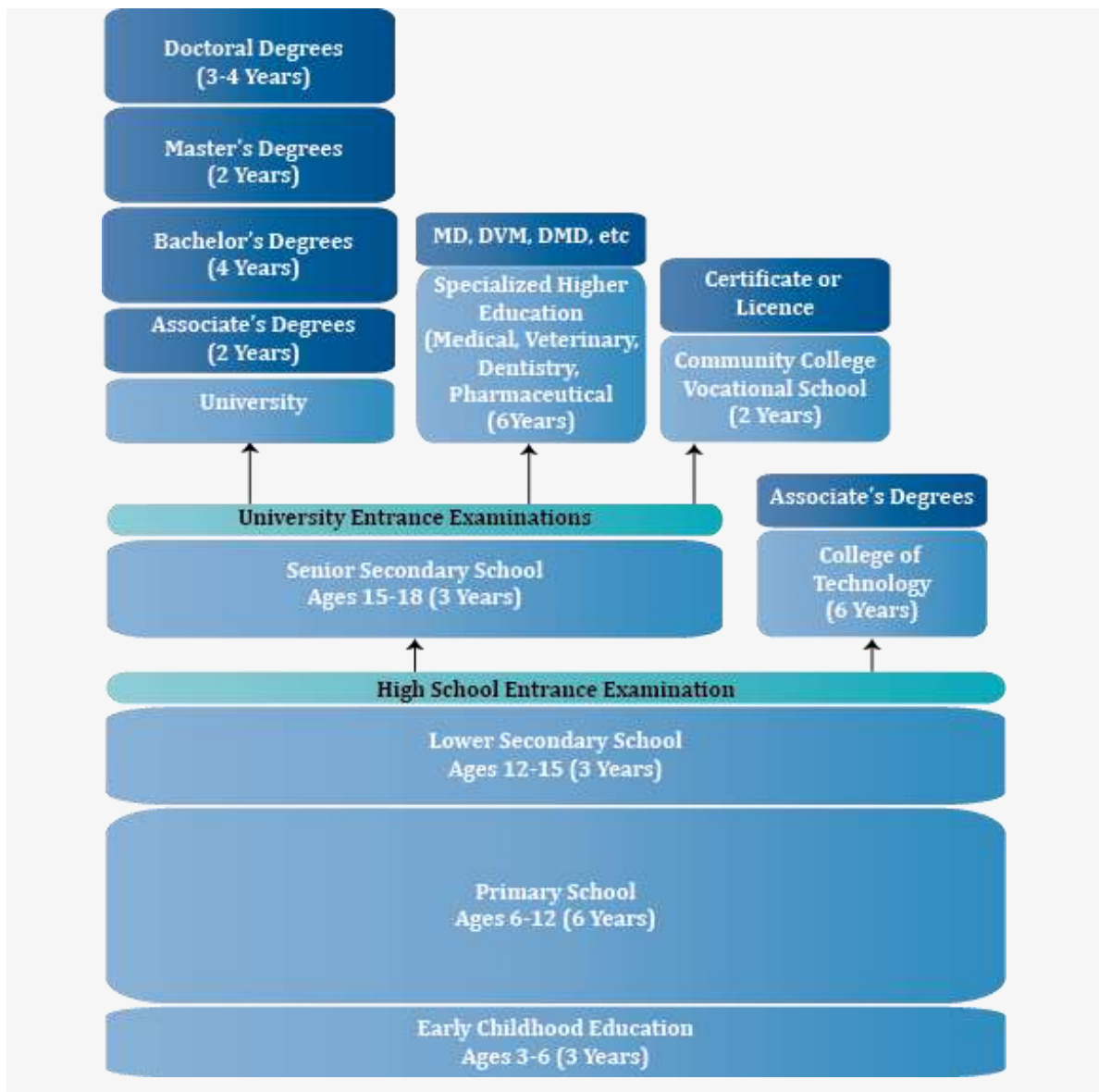


FIGURE 2.1 JAPAN'S EDUCATION SYSTEM AT A GLANCE

Source: The website of *National Centre on Education and the Economy*

<http://ncee.org/what-we-do/center-on-international-education-benchmarking/top-performing-countries/japan-overview/japan-instructional-systems/>

2.2 ENGLISH EDUCATION IN JAPAN

2.2.1 HISTORY OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION IN JAPAN

In order to demonstrate that the history of foreign language education in Japan affects how English is taught currently in schools, this section provides a historical outline as well as some current issues regarding English education in Japan.

Shimizu (2010) explains that English became the main foreign language taught in Japan only after the British battleship “Phaeton” came to Japan in 1808. Until then, limited ports were open to the outside world due to the seclusion policy by the Shogunate. Dutch was the main foreign language studied as Holland was the only European country that was permitted to trade. The first Europeans who came to Japan were Portuguese Christian missionaries (1549 AD). With Christianity, they brought many products such as guns, eye glasses, buttons, vegetables that were non-native to Japan. However, the Shogunate prohibited the trade with Portugal (1639 AD), when they started to feel Christianity was a threat to the national policy.

Prior to the significant European influence on Japan, Chinese and Korean were the foreign languages used to gain academic knowledge, and it is said Chinese characters were introduced to Japan when Buddhism was brought in the 6th century AD. From that time, Chinese characters have been used along with the other two sets of alphabets that constitute

the present Japanese writing system. The main purpose of studying a foreign language at an earlier stage was to gain academic knowledge. Translation was the method employed to teach Chinese classics earlier in the history, and later, Dutch was the medium to gain knowledge on European medicine and other academic disciplines such as astronomy and physics. Although they started to feel the need to communicate in practical Dutch to negotiate in trading situations, “[a]s contact with Dutch people was extremely limited, and in the absence of Dutch speaking instructors, the study of Dutch aimed at the translation of Dutch scholarship and research” (Shimizu, 2010, p. 6). Shimizu (2010) states:

Japan is considerably influenced by this long tradition of borrowing from and adapting the languages and knowledge of other cultures to Japanese needs. Thus, it was inevitable that English education and learning should be considerably influenced by earlier experience in learning from Kangaku (Chinese learning), Chinese writing, and the study of Dutch (p.11).

As Shimizu (2010) explains, communication was not the main purpose for studying a language for about 1000 years. Even after the Japanese started to interact with Europeans, a traditional method, i.e. translation, has continued to play a big role in the foreign language education, and so it remains today. This is part of the reason why the government’s intention to cultivate “Japanese with English abilities” (MEXT, 2003) meaning that Japanese should

acquire better English communication skills, has not really worked. The kind of joke such as “Even students who can comprehend quite dense texts written in English, when it comes to ordering a cup of coffee in English, they freeze not knowing what to say” is often heard among English teachers who come from overseas to teach in Japanese tertiary institutions.

By the end of Meiji Era (early 20th century), two main approaches in English teaching were established. One came from the government policy to introduce modern methodologies such as “Gouin Method”, a forerunner to the Audio-Lingual Method. The other was a traditional style method (grammar-translation), which was used to prepare students for taking entrance examinations (Fujimoto-Adamson, 2008). Sakui (2004) explains how these two different styles of teaching have been implemented in Japan until now, and that many language teachers in public school system experience a dilemma. While they sense their responsibility in having to teach English to students for passing entrance exams, they also feel obliged to improve the students’ communicative competence.

Some historical incidents in Japanese in recent history such as the World Wars (-1945) and Tokyo Olympics (1964) have affected how the national government made decisions on English education in Japan. Especially, after the Second World War, General Douglas MacArthur arrived in Japan as the head of General Headquarters (GHQ) and reformed

political, economic and educational systems in Japan. In the words of Fujimoto-Adamson (2008):

... the U.S. occupation played a major role in influencing people's interest in English education... This was seen in various key events, among which was "Come Come English", a radio English conversation programme by Hirakawa in 1946. This popular NHK broadcast encouraged many people to listen in and start to study English. Also, in the following year, English lessons started again in junior high schools and the tentative plan of The Course of Study, which was the National Curriculum for all subjects including English, was devised under U.S. supervision (pp. 273-274).

Imura (2003) provides a brief history of transition of the government's guidelines and argues that the basic idea on the goal of English education has not changed for the past 100 years although many revisions have been made. The summary of the aim of English education in the 1947 *Suggested Course of Study (National Standards for School Curricula)* is described as follows: 1) To form a habit of thinking in English, 2) To acquire English listening and speaking skills, 3) To acquire English reading and writing skills in order to 4) To gain knowledge about the people who speak English and to learn about their customs and lifestyles in order to nurture international goodwill. The revisions made in 1951 and 1958 did not include major changes (Imura 2003). According to Yoshida (2010), a more significant change was added during the period which is known as the time of high-speed

economic growth in Japan (between 1954 and 1973). In the 1970 Course of Study, the importance of both understanding L2 and the ability to express oneself in L2 was included. Furthermore, the expression ‘cultivating basic skills for international understanding’ was added. This was a significant change from ‘promoting understanding of the people who live in the countries where English is spoken’. Yoshida (2010) thinks that the Olympics held in Tokyo in 1964 and the world exposition held in Osaka in 1970 were probably big factors instigating the change because English came to be seen as a tool to be used for proactive international exchanges. In the 1989 revision, ‘cultivating the attitude to communicate proactively in L2’ was added. This period of time is called ‘economic bubble’, and many Japanese businesses advanced overseas, and proactive attitude to communicate in L2 was regarded as important. In the Course of Study issued in 1998, the importance of ‘practical communication’ was added because ‘cultivating the attitude to communicate proactively in L2’ did not necessarily contribute to nurturing the ability to communicate in L2 (Yoshida 2010).

The Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT, 2003) introduced the Japan Exchange Teaching (JET) programme in 1987 “to improve foreign language education in Japan” (pp. 6-7) and it became extremely popular. Many teachers were brought from English speaking countries and they were assigned to teach at public

schools in Japan. ‘Globalization’, ‘cultural difference’ and ‘international understanding’ became official slogans for state-run English education, and in 2003, the national plan to ‘cultivate Japanese who can use English’ was announced by MEXT. Despite these plans announced after another, some issues still remain today, which I will discuss in the next section which also informed my study.

2.2.2 CHALLENGES—ENGLISH FOR COMMUNICATION OR EXAM?

It has been more than 160 years since Commodore Perry came to Japan and Japan opened its doors to the West, and the significance of English has been viewed differently with the times. Sometimes, English was regarded as an important tool to acquire Western knowledge, and other times, it was seen as anathema because it represented the West. Despite this history, there have always been two trajectories of English language education which has caused challenges; the need to cultivate practical communicative skills in English and acquiring English skills to pass university entrance examinations. These issues still remain today.

Many argue that university entrance examinations control the content of what is taught in junior and senior high schools in Japan such as Japanese, maths, and history, and English is no exception. For example, Sturman (1989) notes, “the final aims of schools is to

prepare students for entrance examinations” (p. 76). In terms of L2 learning motivation, this exam-oriented nature of learning is unlikely to motivate students intrinsically. There are other kinds of problems caused by this fact. For example, The Japanese generally have been considered as people with low English abilities and have been criticised both domestically and internationally (Aspinall 2006, Butler & Iino 2005). Even though the Japanese government came up with fancy plans one after another aiming at strengthening Japanese people’s English communication abilities, the implementation of the policies has not necessarily been regarded as successful. For example, the following statement about the school foreign language curriculum was announced by Ministry of Education in 1999:

In the past, we have aimed to develop a willingness to attempt active communication in a foreign language. In future, by focusing more on actual speaking and listening, we are working to develop the basic and practical ability to communicate in terms of daily conversation and simple information exchange.... In addition, children at elementary schools will also learn English conversation through the introduction of hands-on learning appropriate for elementary school students.

In addition to cultivating communicative abilities in English, the government proposed implementation of English education in Japanese primary schools. This caused controversy and created a big confusion among primary school teachers (Butler & Iino 2005; Otsu, 2004). There was also the Action Plan to Cultivate “Japanese with English Abilities”

announced by MEXT in 2003. Neither of these plans helped change the situation in practice, and English education in Japan is still centred on preparation for university entrance exams and pressure created by it is enormous (Aspinall 2006, Frost 1991, Leonard 1998, Sturman 1989). For example, the English version of the 2003 Action Plan is available as a 7,000-word-long paper on the MEXT homepage. Tanabe (2004) summarises the plan in the following manner:

... The 2003 Action Plan ..., maintains only two objectives in spite of its large quantity: in short, (1) to have Japanese acquire English abilities, and (2) to have them develop their ability to express themselves in their first language, Japanese. To attain these objectives, the plan also proposed to establish a system for cultivating those abilities specifically in five years. All language teachers found it quite unique that an action plan which promotes English language teaching also includes promotion of the Japanese language education.... All plans, official or unofficial, have merits and demerits. So does the 2003 Action Plan. One of the merits can be said to be its specificity in terms of financial basis and its descriptions for implementation. The plan is filled with specific numerals, specific dates, and specific places. Those concerned hardly believed such specificity, since they were used to seeing plans with few specifications. Some were amazed, and others perplexed. Some welcomed its meticulousness, and others got angry at it.

Aspinall (2006) has a different view point and suggests that the failure of the implementation of these plans might be caused by poor levels of spoken English of Japanese teachers of English. He (2006) also proposes that “obstacles to the improvement of foreign language teaching can be best understood through an analysis of the social norms, values

and expectations relating to teaching and learning that permeates school and university classrooms in Japan” (p. 255), referring to Holliday’s (1999) notion of ‘small cultures’. In Holliday’s (1999) words, “a small culture paradigm attaches ‘culture’ to small social groupings or activities wherever there is cohesive behaviour, and thus avoids culturist ethnic, national or international stereotyping” (p. 237) in contrast to ‘large’ culture which represents the notions such as ‘ethnic’, ‘national’ or ‘international’. It is used “in order to show how common characteristics of the learning environment in Japan influence the interactions of groups of learners and teachers in ways that inhibit effective foreign language teaching practice” (Aspinall, 2006, p. 255). Below is the summary of Aspinall’s (2006) deduction based on Holliday’s (1999) idea of ‘small cultures’ in order to explain what is inhibiting the teaching of language as communicative medium to adolescents and adults in Japan.

1. Japanese learners passively follow the instructions they are given by the authoritative figures such as teachers. This explains why it is difficult to encourage students to experiment, stretch themselves intellectually and develop their own learning strategies.
2. Showing humility is very important and it is against the social expectations to ‘show off’ your skills and to stand out. This goes both for students and younger teachers who have to work with older colleagues with lower English-speaking abilities so that the older colleagues who deserve respect do not ‘lose face’.

3. The belief that there is one ‘correct’ answer can also cause problems in the English classroom, where there is a possibility for multiple appropriate answers in communicating with others.
4. In junior and senior high schools, class size is relatively large and there are usually about thirty-five to forty-five students with mixed-ability in a class, making it difficult to ensure interpersonal exchanges among students using English.

(See Aspinall, 2006, p. 263-264)

What Aspinall (2006) is claiming is that the failure of communicative language education in Japan cannot be understood only from examining government’s policies and how they have been implemented. Aspinall (2006) claims that ‘small culture’ paradigm is useful for exploring “the ways in which national and other norms of behaviour are reproduced, put into effect and, on occasion, undermined in the day-to-day interactions of small groups of teachers and learners in every part of the education system” (p. 271) because it “shows how individuals internalize national norms and how they can use national norms to justify patterns of behaviour” (p. 271). I have adopted this perspective in analysing the data in my study to explain what happened in my classroom, a small community that provided opportunities for intercultural learning to my students. This will be discussed in depth in Chapter 7.

As Aspinall (2006) describes that Japanese learners passively follow instructions compared to learners in the Western countries, Takagi (2003) makes a similar observation. She (2003) remarks that, Japanese students are often regarded as “passive and teacher-dependent in the language classroom” (p. 130). According to Aoki (2008), this is an influence of Confucian philosophy, in which studying means imitating words and deeds of a good teacher. She explains therefore, challenging a teacher is considered taboo and she contrasts this Confucian influence in Japanese education to Western education, which is based on Socratic philosophy, in which debate is encouraged. The above-mentioned factors are what have been making implementation of ‘communicative’ language teaching more difficult in the present English education in Japan.

As explained above, there are several factors that have made cultivating English communicative competence in Japan. The participants in my study share some of the tendencies listed by Aspinall (2006) above as they went through formal education in Japan, where these values are taught implicitly and explicitly. In other words, they had certain expectations about ‘what an English class’ should be and ‘this is how I should behave’. However, as I will illustrate later in Chapter 5, many students in my course found how English was taught there very different from what they had been used to, I taught the course in a way that did not meet the expectations of many students. In designing the course for this

study, I thought it was important to make something that addressed some issues discussed in this section to promote my students' L2 visions. To be more precise, I wanted to make my classroom "community of practice" (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger 1998) for them to use L2 for communicative purposes such as sharing their L2 learning and intercultural experiences without worrying about finding 'one correct answer' to the questions they answered about themselves. According to Wenger (2011), "Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (p. 1). I wanted them to proactively participate in classroom activities rather than passively listen to my lectures, which they might have been more used to.

2.3 SUMMARY

In this chapter, I explained the current Japanese education and presented a brief history of English language education in Japan from the 16th century until the present day. I then discussed some current issues concerning English language education in Japan, especially in secondary and tertiary levels.

By explaining the above-mentioned subjects, I intended to familiarise the readers with the context of this study. Combined with some socio-cultural factors, the government's

efforts to ‘cultivate Japanese who can use English’ in the global world and to promote ‘international understanding’ have faced challenges largely due to the exam-oriented nature of English education up to the high school level. As I explained in 1.1, there is no direct demand for using English on a day-to-day basis in Japan, which also does not help motivate Japanese learners to use it.

These are the reasons why I decided a vision-oriented approach would be perfect to motivate my students to learn L2 during the aftermath of the earthquake. In the next chapter, I will start the literature review concerning vision, followed by some other related concept within the field of learning motivation.

3 VISION AND L2 MOTIVATIONAL RESEARCH

The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision.

Helen Keller

As mentioned in the last section of Chapter 2, I decided a vision-oriented approach would be useful for motivating my students to use L2, and this chapter aims at providing a conceptual framework underpinning my study. Before getting into a deeper discussion of vision and how it is applied in L2 education, I will outline the history of L2 motivational research to explain how vision approach has emerged from it.

3.1 L2 MOTIVATIONAL RESEARCH

3.1.1 A BRIEF HISTORY OF L2 MOTIVATION RESEARCH

Motivation is regarded as a significant factor in successful L2 learning. According to Dörnyei, (2001), Motivation is the concept concerned with why people choose to do something, how long they are willing to sustain the activity, and how hard they are going to pursue it. Many language teachers would intuitively know the differences between motivated learners and those who are not, and probably have experiences that even the brightest learners might not be able to continue making enough efforts to gain good L2 proficiency

level as Hadfield and Dörnyei, (2013) point out. Motivation has been a topic of interest throughout history, and it can be traced back as far to St. Augustine's work, in which he noted the concept of what was later called integrative motivation around 400 AD, observing it is stronger than what was also later called instrumental motivation (Kelly, 1969). In terms of more recent theory in L2 motivation, the notion of 'integrative' and 'instrumental' was proposed by Canadian social psychologists Gardner and Lambert (1959), and research on motivation in second/foreign language (L2) has evolved around their theory. They advocated a highly influential concept of 'orientations', distinguishing between 'integrative' and 'instrumental' orientations respectively. Integratively oriented learners would learn the L2 because they are interested in the people who speak it or in their culture and society and thus are primarily motivated by their desire to integrate into and/or identify with relevant L2 speaking communities. The primary reason to learn the L2 for instrumentally oriented learners, on the other hand, would be to get better education or highly-paid jobs, for example; in other words, the L2 would be seen as an instrument to achieve other goals.

From the outset, Gardner and Lambert paid attention to the socio-psychological factors that play a role in L2 learning. Their seminal work (1959) on the motivation of English-speaking students toward learning French in Montreal, where Anglophone and Francophone communities coexist, lasted for 30 years. The results indicated that

integratively oriented students had more positive attitudes towards Francophone speakers, and were more motivated to learn French, and were more successful in acquiring French, compared to instrumentally oriented students. Interestingly, another study by Gardner and Lambert's (1972) conducted in the Philippines demonstrated the opposite result. Instrumentally oriented learners achieved higher level in L2 than integratively oriented learners. The same result was gained from Lukmani's (1972) study based in India. As for a Japanese context, to my best knowledge, no similar study was conducted in Japan during this time period on this topic. However, this time period (mid 1950s to early 1970s) in Japan is known as the period of high economic growth 'the Japanese economic miracle', and learning English well was considered to help find well-paid jobs. This kind of belief reflects instrumentality rather than integration.

Regardless of the contradictory results, research on L2 motivation evolved around this notion of 'orientation' proposed by Gardner and Lambert (1959). Until the beginning of the 1990s, L2 motivation theorising by Gardner and colleagues, which included the concepts of 'integrative' and 'instrumental' orientations, the socio-cultural and social-psychological interpretations of motivation, and, particularly, the Attitude and Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), was the most influential research programme that shaped L2 motivation theory within SLA and established a strong basis for quantitative research. See Appendix for a copy

of AMTB. AMTB which was first developed in 1952 but has gone under several revisions. It assesses how much various non-linguistic factors related to individuals' lives and experiences affect their motivation. The version in the Appendix in this thesis include items to be rated using a 7-point Likert scale.

Although Gardner's approach has generated much interest and it has been validated by many empirical studies, as hinted at in the discussion above, it also caused controversy. While the ideas and the theoretical contribution were generally considered significant by the field, some of the concepts were later challenged by some researchers. Some argued, for instance, that 'integrativeness' proved to be a rather elusive concept (e.g., Crookes & Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 1990; and Oxford & Shearin, 1994), especially in the context of classroom-based research and practice. Since 1990s, there has been a notable theoretical shift in the field and the research entered a new phase. Crookes and Schmidt's (1991) landmark study is best known as something that represents this shift, in which they argued for a shift in L2 motivation research, by locating it in the classrooms. In their paper titled 'Motivation: Reopening the research agenda', they reviewed studies on motivation in SLA and psychology fields, which indeed re-opened the research agenda and triggered a surge in studies that started to apply theories of educational rather than social psychology. What distinguished Crookes and Schmidt's work from the previous research were their proposals

for practical classroom methodology, identifying ways in which motivational factors could be incorporated into classroom techniques and into curriculum and syllabus design. Crookes and Schmidt's contribution was seen as a dramatic shift, with L2 motivation researchers calling it a 'motivational renaissance' (Gardner & Tremblay 1994a, 1994b), 'educational shift' (Dörnyei, 1998), and 'a revolution in our thinking' (Oxford, 1996).

Since motivation started to be recognised as a complex, multi-faceted construct that could not be encompassed easily by a instrumental/integrative orientations dichotomy (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009), the concept of integrativeness itself has undergone further theoretical scrutiny based on research conducted in contexts such as Hungary, China or Japan, in which English (since this is an L2 that has traditionally received most attention from L2 scholars) was (and is) taught mainly in educational settings with fewer opportunities for L2 use and direct contact with L2 native speakers (Csizér & Kormos, 2008; Dörnyei & Csizér, 2005; Kormos & Csizér, 2007). In addition, with English rapidly acquiring a global status and with the emergence of 'World Englishes' (Kachru, 2005), identifying a particular target language community that L2 learners wanted to integrate themselves into was not seen as useful any more as such an idea no longer described the everyday realities, desires, and purposes of English (L2) users around the world. In the next section, I will discuss a framework proposed by Dörnyei (2005) *the L2 Motivational Self System* (2005) that was

proposed in response to some of the above challenges and shifts. A vision approach, which forms the focus of my study, owes its theoretical origins to this framework.

3.2.1 THE L2 MOTIVATIONAL SELF SYSTEM AND POSSIBLE SELVES

In this section, I will explain the framework *The L2 Motivational Self System* (Dörnyei, 2005), in which the main concept of my study vision approach draws from. I will explain how this concept came about and why a focus on possible selves and vision was needed. As noted in 3.1.1, this concept was proposed as a response to theoretical and practical limitations of portraying L2 learners' reasons for engaging with L2 from the lens of 'integrative orientation' (a desire to be identified with a target L2 community). Generally, however, it was acknowledged that understanding learners' motivation as openness and respect for the L2 speaking community was a useful direction in rethinking integrativeness (Dörnyei, 2005). After all, this was in line with what Gardner (2001) identified as part of his own framework in which he outlines more explicitly an openness towards other cultural communities.

Another related concept that led to a rethink on integrativeness is what Yashima (2002) put forward as 'international posture', a concept that she used to describe Japanese learners of English who have an "interest in foreign or international affairs, willingness to

go overseas to stay or work, readiness to interact with intercultural patterns, and, one hopes, openness or a non-ethnocentric attitude toward different cultures” (p. 57). Acknowledging the significance of this notion, Ushioda (2010) proposed the need for a theoretical shift, focussing on self and identity:

The concept of ‘international posture’ thus considerably broadens the external reference group for integrative attitudes from a specific geographic, linguistic and cultural community to a nonspecific global community of English language users. Yet, precisely because it is a global community, the question arises whether it is appropriate to conceptualise it as an ‘external’ reference group, or as part of one’s internal representation of oneself as a de facto member of that global community (p. 150).

The abovementioned shift in considering integrative motivation as an internal identification process rather than an identification with an external reference group was advanced by the large-scale longitudinal survey conducted by Dörnyei and his associates between 1993 to 2004 (Dörnyei & Csizér, 2002; Dörnyei et al., 2006), in which they examined Hungarian students’ attitudes towards L2 learning. Integrating the results gained from the studies, Dörnyei (2005) proposed a new framework ‘The L2 Motivational Self System’, which attracted interest of L2 motivation researchers whose research efforts focused on validating it in different L2 learning contexts (e.g., Al-Shehri 2009; Kim 2009; Ryan 2009; Taguchi, Magid, & Papi 2009).

The L2 Motivational Self System was guided by theories such as goal theories and self-

determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) which emerged from educational psychology and motivational psychology, but it also introduced new theorising unique to this theoretical model, namely *possible selves* theory (Markus & Nurius, 1986). In the original possible selves theory, three types of possible selves are proposed, namely “ideal selves that we would very much like to become.... the selves we could become, and the selves that we are afraid of becoming” (p. 954). Building on this theorising, Dörnyei (2009) distinguished a similar notion of ‘future self-guides’ from this concept of possible selves, reasoning that not every type of possible self has a guiding function and therefore relevance for L2 motivation research. In Higgins’s theory (1987), the two key components are *ideal self* and *ought self*. Higgins argues in his self-discrepancy theory (1987) that when there is a discrepancy between actual self and ideal self, people are motivated to reduce the gap. Drawing on this motivating function of possible selves induced by self-discrepancy, Dörnyei (2009) claims that his *L2 Motivational Self System* “represents a major reformation of previous motivational thinking by its explicit utilisation of psychological theories of the self, yet its roots are firmly set in previous research in the L2 field” (p. 9).

L2 Motivational Self System (2005) has the following three components: 1) *Ideal L2 Self*, which is the L2-specific facet of one’s ideal self, 2) *Ought-to L2 Self*, which is related to how one thinks he/she needs to be to meet expectations and avoid possible negative

outcomes, and 3) *L2 Learning Experience*, which is concerned with the immediate learning environment and experience (e.g., the impact of the teacher, curriculum, the peer group, the experience of success). One particular aspect in ‘possible selves’ theory that is particularly useful for the purposes of this thesis is its imagery component. Dörnyei (2009) states: “Language learning is a sustained and often tedious process with lots of temporary ups and downs ... the secret of successful learners was their possession of a superordinate vision that kept them on track” (p. 25). In the next chapter, therefore, I will shift the focus on vision and mental imagery, key aspects of possible selves, as a way of theoretically rationalizing the focus of my study.

3.2 VISION AND IMAGERY INFORMED BY POSSIBLE SELVES THEORY

As noted in the last section, some possible selves can function as future self -guides that elicit motivational power, and the role of vision and imagery is critical in instigating the desire because “possible selves can be seen as the ‘vision’ of what might be” (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014, p. 12). Although they do not argue for a vision-based approach as a replacement of previous motivational frameworks, they see vision as “one of the highest-order motivational forces, one that is particularly fitting to explain the long-term, and often lifelong, process of mastering a second language” (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014, p. 4).

Focusing on motivational pedagogy that has vision at its centre does therefore constitute a worthwhile effort in relation to research and, particularly, to practice-based inquiry. The remainder of this chapter considers the theoretical foundations of vision and vision-based practice, while the bulk of my thesis (starting with Chapter 5) focuses on investigating such practice empirically through the exploratory practice lens.

According to the online Longman dictionary, a vision has several definitions that include the following: “the ability to see”; “an idea of what you think something should be like”; and “the knowledge and imagination that are needed in planning for the future with a clear purpose” (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online*, 2017). The dictionary lists the word ‘sight’ as its synonym, but it clearly has a different meaning as the quote presented at the beginning of the chapter: “The only thing worse than being blind is having sight but no vision” (Helen Keller). ‘Sight’ is not associated with having a clear purpose in the way ‘vision’ is. On the other hand, Stopa (2009) frames vision as “a mental representation that occurs without the need for external sensory input” (p. 1), which suggests that both sight (mental rather than an outcome of external stimuli) and purpose are integral to the concept of vision.

The term ‘vision’ has been used in various fields and in our everyday life. Van der Helm (2009) observes the term has three core aspects: (1) *the future*, (2) *the ideal*, (3) *the*

desire for deliberate change. To Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014), Van der Helm's (2009) idea about *personal vision* is relevant to modern theories of L2 motivation as it emphasises the "learner's desire to approximate a preferred future state, the sort of ideal self a language learner might envision for himself/herself" (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014, p. 9). They distinguish 'vision' from 'goal', although both concepts share intentions to change in order to reach a future state. The former includes a strong *sensory element*, which "involves tangible images related to achieving the goal" (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014, p. 9). This notion has been prominently and successfully used in sport psychology. Cox's (2012) study, for instance, indicates the brain cannot tell the differences between an actual physical event and vivid imagery of a simulated scenario.

A specific example of this is a successful Japanese gymnast Kohei Uchimura, whose vision is said to have been crystal clear since he was very young. Kohei Uchimura (born on January 3, 1989) is a seven-time Olympic champion and is considered to be the greatest gymnast of all time. He is known for winning every major all-around title in the recent Olympics (London, 2012; Rio de Janeiro, 2016).



FIGURE 3.1 KOHEI UCHIMURA PERFORMING AT THE 2016 OLYMPICS

(Source: <http://www.chunichi.co.jp/article/feature/rio2016/news/CK2016080702000221.html>)

When he won the gold medal in the London Olympics, he was a sensation. The media reported on his biography including the drawings he made when he was seven.



FIGURE 3.2 DRAWING BY KOHEI AT THE AGE OF SEVEN

(Source: http://london2012.nikkansports.com/gymnastics/news/photonews_nsInc_p-sp-tp0-20120803-994344.html)

His ‘vision’ can be seen in the above drawing. His goal might have been to become an Olympic gymnast since he was very young, but his visions were more specific. He had ideas about what kind of moves he would be doing, and maybe how he would be feeling flipping himself up in the air, or the cheer of crowds he would be hearing. This kind of ability is defined in sports psychology as “an individual’s capability of forming vivid, controllable images and retaining them for sufficient time to effect the desired imagery rehearsal” (Morris, 1997, p. 37). The mental imagery of this type is not restricted to visual, but can be applied to other senses such as auditory, olfactory, and tactile.

To Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014), this ‘vision approach’ which has been used successfully in sport psychology has significant implications to foreign language education, as imagery is also an important concept in desired possible selves in modern theories on language learning motivation. Imagery is a key aspect of *L2 Motivational Self System* and this has been emphasized in different areas of L2 education in the past few decades. Such studies include: Puchta, Gerngross, & Thornbury (2006) in grammar teaching, vocabulary learning (Cohen, 1987; Ellis & Beaton, 1993; Shen, 2010; Stevick, 1986), reading (Arnold, 1999; Green & Donahue, 2009; Krasny & Sadoski, 2008), writing (Wright & Hill, 2008), and listening comprehension (Center, Freeman, Robertson, & Outhred, 1999).

The principles underlying Dörnyei and Kubanyiova’s (2014) approach to designing

intervention programmes for enhancing learner vision have been derived from past research into the motivating power of possible selves and the key facets can be summarised as follows:

- Creating the language learner vision
- Strengthening the vision through imagery enhancement
- Substantiating the vision by making it plausible
- Transforming the vision into action
- Keeping the vision alive
- Counterbalancing the vision by considering failure

(p. 32)

In creating this framework Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014), considered that future self-images needed to be linked with a positive social identity that the person values in order to enable him/her envisage who he/she wants to be. They also argued that there needed to be a discrepancy between the current self and the possible future self so that efforts can be invested into reducing the gap. The difference between the actual and future selves, they further stressed, had to be substantial enough in order for the person to experience dissatisfaction with their current status quo and thus compel them to do something about it. At the same time, if the gap was at any point perceived as too large, the motivational power of possible selves may be diminished since there was a chance that the vision of what is

perceived as distant and impossible could just as easily translate into non action and possibly resignation. These and other tenets have empirical grounding in psychological literature on possible selves (for a fuller discussion, see Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014) but many of them in fact resonate with the principles of exploratory practice (EP) (Allwright & Hanks, 2009) because they prompt students to reflect on their identity and lived experiences, while giving teachers substantial material for their own reflection on how they can, collaboratively with their students, bring the students' lives, desires, fears and hopes into the language classroom. More details on how the principles of both EP (Allwright & Hanks, 2009) and of a vision-based approach to L2 motivation outlined by Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) were incorporated into the course I taught will be given in Chapter 5. In the following section, I introduce examples of studies that have researched elements of vision, imagery and possible selves as part of pedagogical design in the language classroom.

Several intervention studies incorporating the focus on vision and imagery have been conducted more recently (Fukada, Fukuda, Falout, & Murphey, 2011; Magid & Chan, 2012; Sampson, 2012). Fukada et al (2011) employed various possible selves activities to “generate aspiration contagion and possible selves” (p. 339) in six Japanese universities. In order to investigate the changes in their self-beliefs regarding *antecedent conditions of the learner* (ACL), their investment both inside and outside the class, and possible selves, they

conducted 6-point Likert-scale based surveys at the beginning and end of one semester courses. The study concluded that ACL can be understood as “emotional baggage” (p. 337) filled with learners’ language learning histories and beliefs about their successes and failures, and this “emotional baggage”, in turn, affects learners’ present self-confidence and self-efficacy (cf. Bandura, 1997). Therefore, ACL is likely to influence the nature and quality of investment that learners make in L2 learning. The activities used in this intervention included: sharing views of one’s possible selves with their peers, a mock ten-year class reunion. The results show that there was a significant increase in the correlations between students’ possible selves/ACLs and their investments in L2 learning both inside and outside the classroom after the intervention.

Similarly, Sampson (2012) conducted three cycles of action research at an all-female university in Japan over one 15-week course with each cycle making “use of reflection upon data from previous cycles to enact a change-action” (p. 321). Data was collected from various sources, which were also used by students in class as possible self tasks including It was analysed qualitatively, “searching for recurring themes mentioned across the texts” (Sampson, 2012, p. 321). The qualitative nature of Sampson’s study seems to be particularly valuable in getting deeper insights into the learners’ experiences and how the learners’ future self-images can be developed to motivate learners to learn L2 in class.

Social factors were identified as something that can contribute to the development of students' possible L2 selves in both above-mentioned studies (Fukada et al., 2011; Sampson, 2012). The learners were able to associate themselves with their peers when listening to each other's future dreams, hopes, and ideals. This encouraged their reflection on their own future selves and to take an action to get closer to their ideal selves.

3.3 THE PEDAGOGICAL RELEVANCE OF IMAGERY IN OTHER SELF-RELATED FRAMEWORKS

In this section, I will give a brief explanation of two other theories that have subconstructs which are related to self and acknowledge the effect of imagery. One is self-determination theory known as SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985) and the other is self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986). As noted in 3.2, imagery has significant effects on people's behavior and self-concept (Hall, 2001; 2002; Paivio, 1986; Taylor, Pham, Rivkin, & Armor, 1998).

Noels, Clément, and Pelletier (1999) showed the concept of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in SDT can be useful for understanding L2 learners' motivation in SLA research. Intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation lie on the continuum showing the degree of individual's self-determination in performing a task. Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation deriving from an individual's genuine interest and enjoyment. Extrinsic

motivation can be divided into three subtypes ranging from the most self-determined to the least, depending on how one perceives the value of the task or feeling responsible, and influenced external factors such as guilt and rewards. Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation plays a role in producing positive learning outcomes (Koestner & Losier, 2002). According to Ryan and Deci (2002), the following three psychological needs to be met for people to become self-determined: need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness. Mental images can be useful to regulate a person's behaviour. For example, if I have a dress which I really want to wear to go to a friend's wedding, and when I find out it does not fit me anymore because of weight gain, I would take a self-regulated action (e.g., eating less and exercising more) picturing myself wearing the dress and having fun at the wedding. I could also be having a negative image of myself trying to fit into the dress forcefully and tearing it in vain. If going to the friend's wedding means so much to me (relatedness), I would take a self-determined action (autonomy), which will in the end help me achieve the goal of fitting into the dress (competence).

Similarly, imagery can affect a person's self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is a concept that has attracted interest especially in educational psychology. A Canadian psychologist Albert Bandura (1986) has defined self-efficacy as "People's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances"

(p. 391). According to Bandura (1977), there are four major sources of information used by individuals when forming self-efficacy judgments. They are: performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and emotional arousal. They can be summarized as follows:

1) Performance accomplishments: They are the most influential source of information for efficacy forming. They refer to personal assessment of his/her own mastery or accomplishments. If you experience success, it can increase expectations for future success, while repeated experience of failure reduces the expectations.

2) Vicarious experience: It is gained by observing others perform activities successfully. This is often referred to as modelling.

3) Verbal persuasion: "People are led, through suggestion, into believing they can cope successfully with what has overwhelmed them in the past. Efficacy expectations induced in this manner are also likely to be weaker than those arising from one's own accomplishments because they do not provide an authentic experiential base for them" (Bandura, 1977, p. 198).

4) Emotional arousal: Self-efficacy judgments are also influenced by one's physiological or emotional states with respect to specific tasks. For example, when one feels anxious, he/she is more likely to make negative judgments of his/her ability to complete tasks.

The theory of self-efficacy, especially in terms of the second element “vicarious experience” was useful in this vision-based study in preparing the intervention course and in analysing the qualitative data in this study. Bandura (1997) explains that “Seeing or visualising people similar to one-self perform successfully typically raises efficacy beliefs in observers that they themselves possess the capabilities to master comparable activities” (p. 87). This notion is relevant to the vision approach in this study in which I attempted to develop my students’ L2 visions in the classroom, where there were ample role models who were peer students in the classroom. In addition, people with high self-efficacy beliefs tend to make efforts to overcome challenges than those with low self-efficacy beliefs, who may put in fewer efforts or even withdraw from difficult tasks. With that said, it was presumed that helping learners with self-efficacy beliefs could also help them sustaining their visions because they would set themselves perfectly challenging goals and maintain strong commitment to accomplish them. Self-efficacy is listed by Dörnyei and Otto (1998) as one of the relevant motivational components, and I have used this concept for analysis in this study based on the belief that enhancing one’s L2 vision can also increase his/her perceived self-efficacy, which will also be conducive to L2 learning motivation.

3.4 TEACHERS' USE OF STRATEGIES TO MOTIVATE LEARNERS

As the previous sections have shown, vision and imagery have informed a number of theoretical approaches to L2 motivation and, even more importantly for the purposes of this thesis, have been at the heart of several pedagogically-oriented studies and debates on motivating language learners. In this section, I wish to consider briefly a broader perspective on motivational strategies, acknowledging the multiple theoretical and practical lens informing research on motivational teaching and the generally under researched link between motivation and teaching practice. As Lamb, Astuti, and Hadisantosa (2016) observe, despite its significance, there is not much research investigating the connection between pedagogy and L2 motivation despite the growing interest in how learners respond to motivational teaching strategies.

Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) explain that motivational strategies refer to “(a) instructional interventions applied by the teacher to elicit and stimulate student motivation and (b) self-regulating strategies that are used purposefully by individual students to manage the level of their own motivation” (p. 57). Their longitudinal study (2008) in Korea employed a novel data collecting method such as post-lesson teacher evaluation and observation in addition to students' questionnaire survey which had been a dominant data collection method in the field. The data was collected from more than 1300 junior high

school students and 27 teachers. They conclude (2008) that on the one hand, teachers' use of motivational strategies correlates with the learners' motivational intensity, and therefore what teachers do matter. On the other hand, the strategies have different influences including negative ones depending on how they are used, and they also called for the need to "examine the extent to which motivational strategies are culture specific" (p. 73).

Lamb, Astuti, and Hadisantosa (2016) identified motivational strategies and other pedagogic qualities in Indonesian contexts by examining eight teachers working in different schools and teaching different age groups (aged 14-22). Their study revealed that there is much commonality in their motivational practices despite the differences in their teaching contexts, teacher training and development backgrounds. The following three items were identified as their common practices by all the eight teachers: having good rapport with learners, providing enjoyable classroom tasks and activities, and being sensitive in giving feedback on the learners' performance. All of these three were what appeared in Dörnyei's (2001) earlier taxonomy of motivational strategies such as building good rapport, stressing the importance of English, providing enjoyable activities, strategic use of L1 and L2, development of learner autonomy. Taking a broader perspective on what it means to motivate, Lamb et al. (2016) conclude:

...motivation is more a habit of mind than a set of strategies, a disposition which successful teachers bring to every class and invest in everything they do. It is not so much 'a few well-selected basic techniques' that are needed, but rather a sufficient willingness to think about what the particular group of learners, or particular individual learners, want and need at any point in time, and the skill to respond in the right way (p. 213).

Chan's (2014) intervention study which incorporates imagery aimed at exploring the impact of imagery training (e.g. visualization exercises in class and language counseling) for Chinese university students majoring science in a compulsory English course in Hong Kong. The goal of the study was to create a vision of ideal L2 self and monitor their progress throughout the course. As a result, their ideal selves increased, but feared L2 selves did not change significantly after the imagery intervention. The top two components evaluated favourably by the participants in the study were counselling and visualization. Although this study specifically concerns vision and imagery discussed previously, it also highlights some of the broader perspectives on motivational practice. A particularly important finding is the students' highest appraisal of counselling as a pedagogical element in Chan's intervention. While it is true that some learners may have felt negative pressure to present their learning goals and progress to the teacher during the counseling sessions, others saw them as opportunities to build rapport with the teacher. These findings are important because they indicate that how learners perceive their teacher might also shape how they respond to the

motivational strategies, whatever principles might be at their core. This also hints at the possibility that the ways in which teachers themselves envision their own role (in this case, a counsellor/guide), can also affect the motivational strategies they, consciously or subconsciously, use in their classes. In other words, teacher vision is likely to matter significantly in the discussion of motivational practice (as shown by Kubanyiova, 2014, 2015, 2017) and I will return briefly to a related point in the introduction to Chapter 4.

In terms of research in Japanese contexts, Konno's (2014) investigated how motivational interventions affected the change of the L2 self of Japanese EFL learners in university English classrooms with a quantitative method. The interventions incorporated group work and a formative feedback, which were considered to encourage learners' self-determination (intrinsic motivation) and internalization (extrinsic motivation). The results of pre-and post-questionnaire survey show that the learners' ideal L2 self and the ought-to L2 self did not change significantly as a result of the interventions. However, his study (2014) indicates that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation play a potential role in the L2 self development if learners perceive that they learn English because it is enjoyable and valuable, which can be a possible source of the ideal L2 self. This also points to the significance of L2 teachers in motivating students by creating environments in which students enjoy learning L2 and feel the importance of learning it. Enjoyment seems to be particularly important in

teaching English at a college level in Japan. There is much literature written on Japanese college students' lack of motivation (e.g., McVeigh 2004, Nakata 2006) and some rationale for this phenomenon can be explained by the fact that students lose their purpose for learning English after entering universities (Carpenter, Falout, Fukuda, Trovela & Murphey, 2009). Aubrey (2014) claims, "Students entering university face a difficult challenge: They must derive not from externally imposed needs of an examination-based system but from their desire to make their English studies personally meaningful for their future" (p. 154). This points to the need to contextualise any discussion on motivational teaching practice, whether broadly conceived or informed by a vision approach in particular, in relation to meaningful language learning opportunities in a particular setting, for particular learners. In order to do that, the teacher needs to understand learners as Ushioda (2013) suggests that L2 motivation in Japan needs to be researched from the perspective of how students see English as 'fitting into' or not 'fitting into' their personal values, goals, and identities, an issue acknowledged at the outset of Dörnyei and Kubanyiova's (2014) discussion, for example.

Another intervention study in a Japanese university context is reported by Sugita McEown and Takeuchi (2014), who conducted a questionnaire survey among 222 Japanese university students who were taught English in five different classes by one instructor. The survey was conducted four times while the course was taught over a three-month period to

understand how the teacher's motivational teaching techniques would influence students' motivation. The motivational teaching techniques included the following 17 items shown in the table below, and they were gained from their pilot survey.

Table 3.1 The 17 motivational strategies in Sugita McEown & Takeuchi (2014, p. 26)

-
1. Circulate around in the classroom to observe each student carefully
 2. Ask students to be quiet when needed to maintain a better learning environment in the classroom
 3. Start the class exactly on time
 4. Make a clear explanation for class assessments and exams
 5. Make clear answers and explanations for students' questions and also the content of the textbook
 6. Provide individual support for each student Bring a variety of learning materials
 7. Keep pace with the students and get them involved in the activities
 8. Speak in English with proper pronunciation
 9. Speak in a clear and loud voice
 10. Write clearly on blackboard/whiteboard
 11. Provide positive rewards and praise to the students
 12. Provide some background knowledge/supplement information
 13. Bring humour into the classroom
 14. Perform in a positive manner in the classroom
 15. Perform in a friendly manner in the classroom
 16. Display enthusiasm of teaching English

The items on the questionnaire were taken from (Yashima, 2002), which were based on Gardner and Lambert (1972), and they were evaluated by the respondents on a five-point

Likert scale. Some motivational strategies were found to correlate with the students' motivational intensity throughout the course: for example, starting the class on time. Once again, however, it is important to exercise caution as these strategies are inevitably linked to and can therefore be meaningfully appreciated only in relation to the context in which they were investigated. With this in mind, these results make sense in the educational context of Japan not because of their universal applicability, but precisely because of the culturally-embedded value that is attached to the concept of time and timeliness in this specific setting of educational and cultural practice. This type of strategy is what Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) call "culture specific" (p. 73), though of course a label denoting a similarly context-sensitive nature of these strategies may have to be applied to many more motivational teaching behaviours if one takes an even finer-grained approach to 'culture' and cultural practice. This is because as Guilloteaux and Dörnyei (2008) found, there was no correlation with students' motivated behaviours, or only at particular times, despite frequent use of teacher's motivational strategies. They also found that some motivational strategies have different effects depending on the students' pre-existing motivation and proficiency levels. Thus, while the findings of this study provide support for the value of motivational instruction, they also point to the complex ways in which the meaning of 'motivational' may

have to be unpacked, taking into account a number of social, cultural, psychological and linguistic dimensions.

Tanaka's intervention study (2014) utilized a motivational strategy created for Japanese university students on the basis of self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2002). In the study, the facilitating effect on the three motivational subconstructs (intrinsic trait motivation, intrinsic classroom motivation, and intrinsic motivation to classroom activities) and the three basic psychological needs (the needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness) was examined and found significant from the quantitative data. The qualitative analysis indicated that the learners' psychological need for competence was satisfied in the classroom that was perceived as motivational. Tanaka maintains that "Once students valued academic activities and internalized them, they made an effort to use what they had learned in class" (p. 92). This perhaps suggests the need to think of motivational strategies less as a set of behaviours and more of an educational practice with which gives students a sense of competence, autonomy and belonging to the classroom community as a "community of practice" (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger 1998).

Previous research in this field including the abovementioned studies has made some, albeit far from sufficient, contribution to understanding the effect of a motivational practice on learners' L2 acquisition and motivation. However, the dominant research method in this

field (e.g. Konno, 2014; Sugita McEown and Takeuchi, 2014; Yashima 2009) has been quantitative using Likert-scale questionnaires, which prompted Irie (2003) to call for the “diversification of data collection and analysis” (p. 98) besides questionnaire-based quantitative research, arguing that more qualitative approaches would offer deeper insights into the development of learners’ L2 motivation and ideal selves and, by extension, their L2 competence. An example of a qualitative study that has assessed an impact on learners’ development of their ideal L2 selves is Takahashi’s (2013) project. She interviewed six university students and identified some unique types of ideal L2 selves which are not usually included in the standard Likert-scale questionnaires studies. For example, one of the participants “envisioned himself as someone who could sing well in English” (p. 6) and another as communicating in English while playing online games. These kinds of ideal L2selves are probably more common among Japanese college students who, for example, are not English majors, but try to use English as part of their daily lives outside of orthodox L2 learning environment. The need to understand L2 learners more holistically has been pointed out (e.g., Mercer, 2011, Ushioda 2009) and the above two participants in Takahashi’s (2013) study is a good reminder of Mercer’s (2011) account that we need to “take a holistic view of the learner, in order to gain an insight into a learner’s self-beliefs in other domains which the learner perceives as connected” (p. 168). What was also salient in

Takahashi's (2013) study was the role of L2 teachers in developing students' ideal L2 selves, by being role models as L2 users, and helping students imagine possible situations they could be using English in. This means that teachers can create opportunities in classrooms where learners can develop their L2 visions. In fact, considering the reality that every Japanese student learn L2 formally in school classrooms, teachers who usually control what is taught in classrooms play a key role in how students engage in learning, including their motivation. The qualitative studies, such as Takahashi's, promise to offer a more fine-grained description of diverse ways in which language learners' motivation, possible selves and learning investment may be shaped by the teachers' pedagogical practice. However, the current review of research also reveals a need to generate richer descriptive data on what actually happens in these language classrooms, how both language teachers and students make sense of what happens, and how that may shape their motivation and L2 development. It may be, therefore, that a research perspective which positions the researcher at the very centre of this 'happening' (cf. Ushioda, 2016) may be an important way forward in understanding a motivational teaching practice.

3.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter, I gave an outline of the history of L2 motivational research and some theories that became the basis of the scope of my study vision. I explained that a vision-based approach draws on the work of *possible selves* (Markus & Nurius, 1986) and Dörnyei's (2005) *L2 Motivational Self System*, which has provided a general framework in researching and understanding L2 motivation in the past decade. I also discussed some recent research that incorporated imagery in L2 classrooms as a way to motivate learners and argued how teacher intervention in classrooms influences learner's future image of themselves as L2 users adding the significance of the role of a teacher in activating the process. In short, the studies reviewed in this section show the relevance of people's future visions in motivating their language learning efforts.

What also has been clear throughout the history of L2 motivation research is that intercultural/international aspect has always played a role in L2 motivation. This is why Gardner's socio-psychological model was such a significant departure from the then already rich body of research in general psychology – it assumed and accommodated, both in theory and research, the significance of people's attitudes towards the Other. This is also why subsequent concepts, e.g., 'bicultural identities' (Lamb, 2004) and 'international posture' (Yashima, 2009) put the intercultural/international perspective into the fore of theorizing. Given the focus on vision, therefore, it only makes theoretical and empirical sense to

examine more closely the role of ‘vision as intercultural speakers’ in motivating people’s efforts to learn and use L2. In order to facilitate such discussion, it is crucial to delve more deeply into research that falls outside the typical domain of L2 motivation but which naturally feeds into it: research on intercultural communication and language teaching and this is what Chapter 4 intends to do. In the next chapter, I will explain why I decided giving a ‘vision as intercultural speakers’ a more prominent focus.

4 UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF CULTURE IN L2 EDUCATION

So far, I have discussed how motivational classroom teaching can impact on students' motivation to learn L2. As I noted earlier in the previous chapter, a teacher's belief and vision of herself as a language teacher can shape how she conducts her classes (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014; Kubanyiova, 2009). In fact, language teachers play multiple roles, they do not merely teach L2, but they do other things to support the students' L2 development which includes: advising language learning, facilitating intercultural awareness, understanding learner aspirations across multiple domains to improve guidance, being linguistic and educational role models, and many others.

I would like to start this chapter by explaining how I came to decide on incorporating interculturality in my classroom, in addition to a more general motivational approach, as a more personal prologue to the theoretically-oriented discussion that forms the bulk of this chapter. As mentioned in 3.2.1 and 3.5, in Japanese contexts, where English is learned as a foreign language, concepts that represent internationalization have emerged such as 'international outlook' (Nakata, 1995) and "international posture" (Yashima, 2009, p. 145). Previous studies have shown that Japanese students with high international posture tend to show higher motivational behaviour (Yashima, 2002; Yashima & Zenuk-Nishide, 2008; Yashima, Zenuk-Nishide, & Shimizu, 2004), which "which leads to proficiency as well as

self-confidence...” (Yashima, 2009, p. 147). She reports after one semester communicative English course, she conducted a questionnaire survey based on the *L2 Motivational Self System* (Dörnyei, 2005) and IP. The results show students increased motivation over the 12 weeks course. Yashima (2009) found a strong correlation between international posture and ideal L2 self. The results indicate that having a personal connection with the non-Japanese, English-using world would help Japanese learners develop their future selves, i.e. learners’ desired English-using self within an international community. This also suggests the need to create such opportunities for students in L2 classrooms and the role of the classroom teacher in doing so.

As I explained in the Introduction to this thesis, my earliest intercultural contact with my Italian pen friend motivated me to use English to communicate with her and it took me to the world beyond my horizon. After experiencing the disaster on March 11, 2011 and seeing some students giving up studying abroad or even leaving college to find work to help their families, I had a strong desire to do something meaningful for my students that would allow them to hold on to hope through my work as educator. This vision-based course incorporating interculturality in this study was a way to embody my vision as a teacher and to account for both what I know as a researcher studying relevant theoretical debates and what I know and desire for them as a professional.

The main purpose of this chapter is to explicate the significance of role of culture in L2 education. This chapter has six main sections. In Section 4.1, I will give a brief account of the difficulty across relevant domains of inquiry in defining culture. Section 4.2 will outline an argument for the importance of incorporating culture in language education before discussing some challenges in doing so in L2 education in Section 4.3 and explaining the shift from culture to intercultural in Section 4.4. In Section 4.5, I provide an overview of one of the key concepts of this literature, intercultural communicative competence (ICC). I use this theoretical background and relevant research as the basis for my argument for the need to combine L2 motivational research and intercultural education in the final section of this chapter.

4.1 CULTURE AS A CONTESTED NOTION

As Atkinson (1999) points out, “Except for language, learning, and teaching, there is perhaps no more important concept in the field of TESOL than culture. Implicitly or explicitly, ESL teachers face it in everything they do” (p. 625). This much is clear from both research and practice perspectives and many language teachers are aware of the significance of culture in teaching L2. The more difficult question, however, is how to best incorporate it into L2 pedagogy and one reason for the difficulty has been the diversity with which the

conceptualisation of culture has been marked. A mere glance across fields such as history, anthropology, sociology, and linguistics give a clear indication that a question of culture remains “an unresolved debate” (Shaules, 2007, p. 25). Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952), for instance, cited 164 definitions of culture. To use an early example, an English anthropologist Edward Burnett Tylor, who is considered to be the founder of cultural anthropology, defined culture as “Culture, or civilization, taken in its broad, ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Tylor, 1871, p. 1). As for a more modern definition of culture, Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online defines culture in the following six ways:

1. the beliefs, way of life, art, and customs that are shared and accepted by people in a particular society
2. the attitudes and beliefs about something that are shared by a particular group of people or in a particular organization
3. activities that are related to art, music, literature etc.
4. a society that existed at a particular time in history
5. bacteria or cells grown for medical or scientific use, or the process of growing them
6. the practice of growing crops (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English Online, 2017*).

Tylor's (1871) abovementioned definition seems to include all the items listed on the Longman dictionary except for the fifth and the sixth, and these aspects of culture have been studied by scholars in different discipline through the lenses of their own specific interests and areas of expertise, which no doubt contributes to the challenge and the many and often competing definitions (cf. Shaules' [2007] discussion of work assembled in the Encyclopaedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology [Barnard & Spencer, 1996] which traces the history of competing conceptualisations). For these reasons, it is not my intention to attempt to resolve the question in this thesis. I will, instead, engage in a discussion of what current scholarship in applied linguistics suggests about why culture matters in language education. I will also discuss some challenges that TESOL in particular has faced in including culture in language curriculum.

4.2 CULTURE'S RELATIONSHIP WITH LANGUAGE

With its focus on L2 motivation, this thesis has already engaged with connections between L2 and culture in the previous chapter as this relationship has featured quite significantly in past as well as more recent theorising in L2 motivation. For example, research conducted specifically in the Japanese context has shown that learners' personal connection and interest in 'foreignness' which includes cultural affairs (i.e. one possible

definition of L2 culture) can help them develop future L2 selves, and this, in turn, is tightly connected to the motivation to learn L2 and, by extension, is likely to facilitate L2 development. But there is an even tighter connection between language and culture, more broadly conceived, that has implications for how language itself is understood and conceptualised. For a moment, therefore, I will focus on the broader discussions of culture as a starting point for exploring connections to L2 education specifically. To add to what was noted in the last section and explain the inclusiveness and the complexity of the concept of culture, an analogy of iceberg is often used as shown in Figure 4.1 below.

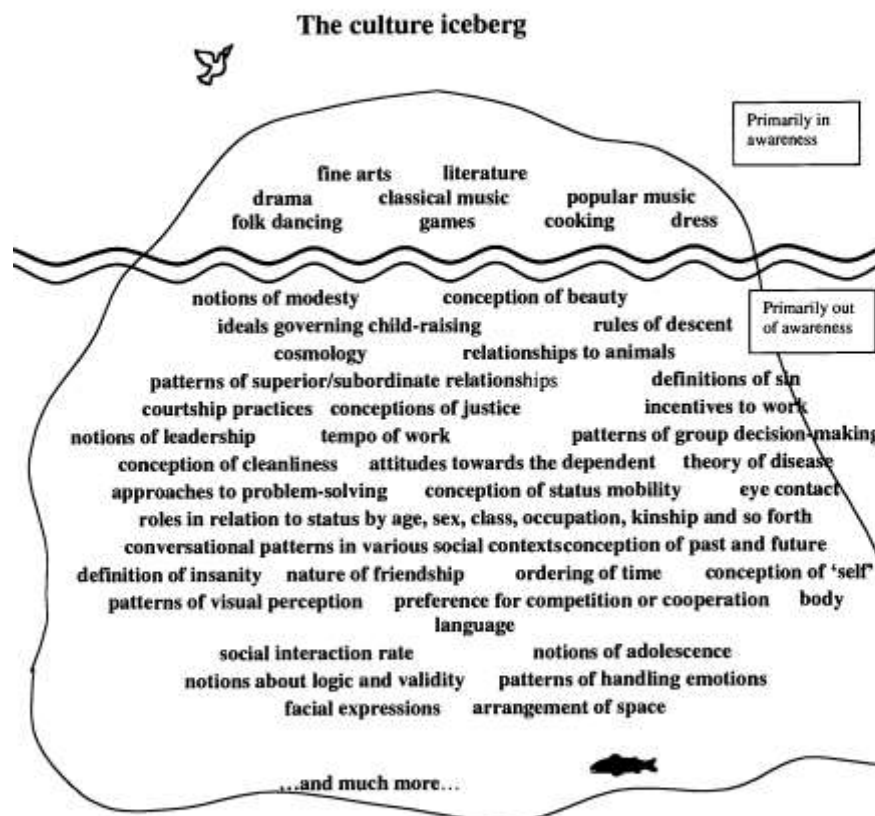


FIGURE 4.1 ICEBERG ANALOGY OF CULTURE (TERRENI & MCCALLUM, 2003)

Figure 4.1 illustrates an example of a theoretical attempt at providing a comprehensive picture of the concept of culture. What is above the surface is mostly in line with what Kohler (2015)'s categorises as *Culture as facts and information*:

In this view, culture is commonly understood as the shared attributes of a particular group of people located within a particular geographical area.... this 'high culture' view iconic artefacts, literary canon or great artworks.... Aligned closely with this view is a 'cultural studies' view, in which culture represents the history, geography, society and institutions of a group.... A further view of culture, strongly associated with the field of anthropology..., is that of culture as the practices and social norms of a particular group of people (Kohler, 2015, p. 20).

In L2 teaching, this aspect of culture is often included especially in content-based teaching. This view is similar to one of the two paradigms Holliday (1999) calls 'large' culture signifying 'ethnic', 'national' or 'international' units. One example of teaching culture as facts and information would be reading Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice" in an English classroom. It is considered to be a useful way of learning about the life of English people belonging to particular social classes in the late 18th century, including their language use. Another example would be reading a text written in English about Inuit people's life, the kind of houses they live in, the way they prepare food, and so on. In this way, learners

can gain cultural knowledge or “facts” about Inuit people’s life in addition to useful language practice.

The other view of culture that Kohler (2015) discusses is culture as semiotic practices. The focus on culture conceptualised in this way is not on culture as facts or information but rather culture as participation in meaning making. Drawing on Geertz (1973), Kohler locates culture “in the daily lived experiences of individuals as they participate in processes of creating, communicating and making sense of their social system” (p. 21)

This seems to indicate is what is under the water in Figure 4.1, and people are often not aware of these aspects of culture although they shape how we choose to communicate. For example, the conception of beauty is put under the surface of water in Figure 4.1, and this can also affect our language use. An expression “You have gained weight!” can be a compliment in Western Africa, where having an ample figure is considered beautiful, and associated with strength and wealth. It is not the case, however, in Japan and in many Western countries and quite the opposite conception of beauty is being conveyed by someone uttering the same expression. Without having this implicit knowledge of meaning making embedded within a particular social system, there is a possibility of offending someone unintentionally by using this utterance. This is why Fageeh (2011) considers foreign language learning as a process that requires cultural learning in addition to linguistic

competence and “only with the combination of language competence and cultural awareness can language achieve its communicative function (p. 65). Of course, this type of cultural understanding was central to the development of Hymes’ (1972) communicative competence model.

The above are two broad and distinctive (but by no means exhaustive) ways of conceptualising culture, but it is already clear that how ‘culture’ is incorporated into the L2 classroom might differ significantly depending on which overarching view of culture informs the curriculum and the teacher’s pedagogy; needless to say that how language itself is conceptualised has similar consequences for the curriculum design. Drawing on Kohler’s (2015) summary again, language too can be categorised broadly into two distinctive views: *language as code* and *language as social semiotic*. She explains them in the following manner:

Language as code: Language can be understood as a code of system for labelling the world. In this view, the code is comprised of forms: lexical and syntactical.... language development is regarded as a cognitive process first and foremost.... What it means to know a language, in this view, is to know the structural elements of the code (p.18)

Language as social semiotic: The theory of language as social semiotic views language fundamentally as a social and functional phenomenon (Halliday, 1975). Language is a system of signs that come to represent particular meanings according to how these are attributed by those who use them....Language therefore is not only dynamic but also permeable and malleable, shaped by its environment and users....

Language pedagogy based on a social semiotic view focuses on both active language use and knowledge of language as a meaning making system (p. 19).

To put it simply, the L2 syllabus informed primarily by the view of *language as code* would probably rely heavily on teaching fixed linguistic structures and exercises, something that has been often associated with the traditional method of teaching L2. In contrast, *language as social semiotic view* is in line with *culture as semiotic practices* view and has very different demands on what is taught while at the same time makes it impossible to think of language as separate from culture. Helping students understand the use of language in the previously used example of “You have gained weight” requires the teacher to help them to participate in meaning making, which is socially and culturally situated. In other words, language learners’ participation in semiotic practices is seen as the goal, outcome as well as process of language learning informed by the second perspective. Of course, the practical implications for how this is implemented in the actual L2 classroom are far from straightforward and I will focus on examples from research illustrating these challenges.

4.3 CHALLENGES OF INCORPORATING CULTURE INTO LANGUAGE TEACHING

Stapleton’s (2000) study demonstrated how FL teachers’ views of language and culture affected the syllabi and what and how they are taught. He (2000) investigated 28 native speaker teachers of English at universities in Japan to elicit views on the role of culture

in TEFL. The results of a questionnaire survey complemented with provided comments and interviews indicated the respondents included cultural elements to some extent, however more randomly than other lesson components. There was also tendency for including overt cultural elements such as different styles of food, architecture over covert ones such as beliefs and values. This overt and covert notion is similar to what was above and under the iceberg in Figure 4.1. These results are also corroborated by Scarino's (2010) explanation that "cultural component" such as literature and art that represent the target country and its people was taught separately from the linguistic contents in traditional foreign language classes. Although the sample in this study was small, the results of this study still reveals how including culture, which has been conceptualised differently by teachers, causes challenges in L2 teaching education on a day-to-day basis in classrooms. Each language teacher's different understanding of culture affects how it is taught in L2 classrooms. Understanding of culture as facts seems by far the most widespread view of culture-sensitive L2 teaching, and is probably seen as the most feasible. Some efforts to redress the balance have been made by shifting the focus from culture to intercultural communication in L2 teaching and I outline some of these debates in the following two sections.

4.4 TRANSITION FROM CULTURE TO INTERCULTURAL

Despite the different views of culture informing the classroom practice in the empirical studies discussed in 4.3, the interrelated nature of culture and language has become a norm in theorising within language education research over the last several decades. Kohler (2015) marks “The emergence of ‘communicative competence’ (Hymes, 1972) as a key turning point in the acknowledgement of the role of culture in language teaching and learning” (p. 22), with the aim of language education being seen as helping students to “be an effective participant in a given speech community” (Kohler, 2015, p.22). The early adoption of Hymes’ ideas led to developments in, for example, Canale and Swain’s (1981) concept of “sociolinguistic competence”, which includes politeness and register and Van Ek’s (1986) model’s six dimensions of communicative competence. These models are all based on the assumption that communicating effectively requires cultural knowledge because language and culture are “two sides of the same coin” (Moran, 2001, p.47) and “language expresses cultural reality” (Kramersch, 1998, p. 3).

More generally, however, Kramersch (2001) has argued that “TESOL has always had as its goal the facilitation of communication among people who do not share the same language and national culture” (p. 201). As the world has become more and more globalised, the notion of intercultural language teaching has become more and more prominent after 1990s in multicultural countries such as US, UK, and Australia with the emergence of

English as an international language (EIL) and World Englishes. The goal of learning English became not to speak like a native speaker of English (i.e. not to become a member of the speech community of native speakers of English), but rather, to be an “intercultural speaker”, who is able to bridge linguistic and cultural boundaries across different communicative situations (Byram, 1997, 2008), and mediate “between different perspectives and cultures, rather than to replace one’s native language and culture with ‘target’ ones” (Hua, 2013, p. 9). In many ways, the idea of intercultural competence brings back into focus the pedagogic implications of understanding the interconnected nature of language and culture while attempting to shine a spotlight on the intersections in culturally embedded meaning making practices rather than cultural facts. In the remaining sections, I will outline some concepts that have influenced intercultural language education, namely, intercultural communicative competence (ICC) and linguaculture before discussing some classroom implications for these concepts.

4.5 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN L2 EDUCATION AND LINGUACULTURE

4.5.1 INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE

The phrase “intercultural communication” was first used by an American anthropologist Edward Hall in his influential book *Silent Language* (Hall, 1959), and he is

considered to be the founder of the field (Leeds-Hurwitz, 1990; Rogers & Steinfatt, 1999). Hall's view of culture as unconscious framework of shared meaning affecting communication was influenced by the following scholarly fields: (1) cultural anthropology, (2) linguistics, (3) ethology, the study of animal behavior, and (4) Freudian psychoanalytic theory (Hall, 1992). Inspired by his work, researchers have developed framework for comparing culture and for understanding issues related to hidden culture such as awareness, consciousness, and identity (Shaules, 2007).

Intercultural communication has been researched by specialists in various fields such as anthropology, business studies, social psychology, communication, linguistics, and researchers have tried to theorise this notion in different ways, and this has resulted in confusing terms associated with 'interculturality' used in related disciplines. For example, there are a number of definitions of intercultural competence (Byram 1997, Deardorff 2004, Guilherme 2000, Sercu 2004). Others include: intercultural communication competence (Chen & Starosta, 1996); intercultural competence (Deardorff, 2006), intercultural interaction competence (Spencer-Oatey & Franklin, 2009), and others. Defining the concepts related to interculturality has been as challenging as what culture is. One evidence showing this can be found in Deardorff's (2006) study, in which she asked 23 American intercultural experts to propose their views on the key concepts of intercultural

communicative competence (ICC) to discover how little consensus there was among the experts about ICC. However, seven definitions were proposed with more than 80% agreement. The most significant definition was “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills and attitude” (Deardorff, 2006, p. 13).

The terms containing “intercultural” has been prominent recently in public discourse, intercultural learning and education and other related fields (Hua, 2013), and this phenomenon also applies to the Japanese educational context, where ‘cultivate Japanese who can use English’ in the globalised world is aimed, especially in preparation for the Tokyo Olympics/Paralympics to be held in 2020. While there is plethora of literature explaining the ideas on interculturality, there is little written on how to put those ideas into real classroom practice as pedagogical models. Therefore, it is essential to discuss the work of Michael Byram, who has been involved in the influential Council of Europe’s (2008) *Autobiography of Intercultural Encounters*. He has contributed significantly in the field of intercultural and foreign language education, which I will focus in the next section.

4.5.2 FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE—APPLYING INTERCULTURAL INTO L2 EDUCATION

The most prominent work by Byram (1997) is probably what he defined as “five savoirs” (p. 50-53), which is components of ICC. In order to distinguish the notion of

linguistic competence advocated by Chomsky (1965) and developed by Hymes (1976) from the new concept of ‘intercultural competence’, he used a French word *savoir*. Byram (2008) summarises these five aspects are as follows:

Attitude (savoir être): curiosity and openness, readiness to suspend disbelief about other cultures and belief about one’s own.

Knowledge (savoirs): of social groups and their products and practices in one’s own and in one’s interlocutor’s country, and of the general processes of societal and individual interaction.

Skills of interpreting and relating (savoir comprendre): ability to interpret a document or event from another culture, to explain it and relate it to documents from one’s own.

Skills of discovery and interaction (savoir apprendre/faire): ability to acquire new knowledge of a culture and cultural practices and the ability to operate knowledge, attitudes and skills under constraints of real-time communication and interaction.

Critical cultural awareness (savoir s’engager): an ability to evaluate critically and on the basis of explicit criteria perspectives, practices and products in one’s own and other cultures and countries. (p. 68)

Byram (2009) claims that they are different from the cultural competences of a native speaker. He challenged the conventional idea of targeting native speakers as models in foreign language teaching (e.g., ‘communicative competence’ advocated by Canal & Swain in 1980; ‘communicative ability’ proposed by van Ek in 1986) and proposed the notion of ‘intercultural speaker’ while working with Zarate preparing for the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages of the Council of Europe (2001). The definition given by them is: “[Intercultural speaker is] someone who has an ability to interact with ‘others’, to accept other perspectives and perceptions of the world, to mediate between

different perspectives, to be conscious of their evaluations of difference” (Byram, Nichols, & Stevens (2001, p. 5) and it is this view of intercultural speaker that has informed my thinking of vision-based EFL course to enhance students’ vision of themselves as intercultural speakers. Figure 4.2 below shows Byram’s (2009) model of Intercultural Communicative Competence.



FIGURE 4.2 MODEL OF INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE (BYRAM, 2009, P.323)

Based on the idea of Canale & Swain (1980), the goal of L2 learners was to gain communicative competence made up of four major components: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic competence, and it was based on the competence of

native speakers of English, and learners were expected to assimilate into the target culture (Alptekin, 2002; Hyde 1998). However, as explained in 4.4, with the rapid pervasiveness of the concepts such as EIL and intercultural language teaching, there was a need to reflect this change and into pedagogy. One of the big contributions that Byram made was adding the intercultural perspective to the model of Canale and Swain (1980). Byram (1994) proposed that communicative competence is made up of four dimensions: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and intercultural competence. Intercultural competence consists of five *savoirs* which include attitude, skills, and knowledge. Byram and Zarate (1994) claim that cultivating ICC is possible in FL classrooms. By gaining above mentioned competence, one can become an “intercultural speaker” who has “a willingness to relativise one’s own values, beliefs and behaviours, not to assume that they are the only possible and naturally correct ones, and to be able to see how they might look from the perspective of an outsider who has a different set of values, beliefs and behaviours” (Byram, Nichols, & Stevens, 2001, p. 5).

This focus on *savoirs* that make up intercultural competence and the detailed description of learning goals are what makes Byram’s model applicable in FL teaching, however, they have still been criticised as they have not been shown “in a way that can be mapped onto the mechanics of everyday practice” (Diaz, 2013, p. 7). Yet, Byram’s (1997)

idea on ICC has had a significant influence on the foreign language teaching and intercultural education as it has clear objectives. He and his associates conclude:

Often in language teaching the implicit aim has been to imitate a native speaker both in linguistic competence, in knowledge of what is 'appropriate' language, and in knowledge about a country and its 'culture'... In contrast the 'intercultural dimension' in language teaching aims to develop learners as intercultural speakers or mediators who are able to engage with complexity and multiple identities and to avoid the stereotyping which accompanies perceiving someone through a single identity. (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002, p. 5)

In this statement, all the four descriptions given by Kohler (2015) are included: *Language as code*, *Language as social semiotic*, *Culture as facts and information* and *Culture as semiotic practices*. In language learning, one needs to learn grammar and vocabulary to convey meaning and engage in social interactions. This requires cultural knowledge including his/her own. The term used in the above statement “intercultural speaker” is what is relevant to the current study along with the notion of linguaculture, which also integrate language and culture, which is explained in the next section.

4.6 LINKING THE STUDIES IN THE TWO AREAS: L2 MOTIVATION AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION AS A WAY TO EXPAND SELF

Despite theoretical understanding in the inseparable nature of culture and language, and the role of culture promoting L2 learning motivation as shown in Chapter three, very little empirical research that investigates the relationship between L2 motivation and ICC has been reported, especially from a L2 motivation scope, but Spitzberg and Chagnon (2009) demonstrate that motivation is an important factor in some ICC models along with other factors such as skills and knowledge.

In Mirzaei and Forouzandeh' study (2013), in which they attempted to research the relationship between Iranian university students' ICC and their L2 learning motivation. The students were English literature or translation major undergraduate and MA students at Iranian universities. Their test battery was comprised of the ICC questionnaire they developed drawing on Deardorff (2006) and an L2 learning motivation questionnaire adapted from Gardner's attitude/motivation test battery. The correlation results indicated that there was a powerful and positive relationship between L2 learners' ICC and L2 learning motivation and that teachers should include tasks and activities to facilitate L2 learners' intercultural communicative competence (ICC). Their findings support the claim by earlier research by Gardner and Lambert (1959) that learners' interest and attitude towards L2 community is positively linked with their L2 learning motivation, confirming that "L2 learners with high levels of ICC show more curiosity and enthusiasm to engage in social

interaction with members of other groups or speakers of other languages... (p. 311). The study also highlights the advantageous effects of incorporating tasks and activities to enhance learners' ICC and L2 motivation. However, the quantitative nature of the study method does not offer in-depth understanding how pedagogic intervention affects learners' L2 motivation and ICC.

Fritz and Miyafusa's (2015) case study is noteworthy in terms of combining framework of the latest L2 motivational research (Dörnyei, 2009; Dörnyei & Hadfield, 2013; Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014) and intercultural communicative competence (ICC) developed by Byram, 1997, 2008, 2012; Deardorff, 2006, 2009; Liddicoat & Scarino, 2013. They (2015) propose the ideal intercultural self (IIS) framework, in order "to give learners a unique way in creating their own intercultural and foreign language goals, and to also understand the responsibilities involved in reaching them" (Fritz & Miyafusa, 2015, p. 124). In fact, their study (2015) was similar to the current study in which attempted to facilitate learners' L2 vision as intercultural speakers as they sought "a motivating classroom approach to let learners visualize and create not only their own foreign language goals, but also their own intercultural development goals" (p. 125). They taught one semester course whose syllabus aimed at developing the participants' ICC and self-awareness as well as using the motivational approach combining ICC and L2 motivation. What is unique in their

study (2015) is the use of visual and narrative data to analyse the participants' ICC development. Their study results show that a slight development in overall ICC level of the participants was identified after the course was taught over thirteen-week period. Although their study was a small-scale pilot study, the results correlate with the findings of L2 Motivational Self System studies noted earlier in the previous section (e.g., Kojima-Takahashi, 2013; Magid & Chan, 2012), because both having an ideal L2 self or intercultural self can motivate learners reduce the gap between the present and future self.

Another key concept related to my study is what has been increasingly used in the field of language education, which is expressed in the following terms: language-and-culture (Byram *et al.*, 1994), culture-in-language (Crozet & Liddicoat, 2000), and linguaculture or languaculture (Agar, 1994; Diaz 2013; Friedrich, 1989; Risager 2006, 2015). As discussed in 4.3, incorporating culture in actual L2 classroom teaching has been problematic as Shaules (2016) explains, “culture and language have traditionally been considered separate domains of inquiry—e.g., anthropologists study culture and linguists study language” (p 3), resulting in “immature development of a unified sub-discipline for the study of language and culture” (Sharifian, 2015, p. 3). The terms linguaculture or languaculture have been used to propose how to bring cultural learning and language learning together (Anderson, Lund, & Risager, 2006; Diaz, 2013; Risager, 2006, 2007).

Shaules' (2016) proposed the Developmental Model of Linguaculture Learning (DMLL) "to help educators conceive of language and culture learning as a single integrated process—as linguaculture learning" (p. 4). This model draws from dynamic skill theory (DST) developed by an educational psychologist Kurt Fischer, and is part of a new field in educational neuroscience and has been applied in foreign language education. According to Shaules (2016), DMLL "proposes a roadmap of cognitive development—one that describes how language and cultural knowledge become more sophisticated over time" (p. 7-8). What is interesting is that this "evolution results not only in increased linguistic ability or cultural understanding, but also in an expanded sense of self" (p. 7), and "Learning involves the development and expansion of the learner's foreign language self and intercultural self (taken together—linguaculture self) (p. 8).

Shaules has also developed an online questionnaire called Intercultural Language Learning Profiler (ILL-P) aimed at facilitating students' reflection on their language and intercultural learning. The tool has been used as both an awareness raising and a measurement tool and is described by Shaules (2013) as follows:

The ILCL Profiler is a psychometric tool that helps students reflect on their level of language awareness. After logging in with a password and answering a series of questions about language learning, learners receive a personalized profile reflecting their perception of language learning in the form of a bar-graph.... The profile is not

a measure of language ability. Its goal is to help learners reflect on their own language learning process. (Shaules, 2013)

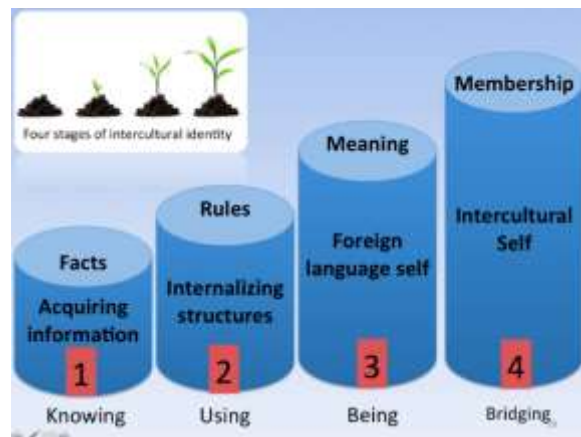


FIGURE 4.3 Four stages of intercultural identity (Shaules, 2013)

This tool is grounded in Shaules' theoretical proposal that there are four stages in the intercultural identity development as shown in Figure 4.3. The first stage is labelled as *facts* because learners see both language and culture learning as a way of acquiring new information. Therefore, memorising new vocabulary and repetition practice are the main concern for learners at this stage.

In the second stage, the learning focus is to systematise their new linguistic knowledge. This can be facilitated, for example by helping learners understand to how sentences can be formed and how sounds are made. Learners at this stage are encouraged to be aware of their own learning styles and strategies to improve their skills. They should see

the difference between accuracy practice and fluency practice and understand that they are both important in the learning process. In terms of cultural learning, learners see “right” and “wrong” behaviour; however, they are not aware of the hidden values and beliefs to cause the behaviour. Shaules (2013) names this stage *rules*.

In stage three, learners start to work towards larger communicative goals than learning L2 merely as a school subject, for example. Learners start to have the sense of a *foreign language self*. To learners in stage three, language learning is not only about memorising vocabulary and forming grammatically correct sentences but expressing their thoughts and ideas to communicate with others. Learners also become aware of hidden values and assumptions seen in certain cultural behaviours. Stage three is called *meaning* by Shaules (2013). The highest stage in this model is what he labels as *membership*. Learners have developed their *intercultural self* and have internalised the L2 enough to experience L2 use as natural part of themselves. They know being able to see a situation from different cultural perspectives is essential to understand cultural differences. Therefore, a learner who has developed his/her *intercultural self* can be a “bridge”, able to shift between different communicative styles and cultural perspectives but still maintains himself/herself comfortably. To conclude, as learners move on to higher stages, not only do they have more linguistic competence but also their intercultural awareness and intercultural identity

develop. This has now evolved into what Shaules (2016) calls Developmental Model of Linguaculture Learning (DMLL), but his model (Shaules, 2013) was in line with my research which also aimed at cultivating learners' linguistic competence and intercultural awareness. Therefore, I thought incorporating this idea in my study would be useful for developing a vision related to *intercultural self* and would be conducive to successful language learning.

Whether an L2 learner develops a foreign language self, intercultural self, or linguaculture self, it can be understood as a form of ideal L2 self. This approach is therefore in line with a vision-based approach which was explained in the previous chapter. When it comes to motivational language teaching, the aim should be on cultivating in language learners future visions as intercultural speakers, which was also discussed in the last section of this chapter. What is interesting is this linguaculture approach is also conducive to the development of 'self'. Intercultural experience expands the horizon of how one sees the world beyond the values and norms he/she has, not only by learning about facts about certain people in certain countries, or memorizing grammatical rules to produce accurate language. I wanted my students to gain the skills and awareness required to relate effectively to 'otherness' (Byram, 1997).

4.7 SUMMARY: L2 VISION AS AN INTERCULTURAL SPEAKER, TRANSFORMATIONAL POWER OF INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

In this chapter, I reviewed the literature on culture and language teaching including how linguaculture approach has emerged as a way to integrate language and cultural learning. The last section in this chapter attempted to elucidate the link between the concepts between L2 motivation, more specifically, L2 vision and intercultural communication. Based on the idea that there is a strong relationship between ICC and L2 learning motivation, and also the study of L2 vision can be located in the field of language learning motivation, which is reviewed in Chapter 3, I thought it would make sense to combine these two fields of study in my research project.

In addition, although the idea of ‘vision’ has had a strong appeal among researchers and practitioners, there has been little knowledge about how it can be promoted through general classroom interaction practices. While there have been a host of practical tasks and activities for building vision, I wanted to understand what, if any, role the actual classroom interactions played in the development of relevant L2 visions of my students. In the next chapter, I will describe how a vision-based approach was incorporated in the research design and methods along with a linguaculture approach to facilitate learners’ L2 visions as intercultural speakers in order to prepare my students “to know how to negotiate comfortable third places between *the self* and *the other/the foreign*” (Lo Bianco et al., 1999, p. 1,

emphasis in original). It is by encountering the other that one can learn more about self, by examining the differences and similarities, by reflecting on the feelings evoked by the interactions. I began this chapter by asking what culture is. One possible answer may be that culture is the lens to help us understand who we are and I will be interested in exploring this possibility in the empirical part of my thesis.

5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

In this chapter, I will describe the design and methods I employed in the current research project and give details of the context for the research. The research design originated from the research questions and a qualitative research paradigm that focuses on “*understanding*, and ultimately on a concern for the quality of life in the language classroom, for both teachers and learners” (Allwright, 2003, p. 113), that is understanding the impact of the course on students’ L2 visions, including the visions they had at the beginning of the course and how they were formed. Because I was concerned with understanding the quality of classroom life, I opted for a design that has been framed in the literature as an exploratory practice (EP), which is defined by Hanks (2015) as “a form of practitioner research in language education which aims to integrate research, learning and teaching” (p. 2). EP was suitable for the current study in which I was both the teacher and a researcher working to understand my students’ L2 vision development and the role of pedagogy in enhancing the visions utilizing “normal pedagogic practices as investigative tools” (Allwright, 2003, p.127).

Another purpose for choosing EP was to address the “three core areas of challenges: conceptual, methodological, and pedagogic” identified by Dörnyei and Ryan (2015, p. 204). As for conceptual challenges, they (2015) specially note in reference to narrative identity:

Narrative identity is essentially concerned with the ways in which people organize and understand their experiences and memories in the form of various narratives, such as stories, excuses, myths, or explanations, and in this way, their autobiographical stories become the foundation of their self-concept.” (pp. 199-200)

My study incorporates narratives given by students in which they describe their past and how they see themselves in the future. I used this to gain an in-depth understanding of how they construct meaning from their past experience, and how it affects their future self-image. Secondly, as for the methodological challenge, the qualitative-dominant nature of my study reflects the recent trend of L2 motivational research, which is moving away from quantitative-only approaches. Lastly, as Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) observe that “Motivation appears to be learner characteristic where theory and practice intersect most comfortably...” (p. 103), choosing my classroom as the location for my research enabled me to examine the interactions among the students, those between the students and the teacher, and to evaluate the pedagogical tools used for the study to understand the impact of the course.

I will first explain the overall research design and the rationale behind it in Section 5.1. In Section 5.2, I will provide some contextual information and the summary of the vision-based course taught as part of the study. Details of the course and interview participants are given in Section 5.3. In Section 5.4, I will elaborate on the data collection methods followed by a section concerning data analysis in Section 5.5 and ethical issues in Section 5.6.

5.1 CHOOSING EP TO UNDERSTAND L2 VISION DEVELOPMENT

The purpose of this study was to understand the impact of incorporating cultural elements in English language teaching to enhance Japanese college students' second language (L2) vision as intercultural speakers. This study was guided by two research questions. They were: 1) 'What L2 vision do Japanese students bring to the classroom when they begin their college life?', and 2) 'How is this L2 vision impacted by English course components that aim to facilitate their L2 vision as intercultural speakers?' The reason why I set these questions was because of my strong desire to ensure the quality of classroom life. As explained earlier in 1.1, I conducted this study during the recovery period after the earthquake that occurred on March 11, 2011. As a teacher working at an institution located in an area affected severely by the disaster, I was desperate to find a way to help students have hope for the future through my English course. This was more important to me than students developing better grammatical knowledge and increasing their vocabulary, which are regarded as more conventional linguistic skills in foreign language education. This is the pedagogical motivation for designing the vision-based course. In my role as an exploratory practitioner, I wanted to gain a deeper understanding of what influence, if any, this course had on students' L2 visions. In addition, and in line with Dörnyei and Kubanyiova's (2014) guiding principle for the development of a vision-based language programme, I needed to

understand students' current identity concerns and personal experiences in order to help them envision their future that would be in tune with and build on those concerns and experiences. The above-mentioned factors were the rationale for setting the research questions for my study.

The English language course, which I designed as a part of the study, included activities and tasks for enhancing students' L2 vision as intercultural speakers. I had the freedom to design the course rather than teach on the bases of a prescribed syllabus or a course book. It was a one-semester course with 25 first-year college students who were majoring in international cultural studies. There were 15 classes in total and each class was 90 minutes long. It was a required course for students in the Department of International Cultural Studies. The students were required to take two English classes a week including mine during their two-year period of study at the college. As the teacher of the course, I was fully responsible for it and had relative freedom in designing it. The general objectives of the course were to develop overall linguistic proficiency, but since I could design it freely, I created a vision-based English course for this study, which aimed at meeting the general course objectives and at cultivating students' L2 visions as intercultural speakers with added components.

The data for this study came from the following sources: 1) written narratives, in which students wrote about their language learning and intercultural experiences and their possible future image; 2) semi-structured interviews which I conducted after the course, in which I asked about their course experience and questions relevant to the research questions; 3) field notes & audio- and video-recordings of the classes which I used to recall any specific moment to be used for later analysis; and 4) course evaluation by the students, in which they rated some key components of the course in order to enable me to understand the overall course effect and identify some potential interview participants. See Tables 5.2 and 5.3 below for an overview of the types and volume of data, when and from which participants they were gathered etc.

Table 5.1 Summary of this EP study design

Number of participants		Data resources relevant to the participants
The course participants	25 (23 female, 2 male)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Written narratives as class worksheets: 1) Self-introduction, 2) Language learning history, 3) Thinking about your future and English, and 4) My international experience ● Audio- and video-recording of the classes ● Filed notes ● Course evaluation
Interview participants	8 (6 female, 2 male)	Audio-recording and transcription

TABLE 5.3 SUMMARY OF THE COLLECTED DATA

Data-collection site & the number of participants	Data resources & Volume	
The course 25 (23 female, 2 male)	<p>Written narratives on the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Self-introduction (Week 1) 2) Language learning history (Week 2) 3) Thinking about your future and English (Week 3) 4) My international experience (Week 10) 	
	<p>Recording of the classes</p> <p>17 April (Lesson 1) Audio (63 minutes)</p> <p>24 April (Lesson 2) Audio (76 minutes)</p> <p>1 May (Lesson 3) Audio (85minutes)</p> <p>15 May (Lesson 5) Audio (53 minutes)</p> <p>22 May (Lesson 6) Audio (76 minutes)</p> <p>29 May (Lesson 7) Video (88 minutes)</p> <p>5 June (Lesson 8) Video (73 minutes)</p> <p>12 June (Lesson 9) Video (79 minutes)</p> <p>26 June (Lesson 10) Video (71 minutes)</p> <p>3 July (Lesson 11) Video (85 minutes)</p> <p>17 July (Lesson 13) Video (81 minutes)</p>	<p>Field notes</p> <p>(Total word count: 4358 words)</p> <p>17 April (Lesson 1) 117 words</p> <p>24 April (Lesson 2) 491 words</p> <p>1 May (Lesson 3) 264 words</p> <p>8 May (Lesson 4) 208 words</p> <p>15 May (Lesson 5) 281 words</p> <p>22 May (Lesson 6) 257 words</p> <p>29 May (Lesson 7) 735 words</p> <p>5 June (Lesson 8) 557 words</p> <p>12 June (Lesson 9) 344 words</p> <p>26 June (Lesson 10) 290 words</p> <p>3 July (Lesson 11) 236 words</p> <p>10 July (Lesson 12) 246 words</p> <p>17 July (Lesson 13) 231 words</p> <p>24 July (Lesson 14) 100 words</p>
	<p>Course evaluation (collected on 17 July)</p>	

Interviews	Audio-recording
July-August, 2014	31 July (Asami/25 minutes)
8 (6 female, 2 male)	31 July (Masaya/45 minutes)
	6 August (Kahoko/35 minutes)
	17 August (Yuko/42 minutes)
	20 August (Seiji/37 minutes)
	24 August (Chika/35 minutes)
	26 August (Kei/34 minutes)
	1 September (Aya/41 minutes)

As I explained earlier in this chapter, I was the teacher who created and taught the course, and some of the data was also used as class material. This is in line with the principles of EP. Hanks (2015) proposes the following points summarizing the seven principles of the EP (Allwright & Hanks, 2009):

Seven principles for inclusive practitioner research

Principle 1: ‘Quality of life’ for language teachers and learners is the most appropriate central concern for practitioner research in our field.

Principle 2: Working primarily to understand the ‘quality of life’, as it is experienced by language learners and teachers, is more important than, and logically prior to, seeking in any way to improve it.

Principle 3: Everybody needs to be involved in the work for understanding.

Principle 4: The work needs to serve to bring people together.

Principle 5: The work needs to be conducted in a spirit of mutual development.

Principle 6: Working for understanding is necessarily a continuous enterprise.

Principle 7: Integrating the work for understanding fully into existing curricular practices is a way of minimizing the burden and maximizing sustainability.

(Allwright & Hanks, 2009, p. 149-154)

The use of classroom materials as the data for the study, involving everyone, and working collaboratively for mutual development are all important in EP. They are also relevant to address the issues regarding L2 motivational research discussed in the introduction of this chapter. Examining what happened in my classroom was also hoped to attest the need to “capture how motivation develops through and shapes interactions among persons in a specific context” (Mercer, Ryan, & Williams, 2012, p. 68). Although there have been more research recently on L2 vision examining quantitatively the relationship among future L2 self-guides, learning styles, imagery capacity, and motivated L2 behaviour (e.g., Al-Shehri 2009; Dörnyei & Chan, 2013; Kim 2009; Kim & Kim, 2009), to gain more in-depth understanding of multi-faceted and dynamic nature of students’ images of future selves, a qualitative approach was more appropriate, and the holistic nature of EP inquiry was suitable to answer the questions for this study. For example, it allowed me to understand the group dynamics, which have not been paid much attention recently (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). As I will show later in Chapter 7, group dynamics played a big role in enhancing students’ L2 visions in this study. It also inspired my vision as a teacher, which was an

important process as Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) put:

We are interested in transforming classrooms into learning environments that truly facilitate the study of foreign languages. Such a transformation of classroom practice has to begin with the teachers, because they are the people in the best position to shape classroom life (p. 3).

Taking all the above-mentioned factors into consideration, framing this study as EP makes ethical, theoretical, and pedagogical sense because I was the teacher of the course, felt the urgent need to help students during the aftermath of the earthquake, and created the course in which I intended to enhance students' L2 visions. At the same time, as a researcher I wanted to understand how the course impacted the prior L2 visions the students had had. Students were also asked to reflect on their past L2 and intercultural learning experiences, and envision their future L2 selves in the course. The selected interview participants probably had deeper reflections through the dialogues they had with me after the course. The understanding gained from this research would help my classroom practice as a teacher and help the students' learning.

EP was developed in the early 1990s in the search for a new form of classroom-based research (Hanks, 2015) beyond scientific research (SR) and action research (AR) (Yanase, 2008). Dick Allwright (2003, 2005) contributed significantly to the establishment of EP (Yanase, 2008; Hanks, 2015). In SR that aims at discovering a general rule for efficient classroom practice, classrooms were the places where researchers came from outside and

collected data, and language teachers were positioned as “recipients of information on academic research” (McDonough & McDonough, 1990, p. 103) creating a large gap between theory and practice as Freeman (1998) criticises:

[It] is often assumed, perhaps erroneously, that a researcher can enter a classroom without ever teaching or having taught, can understand what is happening in that environment, can gather information about it and can understand what goes on there. (p. 6)

Many classroom language teachers were dissatisfied with these kinds of research activities since they had “little to do with their everyday practice concerns (Carr & Kemmis, 1985, p. 8) and did not want to cooperate with academic researchers who handled “the relationships with language teachers and learners so badly” (Allwright, 2003, p. 117).

In the 1990s, action research (AR) appeared on the scene and it was expected to contribute to teacher development through practitioner research. (Yanase, 2008). Holliday (1994) contends that researching one’s practices is essential in order to make informed pedagogical decisions. In his words:

In order to arrive at appropriate methodologies, practitioners need to take time to investigate what happens in the classroom. They need to incorporate into their approach the capacity to look in depth at the wider social forces which influence behaviour between teachers and students (Holliday, 1994, p. 17).

In Elliot’s (1991) definition, AR is “the study of a social situation with a view to improving the quality of action within it” (p. 69). ‘Change’ is the key word in AR, and

improving the social situation (classroom) by solving a problem through interventions is the purpose of AR (Cohen & Manion, 1985; Nunan, 1993). Although both AR and EP are forms of practitioner research, the purpose of EP is to deepen understanding of classroom practice, and this is different from AR, which aims at problem solving.

Zhang's study (2004) is a good example of how EP goes beyond action research. The degree of understanding she gained in the study in addition to finding solutions to some of the initial problems she was facing while teaching is significant. At the beginning of the course, she was teaching an extensive reading class for English major Chinese students in a rather traditional teacher-centred approach; teacher reading of passages and explaining grammar and vocabulary. When she felt that the students in the class were not concentrating, she decided to implement EP. Based on the principles of EP, she attempted to understand what was happening in the classroom. She interviewed all of the 60 students in her class asking them some questions to elicit their view about the reading class. Using some insights gained from the interviews, she incorporated group work which was perceived favourably by most students, and she reports, "Group work as guided by EP involves everybody and brings people together" (p. 344) and EP principles not only helped "the learners to understand one another, but also help teachers and learners develop a mutual understanding that was never achieved before" (p. 344). In this study, the intention of the researcher might

not have been to ‘change’ the attitude or behavior of the students, but her taking initiative to understand the phenomenon caused the change and solved the problem. This is why the study is a good example of EP, which goes beyond AR that focuses on problem-solving. In AR, gaining understanding is not prioritised as it is in EP.

In the next section, I will elaborate on the research context and the vision-based English course I taught as part of this EP study, which was informed by L2 motivational theory combined with intercultural elements. As explained earlier in this section, considering the holistic and inclusive nature of my study, defining it as EP is legitimate as I integrated it into everyday classroom practice aiming at “working to understand life” (Allwright, 2003, p.128), and providing “a good foundation for helping teachers and learners make their time together both pleasant and productive” (Allwright, 2003, p. 114).

5.2 THE RESEARCH CONTEXT, PARTICIPANTS, AND THE VISION-BASED COURSE

5.2.1 THE RESEARCH CONTEXT

In this section, I will give the details of the context of my study. The course was taught at a two-year college public institution located in northern Japan, which has two departments: a Living Sciences Department and an International Cultural Studies Department. The research participants in my study were all students who belonged to the

International Cultural Studies Department. My institution is not considered particularly prestigious; however, it has a study abroad programme (a Korean course and an American course) and a variety of culture-related courses (e.g., anthropology, comparative cultural studies, a lecture in multi-cultural societies), which attract candidates who are interested in language and cultural studies from the local area. English is a mandatory subject in most universities and colleges in Japan regardless students' majors. As I noted in 5.1, the intervention English course was taught by me and I had the freedom to design the course as many teachers in Japan who teach general English courses do.

Typically, up to the high school level, Japanese students learn plenty of grammar and they understand written texts quite well. However, the majority do not have opportunities to use English outside the classroom for practical communicative purposes. To many Japanese students, English is merely one of the subjects they have to take. By creating this course for this study, I was also hoping to benefit the students by providing an environment where they could use L2 to express their identity. In addition, this classroom was a community for mutual development not only for the students, but also for me, as I was a teacher/researcher wanting to gain a deeper understanding of the role of the classroom in enhancing students' L2 vision. The purpose of the classroom was directed at the development of all the people involved in this study project, working to bring people together

while fostering the engagement of teachers and learners (Allwright, 2003; Allwright & Hanks, 2009) in order to help “make their time together both pleasant and productive” (Allwright, 2003, p. 114).



FIGURE 5.1 THE CLASSROOM IN WHICH THE COURSE WAS TAUGHT

5.2.2 THE COURSE PARTICIPANTS

The research participants were the students in my course. There were 25 students (23 female and 2 male), and as explained in 5.2.1, they were first-year students (age 18-19) who majored in international cultural studies at a two-year college. Each year, there are more female students than male students who enrol for this department. The year in which this course was taught was no exception, and having 23 female students and 2 male students in any courses taught at the college was not unusual. The majority of the students had good

basic grammatical knowledge of the English language and were able to express their thoughts and ideas in simple English on prepared topics such as a self-introduction, international experiences they had had, and their language learning history. This is because they had previously studied English for at least for nine years, and having basic knowledge of English is important in passing the entrance examination required by the college. The level of their English would probably be between A2 and B1 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). These students were suitable as the research participants for my study as they had similar English learning experience and limited intercultural experience, which meant their vision as intercultural speakers using English, was yet to be developed. In addition, their major was international cultural studies, which means that they were interested in learning foreign languages and culture-related issues. Therefore, I presumed that a vision-based English course with added cultural components would have some impact on their L2 vision development.

Because I played a key role in this research as both the teacher and the researcher, it is important to provide a brief introduction to my personal and professional background as this is likely to have had a significant influence over both what happened in the course and how I interpreted it. As for the teacher of the course, it was I, Harumi a 44-year-old (at the time of this research) Japanese female who grew up in the same area. I had been teaching at

this institution for three and half years. I was initially educated to teach Japanese in Australia. After receiving my postgraduate diploma in education from a university in Sydney, I taught Japanese in several different schools in Australia for three years. When I was studying and teaching there in early 1990s, communicative language teaching method was dominant and my teaching style was strongly influenced by experiencing this phase. While teaching in classrooms, I became more and more interested in psychology in general because I thought it would help understand how people use language and why. I was also interested in why some students seemed keener to learn than others, and why teachers chose certain ways to teach and manage their students.

After coming back to Japan, I studied psychology and counselling and became a certified school counsellor. During my counselling career, I worked with primary school and junior high school students who had hard time attending conventional schools and classrooms for different reasons: bullying, low self-esteem, distrust for teachers, health issues etc. Some of them did not know why they did not want to go to school. Sometimes I would visit their homes or meet with them in special rooms prepared for them in schools so that other students would not see them. I tried to do “counselling”, but talking face-to-face with young students often made the counselling awkward, probably because I was still an inexperienced counsellor. I had found that the better way to have dialogues with the students

was by engaging in something else such as doing jigsaw puzzles, playing cards, colouring, and making crafts. Some students wanted to catch up with school work, so I taught English to them too.

After my daughter was born and when she was very young, I took a break from a full-time job and took up part-time translating and up interpreting jobs. The company I got these jobs from also had some language courses and they asked me to teach English there. Eventually, I applied for a teaching position at the institution of this research context, and was hired as a full-time English instructor. Although I have experienced several different jobs, my interest has always been in how people use language to communicate and to express themselves. As I will show later in the thesis, my counselling experience played a useful role in interviewing focal participants, especially Aya whose data are discussed in Chapter 8.

5.2.3 THE VISION-BASED COURSE

In this section, I will explain about the vision-based English course that I carefully designed in order to cultivate students' visions as 'intercultural speakers'. The course components were selected keeping in mind the dynamic layers of intercultural learning I discussed in the previous chapter. I also wanted to make sure that the course was

well informed by existing theory that Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) propose as motivational conditions for desired future language selves:

- The learner has a desired future self-image (vision) which is related to but is also different from his/her current self-concept.
- The vision is elaborate and vivid.
- The vision is perceived as plausible but not comfortably certain, and it does not clash with other parts of the individual's self-concept, particularly with the expectations of the learner's family and peers.
- The vision is accompanied by relevant and effective procedural strategies that act as a roadmap towards the goal.
- The vision is regularly activated in the learner's working self-concept.
- The learner is also aware of elaborate information about the negative consequences of not achieving the desired end state. (p. 32)

I will show later in this section how these principles were incorporated with the specific course component. The course focussed on vision-related content and it encouraged the use of L2 rather than focussing on grammar-translation, which is often stressed in a traditional Japanese L2 teaching contexts. Along with the contents intended to enhance the students' L2 vision as intercultural speakers, I used a video programme called "Connect with English" (Produced by WGBH Boston with books from the McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc. 1998) as another main material. My colleagues and I have used this programme at my institution for several years. This programme was originally created for adult ESL learners whose proficiency level is from high beginning through low and high intermediate. It comes with video episodes and coordinated books whose components match

with the content of the episodes including graded readers and video scripts. The website Annenberg Learner, the provider of this resource, describes its content in the following manner:

Through the story of Rebecca, an aspiring singer on a journey across America, *Connect with English* touches on life's important issues: leaving home, parenting, education, work, love, success, and loss. All of the characters use meaningful, natural language that students can put to work immediately in their own lives. Each episode features dialogue that is slightly slowed down and subtly simplified.... Facial expressions, gestures, and body language also reveal meaning for students.
(<https://www.learner.org/resources/series71.html>)

I had often used this material in other English classes as it had been effective in generating students' interest in L2 use. It provides the students with plenty of listening practice with visual clues, and can be used in many ways to enhance different linguistic skills such as listening comprehension, writing narratives, and conversation practices. I thought this video material was useful for this intervention course aiming at students' L2 visions as intercultural speakers for the following reasons: 1) Through this visual material, the students can be exposed to simple but natural language, and the level of the language in this material was suitable for my students, 2) The material "touches on life's important issues: leaving home, parenting, education, work, love, success, and loss" as described above, so students can identify themselves with the emotions of the characters. This can help the students use

the language to express their identities although they are prescribed ones, 3) The students can also gain cultural knowledge from the different body language and facial expressions by the characters. That would promote students' intercultural knowledge, 4) The script for all the episodes was provided with the video material and it was useful for role-play practices. In fact, the fourth reason mentioned above was the biggest determining factor for me to use the material as I planned to incorporate role-plays in this course. I have often used role-plays in my classes and it has been effective in facilitating students' linguistic competence and motivation, and this material was useful for that as it came with the video script, and as it is described on the website, the language was "controlled and authentic, with subtly simplified dialog, repeated key phrases, and helpful visual cues", which was also useful for the level of the students I had.

During the course, I showed one episode from the series which is about 10 minutes long, and students did role-plays with the skits from the episode. Hadfield and Dörnyei (2013) say mimes, dramas and role-plays allow students "to enter into the imaginative world of a vision and give their ideal self a voice" (p.17), and incorporating what I often used in my other English courses fitted perfectly to the vision-based course in this study. The vision-based course lasted a total of 13 weeks excluding examinations. Each class usually consisted of 25 first year students (2 males and 23 females). Below is the

summary of what I taught in each class, particularly the main components related to vision enhancement. This summary is based on the course syllabus, which was designed taking theoretical principles into consideration. More detailed record of each class can be found in my field notes in the Appendix.

WEEK 1 UNDERSTANDING THE CURRENT IDENTITY CONCERNS—SELF-INTRODUCTION

The topic ‘self-introduction’ is quintessential as a starter of a new course, where it is for the first time for the teacher and each student to meet one another. Introducing oneself to others in English involves expressing his/her L2 identity. Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) suggest that, “‘Visionary’ intervention has to begin with understanding the student’s current identity concerns” (p. 39), which is also in line with EP, whose a main purpose is ‘understanding’. This activity was also intended to help me grasp a big picture of my students’ own perceptions as L2 users.

I gave out the material titled “Self-introduction”, which I made (Appendix 1, Week1, Front side). I first introduced myself in English and asked the students to take notes while listening to my self-introduction. After that, I asked the students to write down their own introduction about themselves. Then, they introduced themselves in pairs first, and in groups of four next. On the back of the worksheet, the topic and some questions to be discussed in

the following week, 'Language Learning History' was given for homework.

WEEK 2 LANGUAGE LEARNING HISTORY

Dörnyei (2001) claims "Most learners will have certain beliefs about language learning and most of these beliefs are likely to be (at least partly) incorrect" (p. 66). Szpunar and McDermott (2009) note that one is able to imagine his/her future vividly because of his/her ability to recollect past events. Reflecting on one's language learning history will help him/her understand where he/she is as a result of the past and also will help him/her imagine how he/she would like to be. In order to both help students reflect on their past and enable me to understand their learning experience. On this day, the topic "Language Learning History", which students was assigned as homework in the previous week, was discussed. The students in pairs shared what they wrote in their language learning history worksheet (See Appendix 1, Week 1, Back side). This worksheet was made adapting the idea of Murphey (1999).

Then, I said to the class, "Now we have thought about our past language learning experience to understand where we came from, and we are now going to focus on 'future'", and introduced the idea of 'vision'. I talked about a famous baseball player Ichiro and an Olympic gold medallist gymnast Kohei Uchimura, and that they had clear future visions of

themselves when they were young. Those stories are famous, and many of the students had read the essay written by Ichiro when he was in the 6th grade (See Appendix 1, Week 2, Back side). I showed the essay to the class because a few had not seen it. I also talked about the gymnast Kohei Uchimura. When he was 5, he drew some pictures of the moves he wanted to do when he grew up. (See Section 3.3). Kohei Uchimura's episodes were often reported on TV at the time of the London Olympics in 2012.

Introducing the subject "vision" on this day was appropriate because the class had just watched "Connect with English" (CWE hereafter), episode 1, and the practised skit from the episode included the main character Rebecca talking about her 'vision' of pursuing study in music (See Appendix 1, Week 2, Episode 1). The Japanese translation was given on the other side of the paper so that students could look at it once they learned all the phrases in English and tried to reproduce the language they have learned.

We discussed Rebecca's 'vision' and then, I also asked the students to think about what kind of visions of themselves they had. Finally, I gave the material titled "Thinking about your future and English" for the next class to the students and explained the questions, which they were asked to answer by the following week. They were asked to shift their focus from the past to the future this week.

WEEK 3 THINKING ABOUT FUTURE AND THE ROLE OF ENGLISH IN IT

The students talked in pairs for about 20 minutes about what they had written on the worksheet that had been given for homework (See Appendix 1, Week 2, Front side). They were asked not to just read out the text to each other, but to look at each other during this activity and ask questions or make comments while talking. My intention was to create an environment where the students were using the language to communicate their ideas, rather than just checking answers for homework together. In other words, I aimed at making my class a small intercultural place where students could try out their L2 selves.

Then, we watched CWE Episode 2 and practiced the skit from the episode. See the details of the rest of the class in my field notes.

WEEK 4 GIVING ADVICE—A ROADMAP TOWARDS THE GOAL

The activity given in this class was based on the idea that “The future self-image is accompanied by relevant and effective procedural strategies that act as a roadmap towards the goal” (Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014, p. 13). Course material 3 (See Appendix 1, Week 3, Front side) was given to the class. Answers given by an anonymous student from the class were written on it because her vision was expressed clearly. This was done purposefully as a motivational strategy in order to make the material more personalised and relevant

(Dörnyei, 2011; Lamb, 2017) to help some students who did not have practical ideas. I thought the answers given by Asami (pseudonym) would help them form their own visions. Then, I talked about the importance having a vision again, and added it was also necessary to think about how to make it happen, in a practical sense. The class worked on giving specific advice to the anonymous person (Asami), and then, moved onto thinking about their own practical strategies to achieve their goals. The other side of the material had questions to help them think about their own roadmap (See also Appendix 1, Week 3, Back side).

WEEK 5 TASTING THE FUTURE WITH NEAR PEER ROLE MODELS

Looking through the worksheet collected at the end of the previous class, I found that that many students had hard time making specific plans to achieve their visions. Dörnyei and Kubanyiova, (2014) observe, “We need to taste the future to desire it” (p. 46). Therefore, in thinking about making a material to use in this class, I decided to incorporate near peer role modelling (NPRMing hereafter) elements, expecting a potential positive effect on facilitating learners’ L2 vision.

Near peer role modelling (NPRMing) is a process of modelling peers who are close to our social, professional and/or age level who for some reason we may respect and admire (Murphey, 1998c). Previous research indicates that NPRMing has been conducive in various

educational settings (e.g., Murphey, 1998c; Murphey & Arao, 2001; Ogawa & Murphey, 2012; Singh, 2010). According to Murphey (1998c), learners might be more attracted to NPRMs psychologically as their excellence seems more possible to imitate and achieve, within the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD has been defined by Vygotsky (1978), as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86).

Course material 4 (See Appendix 1, Week 4, Back side) was created based on this NPRMing idea. On the front page of this worksheet, example advice given to the future bus tour guide was written (See Appendix 1, Week 4, Front side), and I talked about the importance of practicality and plausibility in setting one's goals. I also stressed that having a clear vision is important, but we also need the strategies to achieve the goals of our life and live out our visions. Then, I showed the class an eight-minute video clip of a former student Rina talking in English about her English learning beliefs and strategies. Rina had graduated from this college two years before and entered Utsunomiya University, which is considered to be a good national university. I thought she would be a great NPRM for the students as half of the students hope to be transferred to four-year universities after graduation.

In this video clip, Rina talks about her language learning beliefs and strategies. I was hoping some students would learn from watching her talk giving practical ideas for language learning because they did not know what to do, or how to study. I had used similar video clips in the past and it was effective in in provoking interests and motivation in language learning (Ogawa & Murphey, 2012). Finally, I talked about my own strategies for learning a foreign language and students also wrote what they do in the worksheets, which were collected at the end.

WEEK 6 THINKING ABOUT MY OWN LEARNING STRATEGIES

The worksheet given on this day was to help the students recall the learning strategies discussed in the previous week and reflect on their own efforts. Including the comments given by students on Course material 4 on what they do to improve their English, I made Course material 5 (See Appendix 1, Week 5) and gave it to the class on this day.

The students read each sentence aloud in pairs and checked if they understood all the words and phrases. They then, they put circles and stars in the brackets as instructed on the worksheet. I told them again that it is important for them to have a practical plan that they can follow and asked them to remember their decisions about starting something new to improve their English.

WEEK 7 MONITORING THE PROGRESS

Hadfield and Dörnyei (2013) highlight the importance of monitoring the actions taken to achieve the goals one has set as well as keeping the track of them privately and publically. In this lesson, I handed out the Course material 6 ‘Monitoring your progress’ (See Appendix 1, Week). They had to look at Material 3 and 5 to answer some questions. It was important that they reflected on their language learning strategies, including what was working and what wasn’t. By having them observe their own performance and progress, it was hoped their visions for the future would be strengthened as Kouzes and Posner (2009) suggest, “...the best way to lead people into the future is to connect with them deeply in the present...” (p. 21). The class also worked on the skit from CWE Episode 3.

WEEK 8 LISTENING TO OTHER STUDENTS’ INTERCULTURAL STORIES

Although class activities up to previous week such as role plays and talking about language learning experience were all incorporated to cultivate students’ L2 selves, it was this week that students intercultural experience were explicitly discussed for the first time in class. All first-year students including my students were advised to watch the presentation given by some second year students who had gone on a trip to the U.S. Although this was

scheduled outside of the English class, I decided to take advantage of this opportunity and include it in my course as I thought this was a perfect vision enhancement activity that could be integrated into the course, which focussed on culture. I thought it would be good for my students to listen to the second-year students' cultural experience in the U.S. and use this topic as a catalyst to reflect on their own international /intercultural experience. I made a worksheet (Appendix 1, Week 7-8) with some questions that they had to answer after listening to the presentation; e.g., Where did they go? When did they go? Which presenter's episode did they like? I handed it out to the students and explained what they needed to listen for at the presentation. After that, I gave the bilingual worksheet of the Episode 4 conversation which is shown in Appendix 1, Week 8. I got them to try to have the conversation in Japanese and how the students responded to this instruction will be elaborated later in Chapter 7 (7.3.2).

WEEK 9 TALKING ABOUT YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE AS AN ENGLISH USER IN AN INTERCULTURAL SETTING (1)

The students' watched the presentation by the second-year students in the previous week and they talked about what they wrote for homework (Material 7 given in Week 8) in groups of four. After everyone in the group spoke, I asked them to choose a representative,

who would speak in front of the whole class. The representatives' episodes were all interesting and the class seemed to be paying genuine attention to the speakers. After that, I gave a model essay describing my experience in Australia (See Appendix 1, Week 9). I asked them to make something similar for the following lesson as homework.

WEEK 10 TALKING ABOUT YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE AS AN ENGLISH USER IN AN INTERCULTURAL SETTING (2)

I started the class by dividing the students into six groups of four. First, each student read their assignment to the group members while showing the photos on the materials they brought. I asked them to make comments and ask questions when each speaker finished talking. Then, I asked them to choose one speaker from each group and the representatives came to the front and talked about their experience. I also showed the representatives' work on the front screen. I made positive comments and asked questions after each speaker had spoken.

WEEK 11 PRACTISING TO PERFORM DIFFERENT L2 IDENTITIES THROUGH PRESCRIBED ROLES 1

We practiced the conversation of CWE Episode 5, and then reviewed conversations from episode 1 to 5. I told the students that they had to know all the skits for the exam. I had the students all lined up at the back of the room and practice changing partners.

WEEK 12 THE INTERCULTURAL LANGUAGE LEARNING PROFILER

After discussing intercultural experience in Week 10, I thought it was a good time to have the students try the online questionnaire developed by Shaules (2013) to help the students reflect on their language and intercultural learning. I gave the material which is shown in Appendix 1 (Week 12) and explained how to log onto the JII website to take the online questionnaire. I went through the first several questions with the students to make sure they understand the procedure. Then, they answered the questions on their own.

WEEK 13 PRACTISING TO PERFORM DIFFERENT L2 IDENTITIES THROUGH PRESCRIBED ROLES 2

First, I told the class the exam would be given on July 31 and they would be asked to write a short essay individually and perform a skit from the video episodes in pairs. We practiced the skit from CWE Episode 6, the scene in which the main characters ending their romantic relationship.

The course evaluation form was given at the end (See Section 5.4.3 and Appendix 4 for the content). I told them they did not have to put their names if they did not want to. I made sure that they understood this questionnaire was only to evaluate the course and the answers they give would not affect the grades.

WEEK 14 REVISION AND PREPARATION FOR THE EXAM

We reviewed essay writing and the episode conversations for the exam. At the end of the class, I called the ten potential participants outside the classroom and explained orally about the interview. One student (Yuko) told me that she wanted to do it right away. I will give more details on the selection of participants and ethical issues later in this section.

WEEK 15 FINAL EXAM

Both written and conversation tests were given as announced on this day. As for the conversation exam, the students had to act out the scene in the assigned episode they had practised during the course. The students were told at the beginning of the course that this would be part of the exam, which could have brought positive wash back effect in students' engagement in learning the skits. Explaining the assessment criteria at the beginning of the course students is required by the institution. The instructors are advised to consider several

factors such as attendance, class participation, quizzes, reports, and exams before giving them final grades.

The written exam was not related to the vision enhancement activities. Therefore, description regarding the written exam content is omitted here.

REFLECTION ON THE COURSE

The aim of this section was to demonstrate the theoretical grounding for the course. Looking back at the course syllabus now gives me the realisation that my understanding of both vision and intercultural communication was limited at the beginning. In terms of culture, I was aware of the hidden dimensions of culture as described with the iceberg analogy (Terreni & McCallum, 2003). However, when discussing it in my class, I seem to have made it look more like culture related to different nations and countries by having them reflect on their international experiences rather than including it more explicitly as a way to explore to reach “an expanded sense of self” (Shaules, 2016, p. 7). Similarly, because my focus was on L2 vision, I was not paying attention to visions and motivation which were not related to language learning until I started working with data during analysis and started to understand that being a language learner is “just one aspect of their identity” (Ushioda, 2009, p. 216).

As I will show later in the findings chapters, it was through my in-depth reflection on what I observed in my classroom that I began to appreciate particular ideas on culture and intercultural communication discussed in Chapters 6, 7 , and 8. In addition, my ongoing reflection on the literature has given me an interesting lens to understand the interculturality pertinent to my classroom community as Murphey et al. (2012) put it, “In a community of practice, community identity is being shaped by its members and their experiences of working or learning together” (p. 224). In Chapters 6, 7, and 8, I will examine the understanding that has emerged for me and for the students in the discussion of my data.

5.2.4 INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

When the course was coming to an end, I selected eight students who I wanted to interview from my course. In selecting the potential interview participants, I was initially planning to select students who have shown significant change in their L2 vision before and after the course. However, my idea evolved during the course as I saw some interesting phenomena and decided to take the following aspects into consideration as my sampling criteria: a) class participation based on my observation and b) interesting L2 learning and intercultural experience which the students described in class materials. Because one of the study aims was to investigate the impact of the course on the students’ L2 vision

development, looking closely at the students' engagement in the course was crucial. Having the sampling criteria b) interesting L2 learning and intercultural experience which the students described in class materials was based on the idea that those experiences would have influenced their initial L2 visions as our past experience shape how we see ourselves now and for future.

Having decided the above-mentioned focus of my study, I took the sampling procedures similar to those of the case study approach. Since this qualitative EP study aims at gaining in-depth understanding concerning L2 vision development, obtaining data intensively from different sources regarding each participant was important. Therefore, purposeful sampling was appropriate in order to enable me to identify some themes that were interesting to me for finding answers to my research questions as Merriam (1998) proposes: "Purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most must be learned" (p. 61). As Table 5.2 shows, my purposeful sampling criteria were the students: 1) who were active or quiet in the classroom, 2) whose visions they described were vague or practical, and 3) who had and had not been overseas. In the end, I selected the eight participants listed in Table 5.2 assuming that some of them would not give me their consent. To my surprise, all of them gave me their consent, and I interviewed them all. This is a third

of the students in the course (eight out of 25), and included the only two male students in class. It can be said the sampling was well-balanced in terms of the representativeness of the classroom population. Although Yin (2003) pointed out that studying a single participant ‘can represent a significant contribution to knowledge and theory building’ (p. 40) in qualitative research, having multiple participants in the current was helpful to understand the multifaceted and dynamic nature of L2 vision formation.

TABLE 5.2 INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS’ PROFILES

Name	Class participation	Initial vision described on the class material	Intercultural experience
Asami (female)	Active	Practical (wants to be a bus tour guide)	Played tennis with a Korean girl in high school. She also lived with her in the same dormitory room.
Aya (female)	Very active	vague & unrealistic (rich, living in England)	Went to China on a government funded project after the earthquake when she was in high school. Stayed there for 10 days.
Chika (female)	Very active	Practical (wants to work for the government)	Never been overseas. Had an assistant teacher who was from America in junior high school.
Kei (female)	Very active	Vague (wants to work at an airport)	Did home stay in Canada for 2 weeks when she was in high school.

Kahoko (female)	Quiet but diligent	Vague (clerk, office worker)	Never been overseas. Has an aunt who is Thai.
Seiji (male)	Quiet but diligent	Vague (wants to use English for office work, talking with foreigners)	Has a Filipino mother and has been to the Philippines several times. Went to Germany and did home stay when he was in high school. Has also hosted an exchange student from Germany.
Masaya (male)	Quiet but diligent	Vague (wants to use English for work)	Did home stay in Scotland for 10 days when he was in high school.
Yuko (female)	Quiet but diligent	Somewhat vague (wants to be a journalist?)	Went to Khabarovsk, Russia on a government funded programme in high school for a short stay.

(All names are pseudonyms.)

5.4 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

In this section, I will describe and explain the specific data collection method and instruments used for this study to find answers to the following two research questions: 1) ‘What L2 visions and L2 vision-related experiences do the course participants have when they begin their college life?’ and 2) ‘How is this L2 vision impacted by English course components that aim to facilitate their L2 vision as intercultural speakers?’ As I explained briefly in Section 5.1, the data in my study comes from the following sources: the students’

written narratives (class materials), my field notes including audio and video recordings of the classes, course evaluations, and semi-structured interviews.

My dual roles as a teacher and researcher in this study also prompted me to use the students' written narratives (class materials) both for pedagogical and research purposes, which was also in accordance with EP. Field notes, audio and video recordings of the classes were necessary to recall some specific critical moments that I needed to reflect on for analysis. The students' responses given on the course evaluation were used to grasp the overall course effect and identify some potential interview participants. The interview data was used for deeper analysis to understand the impact of the course on their L2 visions as well as their prior L2 and intercultural learning that could have influenced their engagement in my course. I collected this data in order to gain an in-depth understanding of the participants' L2 vision development and the impact of the course on their visions

5.4.1 WRITTEN NARRATIVES

As explained in 5.1, this set of data also had a pedagogical function, and they were part of normal class materials and an important tool for this EP study whose one of the principles is "Integrating the work for understanding fully into existing curricular practices is a way of minimizing the burden and maximizing sustainability" (Allwright & Hanks, 2009,

p. 154). To quote Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014), "... Narratives are powerful tools for crafting our identity; they engage our thoughts and imaginations in an unparalleled manner both when we listen to a story and when we construct one" (p. 58). During the course, I prepared some tasks for the students, in which they were asked to write about themselves, their ideas about and their own experience in language learning. Some narratives were accompanied by photos. Then, they discussed stories with their peers in pairs or in groups. To be more precise, the narratives collected from the class worksheets were on the following topics: 1) Self-introduction, 2) Language learning history, 3) Thinking about the future and English, and 4) International experience. The worksheet samples are shown in Section 5.2.2 and in the Appendix. These narratives served multiple purposes as they were used by the students: 1) to reflect on their experiences related to intercultural and language learning, 2) to practice writing in L2, and 3) to practise speaking and listening in group discussions in which the students shared what they wrote with other students. There is a disadvantage to using this pedagogical tool as research data. Their linguistic skills were not advanced enough to express complicated ideas. Therefore, the details that could have been useful in identifying more potential interview participants might have been absent. However, once I identified the interview participants, I was able to ask them to elaborate on what they wrote during the interviews.

The theoretical value of written narratives corresponds to this study's investigation of students' L2 visions. Goody (quoted in Brown & Yule, 1983, p. 13) explains that written language has two main functions: One is obviously storage, and the other is transferring language into a visual form. Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) also point out that "to record something in a visible and permanent form also requires clarity and coherence in thinking, and the product will become 'our story', that is, a part of us in a more permanent way than what we say" (p. 59). Supplemented with spoken narratives provided in semi-structured interviews, the written narratives helped me understand how the students made sense of their past L2 learning and intercultural experience and gave meaning to them, providing insights in the development of the students' L2 vision from the students' perspectives.

5.4.2 COURSE FIELD NOTES AND RECORDINGS

I kept field notes as well as audio and video recordings of the classes in order to use them to recall specific moments to be used for later analysis. Creswell (2008) considers field notes to be extremely important because they are a good complementary data source for observation data, providing portraits of the participants, the physical setting, particular ongoing descriptions of events as well as personal reflections and reactions in classroom ethnographic research. During the classes, I jotted down anything I noticed about students'

engagement and behaviour that looked interesting, for example: when a student gave a performance that impressed or entertained the audience, and when I felt the classroom was full of energy with students' voices and laughter. While I was quickly writing down these brief notes, I was just following my intuition and did not have much time to think about their significance. However, when I turned them into field notes after the classes, where I recorded memos with more detailed information electronically, I was able to think more deeply about what it meant. As Silverman (2006) points out, "in making field notes, one is not simply recording data, but also analysing them" (p. 92). In other words, when I decided to record this incident in my field notes, it was because this was something I found worth keeping in relation to my interests. The text box below shows an example of this with an extract from my field notes.

July 3, 2014

.... We practiced the conversation from Episode 5. Masaya was nervous when he did the conversation with me as Sandy and Rebecca. When I pretended to cry, apparently he came closer to me and everyone laughed (in a nice way). I think it was considered as a great 'communicative' move. Too bad it is not in the video, but we can see how the other students responded to his behaviour....

Masaya was a diligent but very quiet student. He was not the type to attract other students' attention by making jokes or wisecracks during class; he seemed quite reserved and did not

show much emotion. However, with this incident, I felt I saw his hidden identity. His coming closer to me as I pretended to cry must have made him look like a different person, one who showed affection and care. This is why I thought this moment had to be kept in my field notes so that I could ask Masaya about this later in the interview to find out how he saw it from his perspective. I will elaborate on this in Chapter 6 and 7. In this way, I used my field notes to record critical incidents in addition to what I taught in each class helped me later during the analysis procedure “in generating a comprehensive and detailed description of a content domain” (Woolsey, 1986, p. 242) as I synthesised it with other kinds of data. In my project, the content domain was the aspect that had to do with students’ L2 learning motivation and L2 self.

An example of my analysis procedure using field notes with other data sources will be illustrated in Section 5.5. I kept field notes from the beginning of the course (April 17, 2014) until the last day of the course (July 24, 2014). There are 14 entries and approximately 4400 words in total. The entire field notes are provided in Appendix 5.

In addition, I also made video and audio recordings of the lessons so that I could use the recorded data to recall particular moments if necessary and to analyse how students responded to certain tasks later. I have often made video recordings of students’ presentations for teaching and grading purposes. I told the students at the beginning of the

course that classes would always be recorded for research purposes. At first, some students seemed a little self-conscious (avoiding the camera or giggling). However, they eventually became used to having the recording equipment as a normal part of their classroom routine and after the initial 'getting used to' phase, I did not observe any tangible changes to their attitudes and behaviours in the classroom as a result of the recording. Certainly, "the observer's paradox" (Labov, 1972) has been a well-known concern in sociolinguistic studies involving digital recording. Similarly, it has been an extensively-documented problem in teacher observation research and practice (Howard & Donaghue 2014). However, my aim was not to capture the exact speech quality that was spontaneously produced in my classroom setting. Nor was it to observe naturalistic settings of language learning and teaching as such where any departure from typical routine would be seen as undesirable. Rather, my purpose was to document and understand the contribution to the quality of classroom life of what was clearly a specific pedagogical intervention. I explained to the students that the purpose of making recordings was for myself and to recall particular moments later if necessary. In the spirit of the EP approach, I was honest and open about the research purposes with my students to create what Cameron et al. (1994) call "an atmosphere of trust" (p. 28) between myself and my students. The students were not research participants

to be observed by an outside researcher recording their behaviours, but rather co-participants in this inquiry into L2 vision.

Looking back, I really appreciate having this digital data because trying to notice and record everything while I was teaching or interviewing would have been impossible. As I will discuss later (in Chapter 8), listening to some recorded interviews and transcribing them gave me the opportunity to hear what I did not during the actual interview. Being able to take screenshots from the videos I recorded in the class was helpful in portraying some critical moments examined in Chapter 7. The volume of the digital data is shown in Table 5.3. In Lesson 4, the class was not recorded because I forgot to take the equipment to the class. In Lesson 12, the class was held in the computer lab where the students took the online questionnaire created by Shaules (2013), and I did not record the class as the students worked on their own. In Lessons 14, it was not recorded because the class worked to prepare for the exam that was given the following week, of which no recording was made either.

5.4.3 COURSE EVALUATION

When the course was coming to an end, I gave a questionnaire to the students in order to elicit the students' views on the intervention course and grasp an overall picture of the course impact on the students. It also enabled me to collect both quantitative and qualitative data.

The questionnaire was distributed at the end of the course during class time and collected immediately after completion. A total of 24 responses (22 female, 2 male) out of 25 students were collected. One student whose responses were not collected was not present in class on the day the questionnaire was distributed. The questionnaire was given to the students in Japanese to avoid misunderstanding or confusion which may be caused by the lack of L2 abilities and knowledge. Below is the translation of the description written on the actual course evaluation (See Appendix 4 for the original Japanese version).

Comprehensive English 1-B 2014 Course Evaluation

Name: _____

- I understand that the purpose of filling out this form is to 1) evaluate this course so it can be improved, and also 2) to contribute to research on students' motivation in language learning.
- I understand my answers will be kept confidential.

_____ Check to show you read this

For each activity listed below, put the number that shows your view.

1 = Very useful

3 = Don't know

4 = Not very useful

2 = Useful

5 = Not useful at all

Activities	Your rating	Reason why you gave the rating
1. Talking in pairs and groups about future goals and dreams		
2. Talking in pairs and groups about international experience		
3. Talking in pairs and groups about learning strategies		
4. Talking in pairs and groups about past language learning experience		
5. Practising conversations of the video episodes in pairs		
6. Answering the online questionnaire		

***** Please give your comments freely here! *****

Example) What aspect of the course did you find the most valuable and why?

What aspect did you or did you not enjoy most? What kind of difficulty did you experience?

As shown above, the course evaluation had six questions explicitly asking students to rate the main activities in the course. The main activities were the components incorporated in this course to enhance the students' visions as intercultural speakers. Their aims were to facilitate reflection on their language learning and intercultural experience. The

questions from 1 to 4 were relating to what is explained above. The activity in Question 5 “*Practising conversations of the video episodes in pairs*” is not only related to vision enhancement, and this is what I do in my other English classes, and I believe this is effective in improving students’ linguistic skills and their language learning motivation. I was particularly interested to know how working with peers would be perceived by the students. That is why the entire questionnaire items except for number 6: *Answering the online questionnaire* has the phrase “*working in pairs and groups*”. I thought it would be interesting to include question 6 to see if there is a significant difference in students’ rating between the activities that involve working with others and the one that did not.

The ratings used to show the students’ view were based on a five-point Likert scale, and they were: *1 = Very useful, 2 = Useful, 3 = Don’t know, 4 = Not very useful, and 5 = Not useful at all*. The students were also asked to write a reason why they gave the rating for the each question item. At the end of the form, there was a free comment section provided to answer the open-ended questions, where they wrote their opinions about the course freely (e.g., What aspect of the course they found the most valuable, enjoyable and why, what kind of difficulty they experienced). I was hoping to gain more in-depth data by providing this section. I did not take any steps to control for the influence of other course evaluations the students were involved with as such measures were not appropriate for the EP design of this

study. My involvement as someone with a close relationship with the students was an advantage, and I was in a position to better understand students' engagement with the course and interactions among the participants.

5.4.4 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

There were three main purposes for the interviews: 1) to elicit their views on the course, 2) to ask them to elaborate on some written narratives they gave on class materials regarding their past language learning and intercultural experiences, and 3) to ask them about their future self-image. Semi-structured interviews were appropriate for seeking answers to my research questions because I had a set of questions that I wanted to ask my students, yet they gave me and my informants some freedom to talk about what was relevant to the topic, which raised some interesting points for later analysis. The questions I asked in the interviews included: how the course was, what they remembered from the course, if they liked English, what kind of learning experience they had had in the past, and how they saw themselves in the future. This all relates to the research questions I set in order to investigate the impact of the course and past L2 learning and intercultural experience on the students' L2 vision development.

Interviews are a commonly-used method in applied linguistics and education and are believed to be an effective method for collecting in-depth data. Talmy and Richards (2011) note that interviews have been used to seek insight in cognitive processes such as language learning, motivation, and language attitudes. Kubanyiova and Feryok (2015) point out that a researcher's epistemology is manifested in the interpretive process of their findings. My positionality in the current EP study is in line with what Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) call a 'traveller' as a metaphor in contrast to a 'miner', who uncovers knowledge that is already there. The traveller metaphor is used to indicate that the interviewer sets out on a journey to explore unknown territories through engaging in dialogues with interlocutors. Therefore, this process is meaning-making, and requires the researcher to unpack what has been collected carefully to interpret the findings. Some puzzling phenomenon I observed in class or identified in the narratives the students gave on class worksheets needed to be explored and understood using different types of data. To give an example, I asked Masaya, who I noted in Section 5.4.2, about how he saw the incident described in my field notes on July 3, 2014.

July 3, 2014

.... We practiced the conversation from Episode 5. Masaya was nervous when he did the conversation with me as Sandy and Rebecca. When I pretended to cry, apparently, he came closer to me and everyone

laughed (in a nice way). I think it was considered as a great 'communicative' move. Too bad it is not in the video, but we can see how the other students responded to his behaviour....

As will be featured in Chapter 7, he told me in the interview this moment was something that he also remembered specifically from the course.

Extract: Masaya stepping out of his comfort zone

T: What do you remember the most from the course?

S: (Omission) Well, you know that we, you and I, performed in front of the class.

T: Yeah (laugh)!

S: That is what I remember the most.

(In all interview extracts, S stands for student and T for teacher)

Without having this conversation, my understanding of the phenomenon (Masaya expressing his hidden identity in my course surprising me and other students) would have been limited. In this respect, interviews were meaning-making process I went through jointly with the participants to explore the puzzles I encountered while teaching the course. Many interesting things came up during the interviews, which will be discussed in the following chapters. In addition, I started seeing and hearing what I had not during the actual interview while transcribing the interview data. Synthesising the data collected from interviews with data collected from other methods enabled me to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' L2 vision formation and provide a fuller account for the factors related to it.

The interviews were conducted after the course and ended in early August, 2014. I conducted the interviews in Japanese to avoid any misunderstanding that may have been caused by using a foreign language. I made audio recordings and transcribed all the interviews with the students' permission and translated selected segments for discussion and analysis in the following chapters (seven to nine). As a summary of this section, the following table provides an overview of all the data collected for this study.

TABLE 5.3 SUMMARY OF THE COLLECTED DATA

Data-collection site & the number of participants	Data resources & Volume
The course 25 (23 female, 2 male)	Written narratives on the following topics: 1) Self-introduction (Week 1) 2) Language learning history (Week 2) 3) Thinking about your future and English (Week 3) 4) My international experience (Week 10)

	<p>Recording of the classes</p> <p>17 April (Lesson 1) Audio (63 minutes)</p> <p>24 April (Lesson 2) Audio (76 minutes)</p> <p>1 May (Lesson 3) Audio (85minutes)</p> <p>15 May (Lesson 5) Audio (53 minutes)</p> <p>22 May (Lesson 6) Audio (76 minutes)</p> <p>29 May (Lesson 7) Video (88 minutes)</p> <p>5 June (Lesson 8) Video (73 minutes)</p> <p>12 June (Lesson 9) Video (79 minutes)</p> <p>26 June (Lesson 10) Video (71 minutes)</p> <p>3 July (Lesson 11) Video (85 minutes)</p> <p>17 July (Lesson 13) Video (81 minutes)</p>	<p>Field notes</p> <p>(Total word count: 4358 words)</p> <p>17 April (Lesson 1) 117 words</p> <p>24 April (Lesson 2) 491 words</p> <p>1 May (Lesson 3) 264 words</p> <p>8 May (Lesson 4) 208 words</p> <p>15 May (Lesson 5) 281 words</p> <p>22 May (Lesson 6) 257 words</p> <p>29 May (Lesson 7) 735 words</p> <p>5 June (Lesson 8) 557 words</p> <p>12 June (Lesson 9) 344 words</p> <p>26 June (Lesson 10) 290 words</p> <p>3 July (Lesson 11) 236 words</p> <p>10 July (Lesson 12) 246 words</p> <p>17 July (Lesson 13) 231 words</p> <p>24 July (Lesson 14) 100 words</p>
	<p>Course evaluation (collected on 17 July)</p>	
<p>Interviews</p> <p>July-August, 2014</p> <p>8 (6 female, 2 male)</p>	<p>Audio-recording</p> <p>31 July (Asami/25 minutes)</p> <p>31 July (Masaya/45 minutes)</p> <p>6 August (Kahoko/35 minutes)</p> <p>17 August (Yuko/42 minutes)</p> <p>20 August (Seiji/37 minutes)</p> <p>24 August (Chika/35 minutes)</p> <p>26 August (Kei/34 minutes)</p> <p>1 September (Aya/41 minutes)</p>	

5.5 DATA ANALYSIS

Despite the availability of relevant software for analysing qualitative data, my analytical approach has relied on manual methods of data analysis as it was more efficient to do so considering the types and the volume of the data used in this study. For example, as explained in 5.4.2, the fieldnotes which I recorded after each class already involved analytical process and it enabled me to outline key emerging themes and areas that needed to be examined more deeply. Similarly, as shown in 5.4.4, in transcribing the audio data gained in subsequent interviews with specific key participants, I noticed what I had not during the actual interviews, which helped me identify some themes for further analysis. This way of working with data was effective and an advantage compared to the use of software. The possibility of a duplication of the analytical processes and additional time and effort needed to achieve the same level of proficiency in this case outweighed the advantages that the use of software would have added to your project. I was comfortable working as a practitioner involved in the EP research project.

To seek answers for the research questions: 1) ‘What L2 vision do the course participants have when they begin their college life?’ and 2) ‘How is this L2 vision impacted by English course components that aim to facilitate their L2 vision as intercultural speakers?’, I started with content-analysis as the main approach for interpreting the data collected for

the current study. Content analysis is used for “examining trends and patterns in documents” (Stemler, 2001). The trends were found by identifying the words and phrases that had the highest frequency count, and putting some students’ responses into different categories that fell under the same theme. Therefore, this method can also be described as thematic analysis, which is often used interchangeably with content-analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006), thematic analysis allows flexibility and it is “a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data” (p. 6). Although it is commonly used in various disciplines, there is no common definition or procedure for thematic analysis that is agreed upon (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) explain that thematic analysis does not derive from a specific theoretical framework that can be clearly differentiated from another such as conversation analysis, interpretative phenomenological analysis, discourse analysis, or narrative analysis. They also note, “Through its theoretical freedom, thematic analysis provides a flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data” (p. 5). In addition to identifying trends and patterns, I also paid attention to the descriptions that contained more specific information and vivid images: i.e. specifying occupation as a “travel agent” rather than working at an “airport” and illustrating a vivid physical image such as “I have long hair” and “a slim body”. In fact, I did not know where to start, and I thought this method would allow me to have

some choices depending on what I find to provide ‘a thick description’ (Geertz, 1973; Ryle, 1971) with an interpretivist approach in the later analysis to portray students’ L2 vision development in their unique contexts.

Looking back, how I started the analysis process can be described as the ‘miner’ metaphor (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009), as someone trying to uncover knowledge existing in the responses the students gave on class materials. I will explain this in detail below. To answer the first research question, ‘What L2 vision do Japanese students bring to the classroom when they begin their college life?’, I used the written narratives given by the students on one of the class materials ‘Thinking about your future and English’ (Appendix 1, Week 2) and put all their responses into digital format (Table 5.4 below).

TABLE 5.4 STUDENTS’ RESPONSES IN MATERIAL 2 WORKSHEET

	Name*	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Question 6
1	Asami	For work at transportation company	Explain about Iwate's tourist spots	Tourists	Bus tour guide
2	Aya	For working in England	Can talk about anything	?	bank
3	Sayaka	For talking with my family	Can talk about myself	My family and friends who live overseas	government
4	Erina	Honeymoon	Shopping	Foreigners	Nursery school teacher

5	Chiharu	For travelling	Can have daily conversations and tell jokes	Foreigners	construction company
6	Chika	For travelling	Can talk about Japanese culture	My pen pals	local government
7	Ruka	For travelling	Explain about Japanese culture to foreigners	Foreign tourists	Tourist industry
8	Honomi	For travelling and talking with foreign residents	Explain about Japanese culture, learn about foreign culture and problems	Foreigners	I don't have a clear image, but I want to make people happy
9	Kei	For work and travelling	Can speak fluently	Foreigners	airport
10	Kahoko	For travelling	Can have daily and travel conversations	colleagues	office worker
11	Kaoru	For travelling	Teaching foreigners	friends	Work in Sendai
12	Kiyomi	For travelling	Can have daily conversations	Foreign tourists	a big company
13	Mamiko	For travelling	Explain about Japanese culture and history	Foreign visitors	airport
14	Mikiko	For talking to foreign visitors	Give English guide tours in Kyoto and Nara	Foreign tourists	Tour conductor
15	Misaki	For talking with foreign customers	Work	Foreign customers	Hotel
16	Naomi	For talking to foreign visitors	Can have business and daily conversations	Friends and customers	Tourist industry
17	Seiji	For work	Can speak better than now, but not enough	colleagues	Trading company

18	Shiori	For talking with her husband who is American	Explain about Japanese culture to friends and family	My foreign friends and children	Have not decided yet, maybe a shop assistant
19	Rinko	For work at travel agency	Explain about Japanese culture and history	Foreigners	Travel agency
20	Masaya	For work	Can talk about music and sports	colleagues	Travel agency
21	Yuko	For work	Can talk about foreign countries	colleagues	Reporter
22	Yuka	For talking with Taylor Swift in her concert	Can speak with foreigners	Taylor	Office clerk
23	Yumi	For talking to foreign visitors	Explain about local culture to foreigners	Foreign residents	local government or bank
24	Yuria	For work	Can speak better than now	Work-related people	announcer

* All names are pseudonyms

In analysing how students saw themselves using English in the future, I paid special attention to Questions 3-6 because they were particularly concerned with students' visions. I attempted to identify the highest frequency words in what they had written for the answer to each question to examine "trends and patterns in documents" (Stemler, 2001). The word that had the highest frequency count was "foreign", which on the surface appeared to indicate students' L2 visions as treated in the students' narratives. However, as I went deeper to mine the uncovered knowledge by examining educational policies and public discourses, and

synthesised it with other kinds of data, I discovered that the response reflected wider societal discourses rather than the students' own views. Therefore, I concluded that those 'visions' may not have been ones that the students actually identified with and that what may appear to be a clear-cut 'theme' on the surface emerges as an insight that needs further in-depth interpretation in light of other data sources. I will give another example of this process in which I used data in order to understand the formation of the initial vision of particular students who were the interview participants. For example, the student number 20 in the above table was one of the interview participants, and he described his future as someone using English for work at a travel agency and using English to talk to colleagues. Because his description for his occupation was quite specific, I asked him about that during the interview as shown in the interview extract here.

Extract: Masaya talking about his future vision

T: Do you have any future goals? We talked a little about this in class. I think you wrote that you wanted to work for a travel agency. Do you still have that goal?

S: Yes.

T: I see. What made you set that kind of goal?

S: Yes. Well, I went to the UK, and the tour conductor was with us for the whole time. She was attentive and kind and taught us a lot of things. She was a tour conductor, but then, I thought I would like to have that kind of job.

This is an example of how I gradually came to understand his L2 vision development more deeply using different data sources. I first noticed that he specified his occupation unlike many others in the class and there was the incident described in the last section, which made me more curious. These factors contributed to my selecting him as a potential interview participant. I examined all the data I collected regarding him at the end and synthesised it with an interpretive approach focusing on particular events and his actions to understand what they meant to him. In the words of Borg (1998), "... from an exploratory-interpretive perspective, research is conceived as a task of interpreting human action by understanding why people behave in the way they do" (p. 11).

I analysed the data to seek answers for the second research question, 'How is this L2 vision impacted by English course components that aim at facilitating their L2 vision as intercultural speakers?' in a similar manner, except I used some quantitative data in part. The data used for analysis included written narratives (as class worksheets with the following topics: self-introduction, language learning history, near peer role models, and international experience), my filed notes, and audio and video recordings of the classes. This data also helped me select potential informants for further interviews, which I conducted after the course. As mentioned above, I collected data mainly via qualitative methods; however, on the last day of the intervention course, I administered a questionnaire to gather quantitative

data on the effectiveness of the intervention course, which I thought would help me grasp the overall picture of the effect of the course. I also hoped that the questionnaire would help elicit all the students' views on the course. I put the numerical results as shown in the Table 5.5 below. Then, I got the sense that most of the course activities were perceived favourably by the students, which will be discussed further in Chapter 7 along with other themes which emerged from this data as the basis.

TABLE 5.5 STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

Questionnaire item	Very useful	Useful	Don't know	Not very useful	Not useful at all
Q1 Talking in pairs and groups about future dreams and goals	8 (33.3%)	14 (58.3%)	2 (8%)	0	0
Q2 Talking in pairs and groups about intercultural experience	11 (45.8%)	11 (45.8%)	2 (8%)	0	0
Q3 Talking in pairs and groups about language learning strategies	18 (75%)	6 (25%)	0	0	0
Q4 Talking in pairs and groups about past language learning experience	9 (37.5%)	13 (54.2%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	0
Q5 Practising the skits in pairs	18 (75%)	6 (25%)	0	0	0
Q6 Answering the questions of Dr Shaules' questionnaire	10 (41.7%)	9 (37.5%)	4 (16.7%)	2 (8%)	0

After that, I put all the text data into an electronic format and translated all of it into English. In this way, I was able to see what each student wrote. Then, I started to highlight the phrases with different colours according to the rough categories I made in relation to my interest and research questions. Part of this is shown in Table 5.6 below.

**TABLE 5.6 EXTRACT OF THE COLOUR-CODED TEXTS
IN COURSE EVALUATION COMMENTS**

Name	Comments
Student A	I really enjoyed practising the skits of Rebecca and Matt. I got to learn a lot of conversational English and I think my acting skills got better. This did not feel like a "class", it was very relaxing. When we wrote essays and about our own experiences, we had to talk with Huiling sensei first to get her help and it was helpful Up to high school level, writing was the main thing and communicating was not and I was not able to talk much first, but at least I gained confidence through this course.
Student B	Not writing but Speaking was the main thing we did in this course and it was great. I think it helps learning. It was good to talk with people who I had never talked to before in this course. Watching the videos and practising the skits is a good idea because I can visualise the situation. The phrases we learned in this class can be used in other classes. It was also good to know what kind of learning strategies other people have as I wanted to try what they were doing. I have never been overseas so it was great to hear about other people's overseas experiences. It made me want to go overseas more.
Student C	Shadowing your English was most useful because by copying you, I understood the accents and intonation. We don't do this kind of things, so it was a very precious opportunity. It looks like you are having so much fun and it makes us happy. I feel like I was always smiling in your classes. I wanted to hear more about your experiences and learning strategies.
Student D	When I sat next to a person whose pronunciation was good, it was helpful. Maybe this has nothing to do with the course, but it was good to talk to people who I had never

	talked to. What was most useful was learning expressions used in daily conversation. I could really feel this when I spoke to foreigners.
Category by theme	self-efficacy, confidence (if you think you can do it, you can imagine yourself doing it in future...vision)
	enjoy speaking (wants to do more, helps motivation, can express identity)
	social networking (purpose of communication)
	history and beliefs in language learning (vision construct)
	vision, NPRMing (if she can do it, I can do it)
	emotional contagion

The initial rough categories were made rather intuitively to enable me to have something to start with. My intuitions seem to have been guided by existing research and as I began to interrogate an initially identified set of such constructs, I came up with more fine-tuned themes that were clearly grounded in my own empirical data, some of which led to a critical evaluation of re-theorising and existing research as shown the discussion chapters. In other words, a top-down approach was taken first as a guiding framework informed by existing research, and bottom-up later by working with deeper meanings of the data, and constructs became progressively more grounded in the actual data). As can be seen in the chart, the red highlight indicated a general theme of self-efficacy and confidence. Self-efficacy and confidence is linked to L2 motivation in the existing research. The pink one has to do with enjoyment in L2 speaking, which seemed to be conducive to L2 learning motivation and cultivating visions as L2 users. The light blue is the category which I titled

‘social networking’. Seeing descriptions given by the students that fell under this category convinced me that my classroom had a role to play as a “community of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger 1998). The light green has to do with history and beliefs in language learning. They are the sources of the students’ vision construct. The darker blue represents direct reference to vision including near peer role modeling (NPRMing). Lastly, the orange has to do with emotional contagion. As is in the British proverb ‘Enthusiasm is contagious’; emotions are contagious (Hatfield, Cacioppo, & Rapson, 1994). Pekrun, Goetz, Titz, & Perry (2002) remark, “...through the process of emotional contagion, a teacher’s enthusiasm may stimulate excitement and positive affect in students, but having enthusiastic students in one’s class may in turn fuel the teacher’s enthusiasm in teaching this class” (p. 102). This was a very important element in stimulating learning and affect the classroom as a “community of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger 1998).

In fact, Student C in the above table is the focal participant of Chapter 8, and Student D is one of the focal participants in Chapter 6. I started looking at these comments written by the focal participants and started writing vignettes about them also using information from my field notes and interviews, and examined the colour-coded themes to examine their L2 vision formation and the course impact on them. These vignettes were eventually refined and presented in Chapters 6 and 8.

Interestingly, during these processes of analysis I explained in this section, my positionality in this EP study shifted from a ‘miner’ to a ‘traveller’, also prompting me to reflect on my role as a teacher as Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) put it, “The journey may not only lead to new knowledge; the traveler might change as well. The journey might instigate a process of reflection that leads the traveler to new ways of self-understanding” (P. 49), which will be highlighted in the final analysis chapter (Chapter 8).

5.6 ETHICAL ISSUES

The role of authority has been debated in the history of education (Buzzelli & Johnston, 2001). One traditional perspective is seeing the authority inherent in educational settings (Spring, 1999). In contrast, ideas to avoid authority and minimising its role in education have been discussed (Spring, 1999; Welker, 1992). Buzzelli and Johnston (2001) propose two fundamental assumptions about authority in teaching. One is the idea that “authority of the teacher is a constant in education” (p. 874). They (2001) believe that “this is so whatever form of pedagogy is involved, and however the teacher is prepared to share authority or devolve responsibility to the students” (p. 874). The second idea is that teacher authority has two different but interrelated aspects: “the teacher possesses authority both in the sense of having the power to direct classroom activities, and in the sense of having the

knowledge that the students need to acquire” (p. 875). I was aware of this concept of authority and was very careful in communicating my research ideas with the participants who were also my students. By me having dual roles as a researcher/teacher of my own students, I wanted to make sure that the students did not feel pressured to take part in the research to please me.

At the beginning of the course, I told the class that I was conducting a study and data from the class would be used for my Ph.D. thesis. I also explained that the information given in the class materials might be used for research purposes and it was mentioned on each class worksheet (See attached sample worksheets in the Appendix). A small box to tick was provided on each class worksheet if any student wished to opt out. In addition, I explained orally that other kinds of data (such as audio- and video-recordings of the classes) would be used for the study. Most importantly, I made sure that the students understood their privacy would be protected in the use of any of the data.

There was one particular issue raised by the ethical committee of Birmingham University. I could not think of it when planning the project, which was: *“Would the basis upon which participants are selected (the significance of change in their L2 vision) be explicitly explained to potential participants? If it would, may this cause concern for those not selected, and how would it be handled?”* Here are the measures I took in order to prevent

the students from feeling excluded and anxious about it.

I told the class at the beginning that I would approach several students at the end of the course to interview about their L2 learning and intercultural experience. I avoided the wording “the significant change in the L2 vision” for two reasons: 1) This concept was too abstract to many students, and even if they understood the concept, 2) I did not want the students to write what was not real or true about themselves in the class worksheets which were used as data.

I also explained that even if they did not get selected as interview participants at the end of the course, anybody was welcome to participate in the interviews, and that I would appreciate their cooperation. I made this interview open to all the students in the class and they were able to choose to participate in the interview if they wished. Therefore, it is unlikely that any student felt left out and was worried about not having been selected as interview participants. All the students were also explained that their participation in the research would have no influence on their grades.

The basis upon which participants were selected (their class engagement, interesting L2 learning and intercultural experience, and gender) were explicitly explained to potential participants individually outside the class on the last day of the course. I briefly explained

my project and I repeated whether they participate in the interview has nothing to do with the course requirement or their grades. I told them that I would organise a separate meeting with each participant in order to provide further information on the project and an opportunity to ask any questions on their request. Detailed information about the research such as the general procedure, what they were expected to do, and the kinds of data they were asked to provide were given to the participants on Participant Information Sheet (See Appendix 2). Ethical issues including anonymity, confidentiality, and their rights to withdraw were explained to the participants on this form in Japanese. Additionally, I gave them a Consent Form, which they could sign and return to me later if they wanted to participate in the interview. The Consent Form consisted of the following three parts: 1) brief explanation about the research project, 2) participant's rights, and 3) questions concerning participant's consent showing that they are entirely voluntary to engage in current project (See Appendix 3).

These were the ethical issues that I needed to consider in carrying out this project, especially in terms of students' welfare. Finally, this study was based on EP, "cast in terms of a set of ethically and epistemologically motivated principles for practitioner research. (Allwright, 2005, p. 2) intended to bring all people together working towards mutual development. I was conscious about building reciprocal relationship as a teacher/researcher

with my students/participants seeking “meaningful teacher development and students’ learning” (Kubanyiova & Feryok, 2015, p. 437).

5.7 SUMMARY

In this chapter, I have provided the details of the design, method, and context of this EP study, in which I sought in-depth understanding of the students’ development of L2 vision and explained its holistic nature. I had dual roles as a teacher and a researcher in this study. As a teacher, I endeavoured to enhance students’ L2 visions through my course and improve the ‘quality of life’ during the aftermath of the earthquake. As a researcher, I tried to understand the course impact on their L2 visions and other factors that might have affected their vision formation.

In the next three chapters (Chapters 6, 7, and 8), I will provide the findings gained through the analysis with an interpretive approach. The discussion in Chapter 6 is related to the first research question, ‘What L2 visions and L2 vision-related experiences do the course participants have when they begin their college life?’ and Chapter 7 offers the insights gained regarding the second research question, ‘How is this L2 vision impacted by English course components that aim at facilitating their L2 vision as intercultural speakers?’. Chapter 8

integrates all the themes discussed in Chapter 6 and 7, and they will be retold in a different light through the story of a focal participant.

6 ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' DESCRIPTION OF THEIR L2 VISIONS YET TO BE OWNED

The discussion in this chapter is related to the first research question “What L2 vision do the course participants have when they begin their college life?” To answer this question, I have examined how my students saw themselves as English users in the future, and specifically how and in what context they imagined themselves using it. Data used for analysis in this chapter mainly came from students’ responses in one of the class materials and from interviews.

Miyahara’s (2015) claims, “... the reasons why individuals wish to learn a language are not only personal constructions but can also be framed by public discourse about the language, which often reflect a broader framework of politics and ideology” (p. 5), and “How learners visualise their future selves is influenced by global forces” (p. 5). Taking her claims into consideration, it was important that I paid attention to some socio-cultural and socio-political factors such as public discourse and what kind of language education the students had been exposed to. It was assumed that these factors would influence the shaping of the students’ views of themselves as future English users as well as personal factors such as family environment and intercultural encounters with other English users. I was interested to discover not only what kinds of L2 visions the students had, but also how they were

formed. In other words, I speculated that following the trajectory of the students' English language learning background and intercultural experiences would help me understand how their L2 visions were constructed over time.

There are two main objectives in this chapter. One is to clarify the socio-cultural factors that affect the students' vision formation. The other is to examine more individual factors. In 6.1, the results of content analysis of all students' responses on a class material are presented. In 6.2, I provide narratives of three students focusing on their statements of their visions and their L2 learning and intercultural experiences.

6.1 INSIGHTS GAINED FROM THE COURSE EVALUATION ON STUDENTS' VAGUE VISIONS

6.1.1 OVERALL RESULTS OF THE COURSE EVALUATION

To grasp a big picture of my students' initial visions as English users, the students' answers given in the course material worksheet titled 'Thinking about your future and English' were used. See the textbox below for the description given on the worksheet and the actual sample in the Appendix 1. This material was given to the students at the end of the second lesson in late April for homework, and the students shared what they wrote for homework in pairs in class in the third lesson on May 1, 2014. It was only three weeks after

the students had become college students. I thought it was necessary to give this material to the students earlier rather than later to minimise the effect of the intervention course because the course aimed at enhancing students' L2 visions. The worksheet had the following description. I was hoping to understand where they saw themselves in the future.

Thinking about your future and English

Last week, you thought about your past (language learning history). Let's think about your future now. Be as specific as you can. Having a clear future image is an important key to success. What is your vision as an English speaker? Imagine you have studied English for several years and you can use it well.

1. How old are you? What do you look like?
2. Where are you living? What kind of house/apartment do you live in? Who lives with you?
3. How do you use English in your life? Work? Travel? In what situation do you use English?
4. What can you do in English? What can you talk about in English?
5. Who do you talk to in English?
6. What kind of work do you have?

These questions were put to help the students visualise the situations in which they could be using English both in personal and professional contexts. In analysing how students saw themselves using English in future, I paid special attention to Question 3-6, and decided to content-analyse what they wrote for each question. Content analysis is used for

“examining trends and patterns in documents” (Stemler, 2001). The students’ responses are shown in Table 5.4. I will discuss the themes that emerged from the analysis.

As Table 5.4 shows, the following words had the highest frequency count: Foreign (19), Travel (13), Tourists (7), Culture (8), Japan/Japanese (7). This result is no surprising, and it seems to reflect public discourses rather than students’ owned views. I will explicate my rationale below.

6.1.2 INFLUENCE OF EDUCATIONAL AND PUBLIC DISCOURSES ON STUDENTS’ VISION FORMATION

It is no surprise that “foreign” was the highest frequency word. In Japan, English is not used on a daily basis as a means of communication among Japanese people, and English is associated with foreign people and foreign matters. To many Japanese people, English represents foreignness. This is not only because of the status of English as an international language. An education policy called “Foreign Language Activities” was issued by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport, Science, and Technology (MEXT) in 2008 in Japan, and foreign language education became mandatory for fifth and sixth graders in all Japanese public elementary schools since its enforcement. It is not regarded as an official academic subject though, and no tests or grades are given. That is why it is called “Foreign Language

Activities”. The foreign language taught in this class is mostly English. The results gained from Oda’s questionnaire survey (2013) revealed that the participants in his study identified the foreign language in “Foreign Language Activities” lessons as English.

For a similar reason, other words that had high frequency count “travel (13) and “tourists” (7) are associated with foreignness whether it is Japanese people travelling overseas and using English there or using English with foreign tourists who visit Japan. In other words, association of English with words such as “foreignness” and “travelling” means English is not a part of normal, day-to-day basis of life. It is also very likely that the word ‘travel’ on the worksheet might have been a prompt. When the students saw it, they might have taken it as a hint about what they were supposed to write. This speculation can also be made from the fact that eight students (about 33%) listed travel-related words and phrases such as ‘airport’ travel agency’ as their future work places as their answers to Question 6: What kind of work do you have? The students may have just done so because they have limited knowledge about different occupations, and they thought they needed to write something that was relevant to an assignment for an English class. In other words, the students could have picked up clues from the immediate environment about what they were supposed to think. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the influence of the material which was used to elicit the students’ views of themselves as future L2 users on the

descriptions given on the worksheet. Their association of English with foreignness and travelling may be what they thought they needed to present. This will be further examined in 6.2.

The results also show other high frequency words such as “culture” (8 counts) and “Japan/Japanese” (7 counts). For Question 4: “What can you do in English? What can you talk about in English?” seven students out of 24 specified the theme that they would be talking about in English, which was “talking about Japanese culture”. Two students mentioned giving explanations on tourist spots, which probably would include some cultural information. Therefore, more than a third of the total students listed matters related to explaining Japanese culture as the topic they would be capable of talking about.

This seems to reflect the governmental and public opinions that Kawai (2007) identified in the study in which she examined how the English language is depicted in governmental and public discourse. She focussed on the January 2000 proposal to establish English as an official language in Japan, which caused much debates nationwide. The governmental text she examined was the report ‘Nihon no Furontia wa Nihon no Nakani Aru: Jiritsu to Kyochi de Kizuku Sinneiki [The Frontier Within: Individual Empowerment and Better Governance in the New Millennium]’, published in January 2000. The report was prepared by an advisory commission to the late Japanese Prime Minister Obuchi, the

Commission of Japan's Goals in the Twenty-First Century (CJGTC). As she read through the texts, she "looked for the words 'eigo [English]', 'gengo [language]' and 'kotoba [language or words]' and attended to sentences and paragraphs that talk about English and language in general" (Kawai, 2007, p. 42), and then she "analysed them by asking how the English language as signifier is combined with various signifieds, and thereby how meanings to do with English are produced in the texts" (Kawai, 2007, p. 42).

The other texts Kawai (2007) analysed were the 390 opinions that general public posted on the website of The Mainichi Shimbun (<http://www.mainichi.co.jp>), the third largest Japanese national newspaper. The opinions were regarding the CJGTC's proposal to adopt English as an official language in Japan.

One prominent view Kawai (2007) identified from the both kinds of texts was that English should be used to promote Japanese culture. For example, "English is not simply a tool; it serves as a way of promoting Japanese culture in the world.... as a tool to make Japanese culture appreciated in the world. (Kawai, 2007, p. 44). Another summary she gave was that "The English language is also regarded as useful to make Japan and Japanese culture known and recognised in the world These people consider that learning English is important because English can promote Japan and Japanese culture overseas". (Kawai, 2007, p. 48)

The students in my course were growing up in the times when these views regarding the value of English learning were reinforced through the governmental policy as well as in the public media. It can be concluded that the students' answers given to Question 4: "What can you do in English? What can you talk about in English?" reveals the public and educational discourses of the time. Therefore, it seems to make sense to assume that these 'articulations' may signal students' awareness of these public discourses while not necessarily represent their own identification with these visions, and more in-depth look into the data will be needed to understand this 'identification', which I will do in 6.2.

It is also important to note that although the use of a class material enabled me to get a sense of students' tendencies to adopt clues from their immediate environment such as public discourses around English language learning, they were used as course materials to help the students to engage with their ideas, but not really intended as primary data collection methods. Therefore, the students could not have been expected to engage with those questions as fully as would be required for in-depth data into their visions. I am aware of the limitations of the use of the course material. Nevertheless, it did help me see how the wider societal discourses about the value of English language learning are reflected in the students' attempts at articulating their visions of themselves as English users in the future.

What was particularly interesting to me was what my students answered to Question 4: “What can you do in English? What can you talk about in English?” Nine students out of 24 (38%) specified the theme “talking about Japanese culture”. As discussed so far, this seems to indicate the students’ awareness of societal value rather than their views and one could say that the government policy has been successful in promoting this belief. As reviewed in Chapter 2, traditionally, a foreign language was used in Japan to acquire knowledge from foreign countries to keep up with the rest of the world. However, it seems that tradition has been reversed, and now it is regarded as something to be used in an opposite manner, to disseminate Japanese culture to the world.

In this section, I endeavoured to illustrate what kind of L2 visions as English users my students entertained at the beginning of the course. As the data show, there seem to reflect more general tendencies in the public domain of debates about language education in Japan than the students’ identification with them. It can be concluded that the visions that they articulated came from what they had been exposed to in their environment, and the visions they described had not necessarily been owned by them yet. This will be examined more deeply throughout the following sections in this chapter. In the following section, I will shift the focus to more personal factors such as their family environments and personal

intercultural experiences, and provide narratives of three interview participants from my course.

6.2 EXAMINING MORE PERSONAL FACTORS THROUGH STORIES OF THREE DIFFERENT L2 VISION HOLDERS

In this section, I will provide stories of three of my interview participants: Chika, Asami, and Masaya. Out of the eight participants I interviewed, I first chose Chika and Asami as the focal participants to present in this section because they described their visions more vividly than any other participant in the class material (Appendix 1, Week 2), and I wanted to understand how they came to have such clear visions of themselves. On the contrary, Masaya did not give detailed description on the class material. However, I noticed he specified his future occupation, in the same way as Asami did. I then thought it would be interesting to compare these three participants as they have different backgrounds in their language learning and intercultural experience, but they share some things in common. The table below summarises the points for comparison among the three participants.

TABLE 6.1 POINTS FOR COMPARISON

	Chika	Asami	Masaya
Vivid and detailed description on their future appearance on class worksheet Material 2	X	X	
Association of FL speaking with being “cool”	X	X	
Specified future occupation on Material 2		X	X
Did not enjoy playing games in English classes in primary school		X	X
Interest in foreign countries	X		X
Having some level of intrinsic motivation to use English	X		X

As Table 6.1 shows, each participant shares some things in common with the other participants. However, each participant’s narrative offers different insights on vision construct, which are examined in this section. The purpose of this section is to illustrate how each participant’s L2 vision as an English user was formed over time through different L2 learning and intercultural experiences, drawing on interview data primarily and some description given by the participants on class materials.

6.2.1 IN THE CASE OF CHIKA: INFLUENCE OF HER MOTHER

Chika is from Sendai, a major city in the north-east Japan. Until she came to my institution to study, she lived with her mother (her parents had been divorced), an older brother, an older sister, two younger sisters. She had never been overseas. From my

observations, she was a very good student in class, who always completed the assignments as instructed and worked collaboratively with other classmates on different tasks. She especially seemed to enjoy speaking activities. I frequently heard her voice during speaking practices, and sometimes I heard her laugh with her partners in a fun and playful manner. As explained earlier in this section, Chika provided more details for each item on class Material 2 than any other student in my class except for Asami, who is the focal participant in the next section. Figure 6.1 below shows her responses to the questions on the class material.

What is your vision as an English speaker? Imagine you have studied English for several years and you can use it well.

- How old are you? What do you look like?
I'm 25 years old. I have curly brown hair.
I'm high height like now. (173 centimeters...)
- Where are you living? What kind of house/apartment do you live in? Who lives with you?
I'm living in Sendai. I live in low rent apartment to save money for a house. I lives with my boyfriend.
- How do you use English in your life? Work? Travel? In what situation do you use English?
My hobby is traveling. So I use English in travel.
I like going to the United States.
- What can you do in English? What can you talk about in English?
I can speak and write in English fluently.
I have many pen-pals and I can talk about Japanese culture in English.
- Who do you talk to in English?
I talk to my pen-pals in English.
It's very fun.
- What kind of work do you have?
I work as a local civil servant of Sendai city.
(public service worker)
I do clerical work with my computer.

FIGURE 6.1 CHIKA'S RESPONSES ON INTERVENTION COURSE MATERIAL 2

When I saw these detailed descriptions, I felt very interested and instantly became keen to interview her. I speculated that her abilities to visualise her future self would have something to do with her past language learning and intercultural experiences, and interviewing her would give me some good food for thought regarding vision construct.

In the interview, Chika told me she had had “*akogare* (longing/desire)” for foreign countries since she was really young. She was surrounded by English materials such as English pop songs and movies in the house. Her mother loved these things and they were part of their daily life. The townscape she saw in foreign movies and the foreign language the characters spoke in the movies sounded so “cool” although she did not really understand the language. She remembers even when she was in kindergarten, she had a desire to visit foreign countries.

Extract: Chika talking about the influence of her mother

T: Have you always liked English?

S: English..., since I was little, my mother has watched a lot of foreign movies and listened to foreign music, so I was in an environment where I heard English a lot. I would watch those movies with her and it looked different, townscape and all. I did not really understand English, but it sounded so cool, so since I was in kindergarten, I have had a longing for foreign countries....But my mother is a realist and she would tell me that reality was different (laugh), and then I thought I should study more myself.

T: So, your mother’s influence was pretty big.

S: Yes, my mother went overseas for honeymoon and all, and she showed me pictures, so I think the biggest catalyst was my mother (omission), but my mother is not like, she wants to be able to speak English, it's more like she is interested in travelling abroad.

As she says in the above extract, her mother's interest did not seem to derive from learning English, but from her interest in travelling to different parts of the world and watching foreign movies. I speculate this has a lot to do with Chika's abilities to generate such vivid future images of herself as an English user. As she says, "I would watch those movies with her and ... it sounded so cool, so since I was in kindergarten, I have had a longing for foreign countries....", her longing for foreignness was associated with coolness, and it drove her to find connection with foreignness. This resembles the story of a focal participant Maki in Miyahara's study (2015). Maki also used the word "*akogare* (desire)" for returnees who are bilingual and considered to be "cool". She joined a dance club which a lot of returnees belong to and she tried to talk and act like the returnees. Miyahara (2015) argues that these returnees strengthened Maki's vision of an English-using self in her imagined communities.

Chika's interest in being connected to foreignness can also be understood from the fact that she had pen friends in France, Malaysia, Australia, and Germany. She started writing to them because of her mother's suggestion as her mother also used to have pen

friends overseas. The following extract shows her appreciation for interaction and connection with her foreign pen friends.

Extract: Chika talking about her pen friends

S: For example, in France, there are a lot of people who can use English with no problem., and there are many people in other parts of the world who are interested in Japan. I exchange letters with people in different countries and that is what I found out. (omission) I have pen friends in France, Malaysia, Australia, and in Germany. (omission) and when I tell them about Japan, they really get excited and ask questions. When I sent them Pokemon stickers, they were so happy. You know Japanese anime is very popular, like Naruto and Pokemon. (omission) What is popular here is also popular in foreign countries, and I felt connected to them. (omission). It is really fun to interact with them in a tangible manner (not only virtually).

The fact she discovered that French people use English to communicate with foreign people, and her pen friends showing interest in Japanese anime helped her feel “connected” to things and people that were “foreign” and “cool” to her, and she had “akogare (longing)” for. Because she had this longing for “foreignness”, she desired to find connection with it, and it naturally motivated her to use English. Clearly, her mother played a significant role in creating this kind of environment. It can be interpreted that Chika already had a head start by watching foreign movies since she was really young, and had an image of “imagined communities”, (Anderson, 1991) which promoted her L2 use in reality (writing to

international pen friends). This explains why she had such a clear vision of her future self as shown in Figure 6-1. I will elaborate the notion of “imagined communities” in Chapter 7.

In relation to what was discussed in 6.1.2., Chika saying “there are many people in other parts of the world who are interested in Japan.... when I tell them about Japan, they really get excited and ask questions” seem to reveal her gratification influenced by the public discourse. She feels pleased to know that her pen friends are curious to know about Japanese pop culture *anime*. She probably identified it in the same way as her “*akogare* (longing)” for foreign countries. Therefore, by using English to communicate with them contributed to promoting Japanese culture, which was a governmental policy. Chika’s desire to be connected to the international community may derive from her upbringing, but how she chooses to interact with her international friends (tell them about Japanese culture) seems to be influenced by the wider societal context.

Another issue that needs to be raised here is that Chika seems to be trying to find a connection with her international pen friends in the way as Holliday (2015) describes using the word “thread”. It is something that is used for “searching for openings and possibilities for connections” (p. 5). He (2015) explains: “Thinking and talking about threads is very different because it involves what we can pull through from our previous experience to find and engage with the threads of other people’s experiences”. To him, this is part of

“intercultural competence, that involves working hard to find cultural threads” (p. 11). The Japanese *anime* such as *Naruto* and *Pokemon* can be understood as the “thread” that connects Chika to her pen pals based on the idea proposed by Holliday (2015).

Chika’s clear future vision of herself can be explained by Yashima’s study (2009). She (2009) argues that learners who are likely to generate clearer possible selves are the ones who demonstrates higher international posture (IP) and willingness to communicate (WTC). In the words of Yashima (2009), international posture “tries to capture tendency to relate oneself to the international community rather than any specific L2 group” (p. 145). Willingness to Communicate was originally conceptualised by McCroskey and Richmond (1991) in the field of L1 communication and has been adopted in L2 education research (e.g., MacIntyre & Charos, 1996; MacIntyre & Clément, 1996; MacIntyre, Clément, & Donovan, 2002).

The high level of Chika’s international posture can be speculated from the following experts, in which she talks about her interest in foreign languages other than English and her WTC.

Extract: Chika talking about her passion for FL learning

I like watching movies in original languages. Since I was a little girl, I have watched foreign movies. Now I have learned English well, so maybe I should try to learn some other languages. I am taking Korean classes now, but I might try taking up French classes. You know I told

you that I have a pen pal in France. Sometimes my pen pal writes something in French in the letters. I use English to communicate with this pen pal, but someday, I would like to be able to communicate in French. (omission) I think learning foreign languages is fun.

Chika's willingness to communicate is not restricted to a specific L2 target group. She has pen friends in different parts of the world, and she enjoys her exchanges using English. This obviously contributes to her motivation for L2 learning. However, as she says in the above extract, she is also willing to take up other languages such as French and Korean. To Chika, who has a high level of IP, foreign languages other than English can also offer the same potential to be connected to the world. Lastly, she talked about her future vision regarding her career.

Extract: Chika talking about her potential future career

T: OK, so do you think you want to use English to do something in the future?

S: I initially thought of working in an international environment, but when I actually did some research, I found out it is difficult to earn steady income from interpreting and translating..., and becoming a diplomat is way too hard. I thought about this a lot... (omission)... At the moment, I think I will take civil servant examinations. You know there are international exchange divisions and tourism divisions in public sector agencies. It would be best if I get appointed to work in those kinds of division, where they deal with international matters.

T: Wow, you have done a lot of research.

S: Yes (laugh), I get nervous when I am uncertain about the future.

T: So you want to take civil servant examination after graduating from this junior college?

S: I thought about continuing studying in a four-year university, but I have a student loan, and I have two younger sisters. I do not want to give financial trouble to my family. It's not like I want to study more, but I think it is better to start working and save money so that I can go overseas in the future.

T: You mean to travel?

S: Travelling will be fine but working overseas would be nice. I want to go to different countries, so I should start saving. Public servants have a lot of holidays.

Her aspiration to find a job at an “international exchange division” at a public organisation also reveals her high international posture. It is clear that she has thought about her future a lot, and she is trying to negotiate her aspirations and family situation. She is interested going overseas, but she is very much aware of the reality, the financial situation of her family. Having two younger sisters, she feels the sense of responsibility to be independent as soon as possible, and she concludes the best way is to find a secure job and use holidays to travel overseas. What she described about her future job shown in Table 5.4 seems to be the results of the negotiation of her ideal self and ought-to-self.

In conclusion, the environment she was in seems to have helped her have “*akogare* (longing)” for an international community and motivated her to use L2 to be connected through the thread, in her example, Japanese *anime*.

6.2.2 IN THE CASE OF ASAMI: BEING SPONTANEOUS AND PLAYFUL WITHOUT MAKING COMMITMENTS

The focal participant in this subsection Asami gave significant amount of details for her future occupation and how she would be using English for her work in Material 2, just as many details as Chika, especially about her future appearance. I will first present what Asami wrote in the class Material 2 in the figure below.

What is your vision as an English speaker? Imagine you have studied English for several years and you can use it well.

1. How old are you? What do you look like?
I'm 22 years old.
I'm short hair, more taller, and slim body.
2. Where are you living? What kind of house/apartment do you live in? Who lives with you?
I live in Iwate. I live in my house with my family.
3. How do you use English in your life? Work? Travel? In what situation do you use English?
I use English at the work. I'm working for a transportation company.
I become bus guide in Iwate. I'm teaching the charm point of Iwate to foreign person. I'm going to Hirazumi, Miyako and Morioka.
4. What can you do in English? What can you talk about in English?
I can introduce the tourist attraction in Iwate. I'm talking about charm point of Iwate. I can also answer question of tourist.
5. Who do you talk to in English?
Many tourists who visited Iwate.
6. What kind of work do you have?
I become bus guide in Iwate.
This work can meet many people.
I want to tour guide Iwate other than in the future.
I want to be a good bus guide is describing, cool and bright.
おもしろい。

FIGURE 6.2 ASAMI'S RESPONSES ON INTERVENTION COURSE MATERIAL 2

At a glance, one might raise questions about to what extent the ‘visions’ obtained from the class materials were limited by participants’ English proficiency. However, as I illustrate in this section, this was not an issue because Japanese was used in the interviews so that the students could elaborate on what they expressed in class materials. When I first saw what Asami wrote shown in Figure 6.2 above, it immediately caught my attention. I thought what Asami described about her aspiration of becoming an English-speaking bus tour guide was interesting, and I wanted to interview her to understand how she came to aspire that vision. I thought Asami was someone who had a clear L2 vision as an English user who wanted to use English for living as well. However, contrary to my expectations, she told me during the interview that she had thought about writing what is above spontaneously for this assignment.

Extract: Asami’s spontaneous idea about using English for work

Well, I have always wanted to be a bus tour guide (laugh), since I was a little girl, and since before I started learning English.... Then, I had this opportunity to write about it in English (laugh) and just wrote it thinking it would be good to also be able to use English at the same time (laugh)...I just thought then, that it would be cool to explain things in English (laugh).

This comment is another evidence of a student picking a clue about what she thought she was supposed to write. She has “always wanted to become a bus tour guide”, but not necessarily an English speaking one. She wrote that in the English worksheet because it was

for an English class. It was not until I interviewed her to find out what she wrote was off-the-cuff and she did not think much of it when she wrote it. The fact she did not think much of it but still wrote about it is another example of subliminal influence of public discourse on students' values on English usage as examined in 6.1.2, as the skill being able to explain about tourist spots in English to foreign tourists is just what the government was trying to cultivate.

In addition, in a similar way Chika commented (6.2.1), Asami says in the above extract, "...it would be cool to explain things in English". The association of English with "foreignness" and "coolness" is what is common between Asami and Chika. This empirical data echoes with Miyahara's (2015) explanation: "Since 1600, English has been associated with a certain privileged status within Japanese society and it is considered cool to be a fluent English speaker" (p. 9). In fact, three other interview participants (Kahoko, Chika, and Kei) in this study mentioned during the interview that they thought it was cool to be able to speak English fluently.

Although both Chika and Asami associate English with "coolness", Asami seems to have a very different attitude toward English learning from Chika. During the interview, she told me that she neither liked nor disliked English as a school subject. I asked her what kind of English classes she remembered from her past schools and she could not tell me

much. Even in primary school, where there was an assistant language teacher (ALT) who was a native speaker of English and visited her school once in a while to play English games with the pupils, she was not interested although many pupils were enjoying the games. She told me though that English was not the only subject she was not interested in. She felt the same way about other subjects; she was probably not the kind of person who had academic curiosity. That being said, she still did not seem to have had a significant positive L2 learning experience up to the junior high school level. She described her English classes in junior high school ‘boring’.

Extract: Asami’s English classes in junior high school

T: Did you like English then?

(pause)

T: Not really?

S: Well...

T: (laugh)

S: I was not really interested. In junior high school... the classes were boring. We just had to do drills using a workbook, we were taught grammar, and the teacher would ask us what the correct answers were..., things like that.

Asami’s dislike for mechanical grammatical drills has been identified as one of the five demotivating factors among Japanese high school English learners (Kikuchi, 2009).

Kikuchi (2009) contends, “The nature of a grammar–translation approach does not generally allow students any chance to engage in genuine communication in the target language....

Such an approach should be used very carefully and teachers should consider interacting

with students in the target language so that the lesson does not become one-way” (p. 466).

In senior high school though, the situation changed a little bit and she had a “chance to engage in genuine communication in the target language” as Kikuchi (2009) above suggests, and started to enjoy her English classes more than before when a teacher who is a native speaker of English came and taught the classes focussing on daily conversations.

Extract: Asami’s efforts in learning conversational English

T: So the course focussed on conversational English.

S: Yes. Then, it started getting a little fun, although it was not like I was good at it.

T: OK, so you don’t like grammar and translating.

S: No, I don’t (laugh). So, in your course, I did OK speaking English, but memorising the skits was hard. I was not used to that kind of thing, so it took me a long time to get use to it. I worked really hard on the skits (laugh). (omission) but it was fun, I enjoy working with different people.

As she says in the above extract, her interest in L2 learning seems to be on the social aspect.

She is probably not interested in learning linguistic expressions for its own sake but interacting with classmates using English. That is why she started enjoying her English classes in high school and she thought she “did OK speaking English” in my course, in which I intentionally promoted the use of English through the interaction with the peers. To Asami, interacting with her peers using English was meaningful and I will come back to this point

later in Chapter 7, where I focus on the effect of interaction with the peers in the intervention course.

Although Asami does not seem to be a student who was intrinsically motivated in L2 learning in the way Chika was, she had an interesting intercultural experience. She used to play tennis seriously and she went to a high school that had a good tennis team. There were students from Korea on the team who were the best tennis players in Korea. Asami shared a room with one of them in the dorm in high school and she became interested in Korea. This was a significant experience for her and she wrote about it in the course Material 7 worksheet, in which students described their international experience as an English user for their assignment. What she wrote is shown in the text box below.

My international experience

I played tennis with two students from Korea in high school. Also, I lived in a dormitory with them for three years in high school. It was hard and busy every day, but I overcame it with them. They are important to tennis teammates and friends to me. They seemed no different from my Japanese friends. I went shopping, lunch, and karaoke with them. These are very good memories and experiences. I forgot that they were students from Korea because they spoke fluent Japanese. They are still playing tennis in Korea. I will go to Korea this summer. I want to meet them and be guided around Seoul.

Asami's high school is known for its strong sports programme that attracts athletes nationally and internationally. As she described in the homework assignment, she values the experience she had with the Korean teammates and talked about them in the interview too.

Extract: Asami talking about her Korean friends who are good tennis players

S: Yes, I was with them for three years. Yes, they were in the same year as I was. They were the top tennis players in Korea.

T: Tennis players?

S: Yes, and they came here, to Morioka. Probably everyone knows about them in Japan. They lived in the same dormitory as I did. They were really fluent in Japanese. Sometimes I did not see them as Koreans.

At that point, I knew that Asami was going on a three-week study trip to Korea soon after the interview, and I asked her about it assuming that she chose the Korean course because she wanted to see her tennis friends in Korea.

Extract: Asami talking about her plan to visit Korea

T: You are visiting Korea soon, right?

S: Yes, I want to see them, but they are professional players now. I hope I can see them.

(omission)

T: So, your interest in Korea comes from the encounter with them?

S: Yes, I guess that was a big factor.

T: There are so many popular Korean celebrities too, right?

S: Well, to be honest, I don't know much about Korean pop culture.

As she says in the interview, her choice of visiting Korea comes from her experience of having Korean friends who she played tennis with in high school. She is not interested in learning Korean language or Korean pop culture as many Japanese young women are. In the past decade or so, Korean pop culture such as music and TV dramas has been a big part of Japanese entertainment business. Korea is also a popular destination for Japanese tourists because of the geographical accessibility, inexpensive cosmetics for young Japanese women. However, as Asami says, she was not so interested in those aspects of Korea and she does not use them as a “thread” to be connected to Korea. This is different from Chika, who used a form of Japanese pop culture *anime* as a “thread” to be connected to the international community. Probably to Asami, tennis was the “thread” that connected her to her Korean friends who she chose to write about in the homework sheet in which she was asked to write about as her international experience. Asami thinks her Korean friends’ influence is a big part of her motivation of visiting Korea on the study trip. When we were talking about how some students in the class seemed determined to visit a foreign country with a clear purpose, she made the following remarks.

Extract: Asami comparing her purpose to visit Korea to Chika’s

S: You know Chika, she is going to the States this summer on the study trip. She wants to visit somewhere famous for rock music, I don’t remember the name of the place.

T: That’s right. Chika plays rock and pop music.

S: Yeah, she was saying some famous musician used to play there, so she is so excited about visiting the place. When I heard a comment like that, I thought “Oops, I really don’t have any idea what I want to do when I get there”.

She acknowledges the difference between herself and Chika, who she describes as a “super motivated person”. I asked Asami what her parents thought about her visiting Korea to see how supportive they are about Asami’s intercultural learning, and to compare with the attitude of Chika’s mother. She said, “They never objected me participating in the study trip. My parents don’t nag me about things”, and “They just want me to be careful and be safe”. Compared to Chika’s mother who was interested in foreign countries and was watching many movies, Asami’s parents did not sound particularly interested in foreign countries.

Some students who enrol in my institution say the biggest reason for them to have chosen to come to the junior college was the study abroad programme. About 40% of the students go either the U.S. or Korea on the study abroad programme. They take classes on culture and language of the country, depending on which country they choose to visit. Chika, who was the focal participant in the previous section, chose the States, and Asami chose Korea. I initially thought Asami’s L2 vision was as clear as Chika’s, and her international posture would be as high as Chika’s. However, as we talked in the interview, it turned out that how Asami made decisions was very different from Chika. She said she did not think too deeply about things when she made decisions.

Extract: Asami analysing her personality

S: Well, regarding the study trip, it was more like “I want to go if I can”, and I wasn’t thinking so much about which country I wanted to visit. I came to this college thinking “Studying international culture might be interesting”. It is not like I have clear goals like some other people (laugh).

(omission)

S: I am not a kind of person who plans ahead. I am kind of spontaneous and flexible.

(omission)

S: When somebody tells me that something is fun, I am like “OK, I might give it a try”. I am like that, you know (laugh).

As I noted at the beginning of this section, when I saw what Asami wrote in the Material 2 worksheet providing many details of her future vision as an English-speaking bus tour guide, I thought I would find things a lot in common in stories of Asami and Chika. However, their stories were very different. Detailed description on one’s L2 vision does not necessarily mean he/she really has one. After all, what Asami wrote was for homework and she did not have a chance to engage with the idea as much.

Although Asami’s description on her future L2 self as an English-speaking bus tour guide did not derive from her intrinsic L2 learning motivation. It turned out that this was another example of a student picking up clues from their immediate environment about what they ought to think. On the contrary, Asami’s vision of visiting Korea to meet specific friends is quite concrete. Asami’s vision data may not have much to do with L2 motivation literature, but what is common in the stories of Chika and Asami are their association of English with

‘coolness’, and their seemingly clear visions described on the class material were partly a reflection of the societal values on English language learning.

6.2.3 IN THE CASE OF MASAYA: INFLUENCE OF A ROLE MODEL ON VISION

In the last two stories of the female students, what was common was their vivid and detailed description on a class material. The focal participant in this section is a male student Masaya, who did not give such detailed description on his future appearance, but he specified his future occupation in the same way Asami did. The story told by Masaya portrays another significant factor that constructs L2 self. In this section, I will provide an example of an influence of an occupational role model intertwined with other factors such as public discourse and intercultural experience on a vision construct.

Masaya was one of the two male students in class; a quiet but diligent student. He was from a small village where contact with foreign people is rare. How he described his L2 learning experience in primary and secondary schools sounded typical and similar to the stories of Asami and Chika; playing games and singing English songs in primary school, and lots of grammar and translation exercises in junior and senior high schools. He did not like playing games in English or singing English songs when an assistant language teacher came to visit his primary school although most pupils would respond positively to such activities.

Asami also expressed the same view about playing games in English or singing English songs. He told me that although he was not a language ‘freak’, his English grades were better than other subjects and his primary motivation to learn English was to pass English proficiency tests, which his English teachers in his secondary school encouraged to take. He described his English classes in the following manner.

Extract: Masaya talking about his English classes in high school

S: In high school, basically we read the textbook and the teacher translated the texts and explained grammar. We had to learn grammar and also sometimes read the texts aloud.

He was interested in foreign countries though, especially European countries. He came to have interest in foreign countries because he used to read a comic story, in which he learned about different European World Heritage sites such as Sagrada Familia and Mont Saint-Michel. His interest in foreign countries is probably similar to that of Chika’s. It is a noteworthy fact that both Chika and Masaya got images and knowledge about foreign countries from visual materials although they were from different sources. Chika got them from foreign movies and Masaya from comic books.

When there came a chance for him to apply for a short study trip to Scotland which was organised by his village, he did and got accepted when he was in high school. His village had an assistant language teacher from Scotland and they had a sister school there called

“Dollar Academy”. He went to Scotland when he was in the 2nd year in high school. His Scottish host family was very nice and this was a critical experience for him as it made him want to speak more English to communicate with his host family. His attitude to English learning seems to have changed since he came back from his short visit to Scotland.

Extract: Masaya’s change of awareness for English learning

S: I really thought English was necessary and I had to learn more.

T: OK. Why? Is that because you could not say what you wanted to say?

S: Right. I understood the questions in conversations, but I could not reply in English. That was really frustrating, and I thought I needed to learn more.

T: Did you actually start doing something new when you came back?

S: (Pause) There was not anything new I started doing, but I think my awareness changed, like when I took classes.

What makes his case different from the other focal participants in the last sections is that he had this opportunity to immerse himself in an environment where he really had to use English to communicate with his host family, and he thought he “needed to learn more”. There was another significant point about this trip because he met an occupational role model while he was on the trip. She was a tour conductor and he talked about her during the interview when I brought up about the subject. I remember what he wrote in Material 2 and I wanted to ask him about it. I will first present what Masaya wrote in Material 2 below.

What is your vision as an English speaker? Imagine you have studied English for several years and you can use it well.

1. How old are you? What do you look like?
I'm 20 years old.
2. Where are you living? What kind of house/apartment do you live in? Who lives with you?
I live in Morioka.
There is an apartment.
I live alone.
3. How do you use English in your life? Work? Travel? In what situation do you use English?
I use English for work.
4. What can you do in English? What can you talk about in English?
I can talk about foreign country.
5. Who do you talk to in English?
I talk to partners on the job.
6. What kind of work do you have?
I work for a travel agency.

FIGURE 6.3 MASAYA'S RESPONSES ON THE COURSE MATERIAL 2

As most of the students in the class, what he wrote seems like a reflection of public discourse because it contains words such as “foreign” and “travel”. Unlike Chika and Asami, he did not provide any specific details for his appearance. However, I thought it was interesting that he specified the occupation he would have, and I asked him about it in the interview.

Extract: Masaya talking about his future vision

T: Do you have any future goals? We talked a little about this in class. I think you wrote that you wanted to work for a travel agency. Do you still have that goal?

S: Yes.

T: I see. What made you have that kind of goal?

S: Yes. Well, I went to UK, and the tour conductor was with us for the whole time. She was attentive and kind and taught us a lot of things. She was a tour conductor, but then, I thought I would like to have that kind of job.

He told me that he had researched how to become a tour conductor on his own after coming back from Scotland. He knew quite a lot about how to get qualified as a tour conductor when I asked him. As for Masaya, having a tangible experience seeing someone work in the tourist industry helped him have his future vision. Referring to McAdams (2001) Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) note, “Whatever the source may be, the fact is that most adolescents encounter a number of ideological and occupational options available in society, and experiment with a wide range of social roles and possible identities in an attempt to consolidate their beliefs and values into a more or less personal ideology which will, in turn, allow them to make provisional commitments to life plans and projects” (p. 34). Unlike other students in the course, his use of words “travel” was not something he picked up from societal discourse. It came from his personal experience which was critical to him in two ways: 1) He realised the value of English for communication and 2) He met his occupational role model who gave a significant influence on his L2 vision. Regarding the first point stated above, he told me an episode which resonates with Chika’s experience using English with international pen pals. He told me during the interview about the time he used English with

an exchange student from Thailand. He got to know the exchange student while practicing traditional dance and drumming to perform at the local summer festival.

Extract: Masaya talking about his interaction with an exchange student from Thailand

S: Well, I asked him to speak in English because I learn English. And then, when we talked in English, and when he understood what I was saying, I was pleased.

T: This student speaks Japanese too, right?

S: Yes, if we speak slowly, we can talk in Japanese, but because he also can speak English, I wanted to talk with him in English and we did.

(omission)

T: Wow, so you proactively initiated the conversation?

S: Well, there were not many male students in the practice, and some boys, like four of them were hanging together. I found someone who was alone, and it turned out to be he was from Thailand.

When I heard this, I was pleasantly surprised because in class, he was quiet and he did not look like someone who would start talking to a stranger. However, the fact he did, and asking the exchange student to use English indicates that he has more intrinsic motivation in using L2 in a similar way as Chika does. As presented earlier in this section, his motivation to learn L2 when he was in junior high school was more extrinsic, to pass English proficiency tests. However, it is speculated that his experience in Scotland had some influence on his awareness about L2 learning, and eventually resulted in his behaviour in the episode provided above.

6.3 SUMMARY: PULLING ALL THE THREADS TOGETHER

In this chapter, I discussed the findings related to the first research question, “What L2 visions and L2 vision-related experiences do the course participants have when they begin their college life?”. In 6.1, I attempted to identify socio-cultural factors that had a likely influence on students’ vision formation: public discourse and educational policy. What seems particularly important is that there was little discernible commitment of the students to any of these options. They generally may have had vague ideas of what they were supposed to do or to become, but had not necessarily internalised them. This may be partly due to limitations of the homework material used to elicit the students’ visions of themselves because they might not have had a chance to engage with them as deeply. Also, the vague and transient visions were formed while they heard about them in the environment, and they were constantly shifting through different options, and these visions were not owned by the students yet.

In 6.2, I provided narratives of three students who had different backgrounds in L2 learning and intercultural experiences. Compared to Chika and Masaya, Asami had less exposure to English, and fewer opportunities to ‘use’ English or see how English is used in reality. Although she did not like learning English through grammar translation, she enjoyed using English with her classmates. To her, becoming an English-speaking bus guide was

“cool”. What was also common between Chika and Masaya was they had visual materials that were conducive to their interest in their foreign countries.

Chika’s strong affinity to English obviously comes from her mother. Looking at Chika’s reported practices in Material 2 was insightful. It indicated that perhaps those who provide more detail regarding what they do also have a more specific vision. In fact, looking much more at what students do may provide a fuller picture of these visions than asking them about it. In other words, the level of detail they offer either in the course materials or in interviews might not provide strong evidence of their commitment to their visions, and therefore, it is more challenging to discuss visions as we understand them from the literature. This may be a methodological implication, which I will talk about at the concluding chapter. Although this is partly due to the limitations in the data collection methods as what my students described in Material 2 were for their assignment, at the same time, it reinforces the rationale for my course. The course was designed to help the students to think more explicitly about their future, the role of English in it, and to develop appropriate and specific L2 visions which will sustain their commitment to their development. In Table 6.2, I present a summary of L2 learning and intercultural experiences of the focal participants in this chapter along with the description for their visions as L2 users.

TABLE 6.2 SUMMARY OF STORIES OF CHIKA, ASAMI, AND MASAYA

Chika	Asami	Masaya
<p><i>L2 learning experience</i></p> <p>Had a mother who was interested in foreign movies. Loved English classes. Have used English with pen pals.</p>	<p><i>L2 learning experience</i></p> <p>Not particularly interested in learning L2. Didn't like grammar focused classes, but enjoyed talking with classmates using English</p>	<p><i>L2 learning experience</i></p> <p>Enjoyed working to pass English proficiency tests as encouraged by teachers.</p>
<p><i>Intercultural experience</i></p> <p>Never had been overseas. Had an assistant teacher who was from America in junior high school.</p>	<p><i>Intercultural experience</i></p> <p>Never had been overseas. Played tennis with a Korean girl in high school. She also lived with her in the same dormitory room.</p>	<p><i>Intercultural experience</i></p> <p>Did home stay in Scotland for 10 days when he was in high school.</p>
<p><i>Initial vision as L2 user</i></p> <p>Using English for travelling, talking about Japanese culture and writing to her pen pals.</p>	<p><i>Initial vision as L2 user</i></p> <p>English speaking bus tour guide who can explain local tourist spots</p>	<p><i>Initial vision as L2 user</i></p> <p>Talking to colleagues in English while working at a travel agency</p>

In conclusion, my students came to my class with some options for the future selves which they had encountered, considered, and tried out. They were available to them through the environment at home, in school, and in the society. Most students had some visions that included their aspirations and hopes which were still not formed concretely yet. In the words of Gregersen and MacIntyre (2014, p. 261):

Individuals tap into their previous ambitions, dreams and yearnings while simultaneously intensifying the awareness that the significance of ideal selves. This creative process draws upon individuals' past to create visions for the futures and to explore potential identity alternatives without committing to only one of them.

While this chapter focussed on how the students' past experiences affected the students' vision formation, in the next chapter, I will examine how the intervention course affected the students' abilities to visualise themselves as L2 users. I will illustrate how my classroom provided a space to cultivate 'intercultural speakers' who are "successful not only in communicating information but also in developing a human relationship with people of other languages and cultures" (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002, p. 4).

7 THE ROLE OF PEERS AND A CLASSROOM AS A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE FOR ENHANCING STUDENTS' L2 VISION AS INTERCULTURAL SPEAKERS

While the discussion in Chapter 6 was related to the first research question: *What L2 visions and L2 vision-related experiences do the course participants have when they begin their college life?*, the objective of this chapter is to answer the second research question: *How is this L2 vision impacted by English course components that aim at facilitating their L2 vision as intercultural speakers.* In order to do so, I will examine how the intervention course affected the students' abilities to visualise themselves as L2 users and provide findings gained from course evaluation, interview data and field notes. Expanding what was discussed in Chapter 6, I will illustrate how this English classroom functioned as a community for intercultural communication, where the students had opportunities to use L2 to interact with their peers and developed their L2 visions.

In 7.1, I will present the results focussing on the quantitative data and evaluate the overall effect of the course, which was perceived as effective by the students. In 7.2., I will discuss the role of peers and group dynamics in enhancing the students' L2 visions, and the role of pedagogy in it in 7.3. Themes in 7.2 and 7.3 were factors which created a sense of enjoyment and were conducive to students' task engagement. These processes were

important in enhancing students' L2 visions, and the findings shed light on the nature of students' interactions in the L2 classroom, which point to a need to reconceptualise the notion of intercultural communication in this setting, which is proposed in 7.4.

7.1 GENERAL EVALUATION OF THE COURSE FROM THE STUDENTS' COURSE EVALUATION DATA

In this section, the quantitative data gained from the end of semester course evaluation is discussed. The purpose of the questionnaire was to elicit the students' views on the intervention course. The questionnaire was distributed at the end of the course during class time and collected immediately after completion. A total of 24 responses (22 female, 2 male) out of 25 students were collected. One student whose responses were not collected was not present in class on the day the questionnaire was distributed. The questionnaire was given to the students in Japanese to avoid misunderstanding or confusion which may be caused by the lack of L2 abilities and knowledge. See Appendix 4 for the original Japanese version and Chapter 5 for the English translation. The course evaluation had six questions explicitly asking students to rate the main activities in the course. The rated items were:

- 1. Talking in pairs and groups about future goals and dreams*
- 2. Talking in pairs and groups about international experience*
- 3. Talking in pairs and groups about learning strategies*

4. *Talking in pairs and groups about past language learning experience*
5. *Practising conversations of the video episodes in pairs*
6. *Answering the online questionnaire*

The ratings used to show the students' view were: 1 = *Very useful*, 2 = *Useful*, 3 = *Don't know*, 4 = *Not very useful*, and 5 = *Not useful at all*. The students were also asked to write a reason why they gave the rating for the each question item. At the end of the form, there was a free comment section where they wrote their opinions about the course freely (e.g., What aspect of the course they found the most valuable, enjoyable and why, what kind of difficulty they experienced).

As illustrated above, this course evaluation enabled me to collect both quantitative and qualitative data, and to grasp a general picture of how the course activities were perceived by the students. I was particularly interested to know how working with peers would be perceived by the students. That is why the entire questionnaire items except for number 6: *Answering the online questionnaire* has the phrase "*working in pairs and groups*". I had already assumed working with peers would facilitate students' L2 vision based on the idea of Vigotsky's (1962) "zone of proximal development". The ZPD has been defined by Vygotsky (1978), as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by

independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). In addition, I thought more capable peers would function as near peer role models (NPRMs) acting as scaffolding for less capable peers. As explained in Chapter 5, near peer role modelling (NPRMing) is a process of modelling peers who are close to our social, professional and/or age level who for some reason we may respect and admire (Murphey, 1998c). This is why I incorporated NPRMing in the course activities and evaluation to see the effect on facilitating learners' L2 vision. In addition, as Murphey, Falout, Fukada, and Fukuda (2012) points out, "the role of groups in understanding behaviour and learning" (p.220) was as important in this classroom-based study as understanding what was happening to individuals.

Based on my premise, I analysed the quantitative data from the course evaluation, which helped me see the overall picture of the effect of the course on the development of students' L2 vision. Table 7.1, which is exactly the same as Table 5.5 provided previously, shows the students' ratings to the questionnaire items.

TABLE 7.1 STUDENTS' RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

Questionnaire item	Very useful	Useful	Don't know	Not very useful	Not useful at all
Q1 Talking in pairs and groups about future dreams and goals	8 (33.3%)	14 (58.3%)	2 (8%)	0	0
Q2 Talking in pairs and groups about intercultural experience	11 (45.8%)	11 (45.8%)	2 (8%)	0	0
Q3 Talking in pairs and groups about language learning strategies	18 (75%)	6 (25%)	0	0	0
Q4 Talking in pairs and groups about past language learning experience	9 (37.5%)	13 (54.2%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	0
Q5 Practising the skits in pairs	18 (75%)	6 (25%)	0	0	0
Q6 Answering the questions of Dr Shaules' questionnaire	10 (41.7%)	9 (37.5%)	4 (16.7%)	2 (8%)	0

As can be understood from the results presented in Table 5.5, vast majority of students found the course activities either “very useful” or “useful”. No student rated any of the activities “Not useful at all”. Activities in Questions 1 to 5 required students to work with other students, and activity in Question 6 was what students did individually on computers. Clearly, activities that required interacting with peers (Questions from 1 to 5) were rated higher than Question 6, which did not involve such interaction.

What was most salient in the numerical data was the fact that 100% of the students said it was either “Very useful” or “Useful” for Question 3 “Talking in pairs and groups about language learning strategies” and for Question 5 “Practising the skits in pairs”. Other question items also had very highly ratings; over 90% of the students said the tasks were either “Very useful” or “Useful”. Only Question 6 involved no pair or group work and it had the lowest rating; only 79% students said it was either “Very useful” or “Useful”.

As for the qualitative data gained from the free comment section in the course evaluation, I attempted to identify the words and phrases that had the highest frequency count. They were “fun” or “enjoyment”, and I found this was another outstanding theme identified in the questionnaire results. Ten students out of 24 mentioned the words either “fun” or “enjoyment” in their free comments. As I paid careful attention to the data, I have come to understand the students were referring to “enjoyment” and “fun” on two different levels. One was working with peers and the other was speaking in English in different class tasks. Therefore, I have decided to present the findings in two separate categories, which are elaborated in 7.2 and 7.3.

It is an interesting fact that 20 students out of 24 put their names on the evaluation forms although they were told they did not have to, and what they write on the evaluation form would have no influence on their grades. It may have nothing to do with the high ratings

of the course tasks, but it is also important to acknowledge that it might be what students in this context might do any way unless they found the course awful. Therefore, such results cannot reveal much in the way of actual impact, but a close look will help gain insights into some specific aspects that contributed to the results of the course evaluation. In the remaining sections in this chapter, I will focus on the qualitative data and discuss the factors that were conducive to students' L2 vision enhancement.

7.2 THE ROLE OF PEERS AND GROUP DYNAMICS IN ENHANCING L2 VISION

7.2.1 PEERS AS MIRRORS, THE SOURCE OF ENJOYMENT, AND ENGAGEMENT

The role of peers in group dynamics has been confirmed in previous studies (e.g., Murphey, 1998c, Murphey & Arao 2001, Ogawa & Murphey 2012). Through deeper analysis of the data of the current study, I came to understand that peers help one another as being the source of enjoyment, engage in tasks, and also act as mirrors which enable students to reflect on their own learning and behaviour.

For example, the following comment given by Misaki in the free comment section portrays the nature of process of modelling which occurs naturally in a classroom:

Extract: Misaki talking about learning from classmates

I knew it would take some time to learn all the skits, so it was great to have that much time to practise in class. It was interesting to try being expressive and I learned from people who were good at that. (Misaki)

It can be assumed that without an expressive partner, Misaki might not have tried to be expressive in role-play skits. Seeing an expressive peer student was probably inspirational, affirming, and engaging and must have helped her try what the peers were doing (being expressive). What is Misaki is saying here, especially the underlined part was also confirmed by another student Asami, who was one of the focal participants in Chapter 6. In the interview extract below, Asami's admiration for Kei is expressed:

Extract: Asami talking about Kei

Kei was always so expressive and was not afraid of performing in front of the class. I really thought it was great (laugh), I was always impressed and always watching her (laugh).

As she says, "I was always impressed and always watching her", seeing a peers expressing themselves in L2 is impressive and makes you want to also try what they do. Peers can be powerful resources who can provide tangible images potential L2 visions and can inspire and encourage students to follow the examples that they find appealing.

As Asami describes in the above extract, Kei was one of the most expressive and enthusiastic students who were often mentioned in my field notes (Her name is underlined) as follows:

Extract from field notes

May 29, 2014

...I asked two pairs (Kiyomi & Yuka, Seiji & Kei) to perform the skit as they were really into it. They (especially Kei and Yuka as Rebecca) acted out the skit very well.

June 12, 2014

...They talked about what they wrote for homework (Intervention Material 7). When they shared their international experience episodes, they were having fun, especially, Aya & Kei's group. They were talking in English for the whole time and looked really engaged with their gestures and how they were responding to each other.

June 26, 2014

...First, each student read their assignment to the group members while showing the photos. I asked them to make comments and ask questions after each speaker, but it was hard for some groups. Kei, Asami, Kiyomi were in the same group and they are probably good friends. They were making comments in a nice and fun way.

July 17, 2014

We practiced the skit from episode 6. It was a scene of the main characters ending their romantic relationship and students seemed to enjoy practicing the conversation. Aya and Kei, who are usually very enthusiastic were a pair and they were really into it. The facial expressions and the paralinguage they used were a little bit exaggerated, but I thought they were doing a good job. So, I asked them to perform in front of the class. They were really good. They were not shy at all. Everyone was laughing (but impressed) because they looked like real actors. I think I will definitely interview them both.

Someone like Kei had great influence on her peers and classroom dynamics. Kei played what Dörnyei and Murphey (2003) call “unofficial leadership role” (p. 112). As mentioned by Asami and observed by me, Kei’s enthusiasm affected the class positively as in the following quotation: “When the leader is excited and interested, other students tend to

become passionate as well” (Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003, p. 113). Looking back, I think there were several students who were like Kei in my class, who contributed to creating positive energy and collaborative learning environment.

In the following extract of an interview with Chika, who was a focal participant in Chapter 6, and who I consider to be another unofficial leader along with Kei, she made a remark about another student in class Sayaka. When I commented to Chika that how I thought her enthusiasm affected the classroom atmosphere. Then, she told me she was also influenced by Sayaka, who was very proactive about practising the skits even outside the class:

Extract: Chika talking about Sayaka

Sayaka was my partner when I practised for the conversation test. She is very proactive and she was like, “When do you want to get together to practise after school?” She was so motivated and it was really helpful and fun working with her. It was nice to practise outside the class. (omission) She’s interested in foreign countries and has hosted someone from overseas and told me interesting episodes, and she is someone who has the same kind vision.

To Chika, Sayaka was what Murphey and Arao (2001) calls “near peer role models”. She describes Sayaka as someone who “has the same kind vision”. Being surrounded with peers who functioned as mirrors for their own visions strengthened their own vision. Also, as Chika says “She was so motivated and it was really helpful and fun working with her”,

working with someone like Sayaka must have helped Chika engage in a task, promoted L2 use even outside of the classroom.

Chika also talked about other classmates in general. Chika was from a high school which had a strong English teaching curriculum. She told me during the interview the curriculum of the high school was great, but students at the junior college were much more motivated than her peers at her high school. In the following extract, she is saying how impressed and excited she was to get to know the people who are interested in overseas.

Extract: Chika talking about other classmates

When I came to this college, everyone has a passport and has been overseas. They are all interested in foreign things and they would tell me stories, so it was motivating. It felt more real, you know, I have friends who have been overseas and I thought, “Oh, maybe I can have the same kind of experience”. (omission) I saw the photos and then thought, “Wow! This very person in front of me went there!”, and then I was able to imagine myself being there, too.

As explained in Chapter 6, Chika had never been overseas but seemed to demonstrate high level of international posture (IP). From this extract, especially the underlined parts indicate that the course environment helped Chika envision her possible self by working with peers and listening to their experiences. Chika got affirmation for the possibilities for her future self as Murphey and Arao (2001) contend, “What is it that one learns by observing peers? We suspect that one learns that certain successes are possible”.

To sum up, peers help one another by being powerful role models which act as mirrors and awaken recognition of possible L2 selves. In other words, one would think “Oh, if she can do that, I could do that” or “Maybe I will try it out and see how it goes”. In addition, seeing peers having fun and succeed in completing a task in L2 can be a reaffirming experience because their L2 vision becomes tangible. Some students in my class such as Kei, Chika, and Sayaka were all influential NPRMs in this respect.

In the next subsection, I will discuss how sharing past experience with peers can also enable students to see possible choices they can make for the future, which contributes to their vision enhancement.

7.2.2 PEERS OFFERING ROADMAPS TO POSSIBLE L2 SELVES

Analysis of data also indicates that peers also influence others by offering possible road maps, in other words by sharing their language learning strategies. As shown earlier in this chapter, another highly rated class activity besides Question item 5 “Practising the skits in pairs” was Question item 3 “Talking in pairs and groups about language learning strategies”. The following comments are what some students wrote in the free section regarding this item. The underlines are put to draw readers’ special attention.

- It was helpful to know what kind of learning strategies my friends have. (Asami)

- Watching the videos and practising the skits is a good idea because I can visualise the situation. The phrases we learned in this class can be used in other classes. It was also good to know what kind of learning strategies other people have as I wanted to try what they were doing. I have never been overseas so it was great to hear about other people's overseas experiences. It made me want to go overseas more.(Ruka)

What can be inferred from these comments is my attempt to promote NPRMing in this course through pair and group work was successful as they say they found it useful to find out what kind of learning strategies other people have, and especially Ruka says, “I wanted to try what they were doing”. Although I do not know whether they really tried anything new after the course, it made her want to follow what her peers were doing. Similarly, Question 4: “Talking in pairs and groups about past language learning experience” was also rated highly, 91.7% of the students rated this item as either “very useful” or “useful”.

Dörnyei and Murphey (2003) explain:

Each person’s language learning history is uniquely constructed by events, desires, decisions, strategies, beliefs, actions and particular perceptions. However, we also have many similar characteristics in common with our near peers. We have often gone through the same system, with the same problems, needs and desires.... A history can provide wisdom for the future; multiple histories can provide a vast array of possibilities and potentials. This metacognitive awareness allows us then to take more control of our future learning (p. 131).

By asking the students to share their language learning histories in pairs and groups, it probably enabled them not only to reflect on the past and the choices they made, but also to hear the choices that their peers made, which they can refer to in the future in making decisions. They see a variety of possibilities which they have never thought about before, or maybe by hearing similar processes that the peers went through, they may have felt their own experience was justified. This may be why this item was highly rated by the students.

Interestingly, two students Yuiko and Aya wrote, “I wanted to hear more about your experiences and learning strategies”. Seeing this comment was a good reminder for me that teachers also are expected to be language learning role models for students. I have been a language teacher for more than 20 years and I did not think about it so consciously anymore. Because I have been avoiding behaving in an authoritative manner in the classroom, and trying to be a facilitator of communication among the students in L2 in language classrooms. However, seeing these comments made me remember that students do expect teachers to be their role models, and its significance is highlighted in Chapter 8.

This finding reconfirms what has been understood from literature and research as in the words of Schunk (1991), “Students acquire much information about their capabilities from knowledge of how others perform. Classroom models—teacher and peer—are

important sources of vicarious efficacy information. Observing others succeed can convey to observers that they too are capable and can motivate them to attempt the task” (p. 216).

To conclude this section, peers play a significant role in facilitating students’ L2 visions in classroom dynamics. As discussed in 7.1, peers act as mirrors reflecting the students’ own possible future selves as L2 users. In other words, a student can have a vague idea or an image of himself/herself as an L2 user, but this kind of vague image can be turned into a realistic image by seeing a peer’s behaviour that he/she wants to follow as a model, for example, “being expressive in L2”. This is also related to the ‘coolness’ that was discussed in the previous chapter. Fluent English speakers are seen as ‘cool’, and observing peers expressing themselves using English makes a student’s ideal L2 self more approachable.

Furthermore, a peer can offer roadmaps to fellow students by sharing their language learning strategies and history because seeing a peer who they find successful in learning and using L2 can make them want to try what has worked for the peer. In the following section, the focus is shifted to the role of pedagogy in students’ L2 visions.

7.3 ROLE OF PEDAGOGY IN ENHANCING L2 VISION—CREATING ENJOYMENT AND PROVIDING A PLATFORM FOR INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

In this section, another factor in enhancing students' L2 vision, the role of pedagogy is examined in relation to the second research question how the students' L2 vision is impacted by English course components. In 7.2, the focus was the significance of peers in creating enjoyment and helping students engage in tasks to promote the students' L2 vision. In this section, examined is the effect of the pedagogy employed in the taught course.

As noted earlier in this Chapter, one outstanding theme identified in the free comments in the course evaluation was “fun” or “enjoyment”. Many commented that they had enjoyed speaking activities, especially in the form of memorizing the skits for role plays as well as using L2 to talk with the classmates. Example comments are shown below.

- I really enjoyed practising the skits of Rebecca and Matt. (No name)
- I got to feel speaking in English was fun. (Chika)
- The role plays were so much fun because we really had to play the roles and it helped learn the expressions. (Kiyomi)

All of the above comments include the element of enjoyment, and indicate speaking activities helped the students' intrinsic motivation. Enjoyment is an important factor in language learning motivation. To quote Wu (2003), “L2 intrinsic motivation involves enjoyment of learning a second or foreign language for its own sake without any external coercion or pressure” (p. 502). To many students in this course, the choice of the pedagogy

and class activities were novel and engaging. For example, Chika commented in the interview:

Extract: Chika reflecting on the course

Well, hearing each person's intercultural and overseas experience, that was really motivating, like in high school, grammar was the main thing we learned and we didn't talk much. We wrote and learned sentence structures a lot, but in your class, we talked a lot and it was fun.

Another student Kiyomi also gave a similar comment in the course evaluation:

Extract: Kiyomi's comment on the course

I always learned a lot of grammar and writing, but this course focussed on conversations, so I was able to communicate with a lot of people, and was able to learn at the same time. It was so much fun.

The underlined parts in the above comments show that the taught course was able to provide the students with opportunities to learn from and work with peers, especially through speaking tasks rather than grammar translation tasks, which they found fresh and appealing. As explained in 2.2., teaching English through grammar translation is very common in Japan, and many of my students were also used to learning English in that way. Some found my teaching style unusual and confusing at first because it was not based on a grammar-translation method, but eventually enjoyed it as Honomi put in the course evaluation comment:

Extract: Honomi's comment on the course

In high school, we only practised translating, so it was fun to speak in English in every class.... I was a little confused at the beginning because no grammar was taught in this course, but I got a lot out of this course which focussed on speaking.

Among various speaking activities given in this course, role plays were most popular as shown in 7.1. In 7.3.1, I discuss the pedagogical significance of role-play activities in enhancing students' L2 visions as intercultural speakers.

7.3.1 ROLE PLAYS THAT INSTIGATE STUDENTS' IMAGINATION AND L2 VISIONS

To repeat what has been presented in 7.1, all the students in the course rated "Question5: Practising the skits in pairs" as either "very useful" or "useful". This was further corroborated by some interview comments. In this section, I will illustrate how role plays were particularly useful in promoting the interaction among the students and helping them envision themselves as L2 users in "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1991). In the words of Kanno and Norton (2003), "Imagined communities refer to groups of people, not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of the imagination" (p. 241). They (2003) also note, "...the notion of imagined communities enables us to relate learners' visions of the future to their prevailing actions and identities. It

is a way of affirming that what has not yet happened in the future can be a reason and motivation for what learners do in the present” (p. 248).

Their ideas are confirmed by the comment given by Ruka in the course evaluation, “Watching the videos and practising the skits is a good idea because I can visualise the situation. The phrases we learned in this class can be used in other classes”. As she says she can “visualize the situation” that she might be using L2 in, and that is why she finds “watching the videos and practising the skits is a good idea”. As explained in Chapter 5, typically, I showed a 10-minute segment of a video material before having the students practice a skit for a role play. That meant students saw the actors having a conversation first, and they practiced learning all the words and phrases in pairs. Having a visual material such as what was used in the taught course was conducive in creating an imagined community in students’ minds. In addition, working with peers while practicing the skits helped them enjoy and engage in the task. Playing the prescribed role of a video episode character in class must have been a unique opportunity for them to express their L2 identity. In my study context, where people have little opportunities to use English for daily communication, spaces where imagined communities of practice come to life need to be created. Role plays are effective pedagogical tools that can be used for providing this kind of space. By playing prescribed characters in L2 role plays in this kind of pedagogical space, students can expand their “range

of possible selves”. (Kanno & Norton, 2003, p. 246). They express different identities in imagined communities using L2. They participate in L2 interactions and these imagined identities can reframe the experience of learners, it can also affect how they engage with learning opportunities in classrooms (Kanno & Norton, 2003). In other words, these imagined communities of practice are the places where students’ L2 visions grow and expand. In summary, students found the role-play practice useful because they engaged in meaningful interaction with their peers through the prescribed identities. This process seemed to enable students to embody their imagined COP through their interaction in the actual classroom.

Furthermore, role play tasks were engaging enough to motivate some students to use L2 outside the class. Shown below is an extract from the interview data with Chika. This is what she said when I asked her whether she wanted to do the role play practices again in the following semester:

Extract: Chika talking about using the phrases from the role plays

Yes, I do. You know, we talked a lot and learned all the phrases, so when we hear them, we recognise them and when we talk with friends, we use those phrases jokingly, and we can actually have conversations smoothly using them. I work with Seiji and Kei in the same music band. We copy foreign music together and sometimes we jokingly talk in English (laugh). Suddenly we start having conversations from Rebecca’s skits (laugh). In the music club, there is a member who is one year older than us, and she also remembers the conversations from the skits. You don’t forget, yeah, it’s fun.

Chika played pop music with Kei and Seiji, who were also interview participants. It was interesting to hear that they were conversing while practising music using the phrases they had learned in class. Even though they were doing it in a playful way, it means the language taught in the course was internalised enough by at least Chika, Kei, and Seiji. Also, her statement about an older student still remembering the phrases indicates the effectiveness of role play practices in sustaining what has been learned in class. This episode is an implication that the use of role plays was effective in strengthening students' awareness as an L2 user, not only in the classroom, but also outside of the classroom. The impact of the course component goes well beyond the classroom.

It can be concluded the role-play practices which many students enjoyed had pedagogical significance in enhancing students' L2 visions as intercultural speakers. They helped the students having visual images of themselves as L2 users in the imagined communities. They also gave the students opportunities to express their L2 identities through prescribed roles. They were also enjoyable enough for students to engage in and learn the taught words and phrases, and as a result, promoted the use of L2 even outside the classroom.

7.3.2 THE USE OF L1 AS A BRIDGE TO L2 SELF

In this section, I will provide a thought-provoking episode in relation to the use of role play. The aim is to provide the readers with one example of beneficial use of L1 in L2 education, which will be conducive in the development of students' L2 vision as intercultural speakers despite the controversy of L1 use in the field of foreign language teaching. The data presented in this section comes from my field notes and screenshots from the video recording of the class. I will first explain how I improvised to use L1 during a role play practise, and describe students' reactions to it.

One day in this class, I was trying to get the students to practise a dialogue from the video episode 'Connect with English' (See 5.2.2, Week 8). It was supposed to be a conversation between good friends. One is trying to convince the other to follow her to a new city. In the class material, the Japanese translation was given on the other side of the paper so that students could look at it once they learned all the phrases in English and tried to reproduce the language they have learned. Practising this kind of activity was one of the typical activities in this course, and the students had got used to it by the eighth lesson, which is described in this section.

The students in this course were generally good students, who were well-mannered and cooperative. In this lesson, however, they seemed to be practicing the skit routinely and

mechanically, without showing much emotion. The hot and humid weather on that day might have contributed to creating the dull atmosphere in the classroom. Figure 7.1 is a screenshot from the video recording that captured the moment described in this paragraph.



FIGURE 7.1 STUDENTS PRACTISING THE SKIT IN ENGLISH

It bothered me and I wanted to do something to help change the air. I thought I needed to do something to help the students feel more energised and engaged. I felt the need to instigate them to express themselves with some emotions and identify with the characters in the skit. Then, one idea occurred to me. I suddenly decided to ask the students to have the skit conversation in Japanese. When the students heard my request, it instantly caught their attention, and it felt like they became literally awake, and the atmosphere of the classroom

changed completely. Figure 7.2 shows the moment of this significant shift. The face of the girl on the right shows a surprise with her mouth open.



FIGURE 7.2 THE MOMENT I ASKED TO HAVE THE SKIT CONVERSATION IN JAPANESE

Initially they were hesitant to have the conversation in Japanese, so I demonstrated by acting out the scene in Japanese. This moment is recorded in the video data. There was a lot of laughter when they watched me do so. Then, I encouraged them to do the same with their partners. Some of the students were using more body language, their voices were louder, and there were more facial expressions. The classroom became much livelier. Figure 7.3 below shows this moment, when some students are smiling and laughing while practising.



FIGURE 7.3 STUDENTS PRACTISING THE SKIT IN JAPANESE

This series of moments was recorded in my field notes in the following manner:

Extract from field notes/ June 5, 2014

...I got them to try to have the conversation in Japanese and they really loved it. The classroom was full of energy and became very lively. Their voices were louder and they were more expressive. I said, 'You can really get into the character when you do this in Japanese, don't you? Try to put this energy when you do it in English!' They practiced for a while and I think it was different from how they were practicing before.

After that, I asked them to have the conversation again in English maintaining that feeling and identity. Often, it takes time to master a foreign language, and until you get used to the system of the language such as sounds and grammar, it literally feels "foreign", which is not part of yourself. Even when you are using some simple words and phrases, it feels awkward and does not feel like you are expressing your real self in the foreign language. It felt like this was a moment when my students could get the taste of being able to speak

English while being themselves. There was an interesting comment made by a student Kaoru on the course evaluation that adds to the sense I got:

Extract: Kaoru's comment on course evaluation

I felt it was hard to memorise the skits at the beginning, but as we practised more, I became more fluent and I enjoyed the process because it became natural and almost felt like I was talking in Japanese. I actually tried talking in English with my friends outside the class.

Although she is not referring to the exact critical moment described in this section, her saying “I became more fluent and I enjoyed the process because it became natural and almost felt like I was talking in Japanese” indicates that she felt her L2 self had developed more as her L2 proficiency improved. It is no doubt that practicing the skit many times also helped her feel natural when talking in English, but her reference to L1 can be also interpreted as L1's potential for being scaffolding or a bridge to a more developed L2 self.

Although using L1 in this way was what I spontaneously thought about and asked my students to do, how students were engaging with each other changed significantly before and after the activity of playing the roles in L1. To quote Liddicoat and Scarino (2013), “Language learning provides a challenge for identity in two key ways. It raises first the question, ‘Who am I when I speak this language?’ and second ‘How am I me when I speak this language?’ (p. 23). As soon as I suggested to the students to use L1 during the activity,

it probably instigated them to consider these questions. Before using L1, the students could probably not relate to the characters in the skits as much, but after, they could. Using L1 helped them elicit the emotions that prescribed characters would be feeling, and also helped them maintain the emotions while speaking in L2.

I conclude this section by claiming that L1 can be used as a bridge to help students to envision their L2 self. It can help the students understand “Oh, this is what it feels like when you say this. Just as much I can express myself in Japanese, I can do the same in English”. Therefore, L1 functions as a bridge to step into an L2 self.

In this section, I argued that how role plays could be used effectively to help students’ L2 visions (7.3.1), and adding to it, I demonstrated how L1 could be used to strengthen them (7.3.2). In the next section which integrates all the themes discussed so far in this and the previous chapters, I will argue how my classroom where students’ L2 visions were facilitated, and provided a space for intercultural communication.

7.4 UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF LINGUACULTURE CLASSROOM IN FACILITATING L2 VISIONS AS INTERCULTURAL SPEAKERS THROUGH THE LENS OF COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

What has been discussed in this chapter so far can form an idea of classroom as a new place for students as a “community of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger 1998). To quote Wenger (2011), “Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly (p. 1). Belonging to this new community provided the students offered at least the following two modes of belonging: “engagement” and “imagination” (Wenger, 1998). Firstly, having fun speaking English in popular classroom tasks such as role plays helped them engage in tasks, doing them together. Secondly, seeing and working peers helped them visualise their more developed possible selves, and also playing prescribed roles in role-plays instigated their imagination as L2 users. Therefore, my classroom can be described as a “community of practice”, where the students interacted with their peers and the teacher to move onto a more developed stage as L2 users in an imagined community for intercultural communication.

When I initially prepared this course, I intended to promote students intercultural awareness in terms of interculturality of different nations in the world. As explained in 2.3, this course was taught when a lot of people in the area I live in were trying to recover from

the damage of the Great East Japan earthquake occurred on March 11, 2011. My initial intention for the course design was to help students who had to give up going overseas because of that. I thought the students would not necessarily have to go overseas to improve their L2 skills and intercultural awareness. However, I came to understand ‘interculturality’ on a different level after examining the data gained from this study and started to consider the question raised by Ushioda (2015), “Should we consider cultural context in the sense of national culture, or local institutional culture, or the ‘small culture’ (Holliday, 1999) of a particular classroom?” (p. 49). In the words of Holliday (1999), “a small culture paradigm attaches ‘culture’ to small social groupings or activities wherever there is cohesive behaviour, and thus avoids culturist ethnic, national or international stereotyping” (p. 237) in contrast to ‘large’ culture which represents the notions such as ‘ethnic’, ‘national’ or ‘international’. My initial intention to promote ‘interculturality’ among students was on what Holliday (1999) calls ‘large culture’ level. However, focussing on the ‘small culture’ paradigm enables us to see my classroom, which was seemingly monocultural, as a community of practice for linguaculture learning. Shaules (2016) states that “foreignness is at the center of linguaculture learning. Learners must experiment with new sounds, new ways of organizing and expressing their thoughts, and new ways of being and acting” (p. 5). The following

extract from an interview with Aya illustrates how she endeavoured to find a new way to communicate with her partner using a different skill from she was used to.

Extract: Aya's effort in building friendship

S: What was difficult in your course was (omission) I had to work with someone who I had never talked to before.

T: Yeah.

S: Well, you know when we did the translation practice, we had to think together. And I say to partner, "what do you think?", but then the communication did not go well, and I was like, "oh. what will I do?" In your course, that was the moment I did not know what to do, but I felt we had to communicate. So building a relationship is hard. I felt that in English classes

T: So, when you work with someone who is different from you, that is hard?

S: Yes. I can talk to people who I had never talked to before. It is difficult, but I think it is good for me.

The underlines are put to draw the readers' special attention. What Aya is talking about in this extract can be defined as an intercultural encounter. She was trying to find a way to interact with her partner because it was apparently not going in the way she was used to as she says, "but then the communication did not go well, and I was like, 'oh. what will I do?'" Often, when we are interacting with people from different countries who speak different languages, it is hard to tell for example, when it is appropriate to crack a joke, or to jump in a conversation, and whether to make understatements or overstatements. However, even in this kind of seemingly monolingual and monocultural classroom, Aya was struggling to adjust herself to a new interaction pattern. In other words, she was learning how to build

relationships and negotiate with others, just like one needs to do when she/he goes to a different environment whether it is a new country, new school, or new community. This is what “all of us have been doing with moving through different small cultural domains all through our lives” (Holliday, 2015, p. 1). It was challenging, but Aya acknowledges the importance in the way Byram, Gribkova, and Starkey (2002) recognise that “in the language teaching profession that learners need not just knowledge and skill in the grammar of a language but also the ability to use the language in socially and culturally appropriate ways” (p. 7). Finding a way to participate in communicative interactions using a different pattern is also an important aspect of linguaculture learning.

Often, L2 teachers including myself tend to worry if students can complete the required task using the target language, but this excerpt is evidence that students sometimes work on a different level. To her, it was not just an English class where she learned new phrases and acquired grammatical knowledge; she felt it was a new community where she needed to build a good relationship with her peers. An L2 classroom can offer this kind of encounter, where students have to go out of their comfort zone and find a new way of participation in a new community. Sometimes it involves deeper process of inner change or transformation. The following interview extract with Masaya also illustrates how this course pushed him to go out of his comfort zone and deal with what was unfamiliar to him.

Extract: Masaya's initial anxiety

S: In high school, basically we read the textbook and the teacher translated the texts and explained grammar. We had to learn grammar and also sometimes read the texts aloud.

T: So, was it confusing not to have those kinds of exercises in this course?

S: Well, yes. You had us try different things.

T: Like what (laugh)?

S: Well, I feel nervous when I don't know what to expect.

T: Ah, I see.

S: But then, I got used to the conversation practices and all.

As some other students mentioned, he also felt confused because this course was different from what he had been used to, but he says in the end, he got used to it. As I explained before, Masaya was a quiet, but diligent student. He was not a type of students who would behave in a playful manner like some other students in the class. However, the following episode he talked about during the interview illustrates the critical moment, when he took a big action to express an identity which is not his usual self.

Extract: Masaya stepping out of his comfort zone

T: What do you remember the most from the course?

S: (Omission) Well, you know that we, you and I performed in front of the class.

T: Yeah (laugh)!

S: That is what I remember the most.

T: Well, it was a shame that I didn't get to see it (omission), because everyone was laughing so hard, right? It was a skit between Rebecca and Sandy.

S: Yes

T: I was Sandy and I pretended to cry saying, "Oh, Rebecca! You are leaving and I can't believe it!" and you, as Rebecca, you came a step closer to me.

S: Ah, yes.

T: That was apparently hilarious, huh? What was that? Did you try to make the class laugh?

S: No, someone sitting at the front gestured me to do it.

As I remember and documented in my field notes on July 3, 2014, this was something that

left me a strong impression:

Extract: Masaya attempt in acting as a different person

We practiced the conversation of Episode 5. Masaya was nervous when he did the conversation with me as Sandy and Rebecca. When I pretended to cry, apparently he came closer to me and everyone laughed (in a nice way). I think it was considered as a great ‘communicative’ move. Too bad it is not in the video, but I can imagine what it was like from the way the other students responded to his behaviour.

I see this as a moment when Masaya transformed to another identity (although it was prescribed in a role play) in this new community, i.e. my course. To recap, Masaya was a very good student who was pretty serious. He was used to learning English through grammatical exercises, and it was hard for him to express himself in some speaking tasks and role plays. As he got used to them, he became someone who was able “act” as a different person and express a different identity, with a little help of the community group (“someone sitting at the front gestured me to do it”). This is an example of the kind of “transformation of students’ identities in the act of learning” (Scarino, 2010, p. 324) in intercultural orientation, at least, on a superficial level. Masaya’s individual transformation would not

have occurred without the interaction with other members of the group. In fact, the action he took during the public performance with me is what I consider “alignment” (Wenger, 1998). Masaya adjusted his behaviour (acting as a different person, making a step closer to the other interlocutor, not only reciting the phrases in the skit) in order to fit into the immediate social environment (classroom) to the degree he wished to be in line with other members of the group, where he wished to belong.

In this section, I proposed a different perspective of intercultural communication based on Holliday’s notion of ‘small culture’, which is defined as ‘the everyday business of engaging with and creating culture’ (Holliday, 2013, p. 56). The culture here is different from the traditional notion of culture such as high culture such as literature and art and aspects of everyday life (e.g., how to give greetings, excuses, and apologies). Holliday (2015) suggests that all of us have been “moving through different small cultural domains all through our lives.... We encounter and learn to position ourselves with small cultures such as family, school, other families, all the groups and institutions that we join or interact with (p. 1). He (2015) also notes that “we are all naturally interculturally competent from an early age and we engage with the culturally strange throughout our lives” (p.11) and learn how to negotiate the self and others meaning “that intercultural competence is not something to be learned as a new domain when we encounter the culturally strange, but something to

be recovered from our experience of everyday life” (Holliday, 2015, p. 11). Based on this idea, we would not necessarily have to go overseas to gain intercultural competence, because it can be gained through our daily interactions, probably including the interactions occurred in the extracts provided in this section in the classroom, and it can be retrieved when we go overseas. In a linguaculture classroom, one can gain not only “increased linguistic ability or cultural understanding, but also in an expanded sense of self” (Shaules. 2016, p. 7). This type of learning is relevant to language learning because when you use L2 outside the classroom, you are also experimenting with foreign ways of communicating and relating to others. This is the kind of intercultural learning that can be offered in a linguaculture classroom. Students experience the process of adjusting to and learning about situations and communities that are ‘foreign’.

The extracts with two interview participants (Aya and Masaya) used in this section was to demonstrate how the course created the space for different kinds of intercultural encounter. This kind of pedagogical environment, seemingly monolingual and monocultural environment, in fact can offer a very productive space for facility taking such meetings.

7.5 SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to present two main insights gained from the course evaluation data: 1) the role of peers in creating enjoyment and enhancing L2 vision and 2) role of pedagogy in creating enjoyment enhancing students' L2 vision. In 7.1, I have demonstrated how students' L2 visions were facilitated by seeing near peer role models who offered their possible L2 self-images, and made the images more attainable.

As for pedagogical tools, role-play practices were effective in enhancing students' visual images of themselves as L2 users in the imagined communities. The students enjoyed expressing their L2 identities through prescribed roles and interacting with their peers. I have also demonstrated how L1 use can be incorporated creatively into a role-play practice and offered an example of using L1 a bridge in order to that enable students to step into their possible L2 selves.

Overall, the classroom functioned as new community for linguaculture learning, where students experienced new L2 selves. The examples given in this chapter confirms the words of Murphey et al. (2012), "In a community of practice, community identity is being shaped by its members and their experiences of working or learning together (p. 224). There were mutual influences of each member of the course, affecting the thinking and behaviour of the members of the group. This is also why I decided to frame this study as EP.

In the next chapter, I will present the research findings with a different approach, focusing on one student and describing her aspirations for a ‘vision’. All the themes examined in chapters 6 and 7 will be reappear, but will be discussed in a narrative which elucidates the focal participant’s vision formation and development. I will also discuss the influence of the teacher in instigating the focal participant’s desire to find a vision in her life, which goes beyond an L2 classroom.

8 L2 VISION AND BEYOND

While Chapter 6 focussed on how the students' past experiences and public discourses affected the students' vision formation, Chapter 7 highlighted the role of linguaculture classroom in providing a space to cultivate 'intercultural speakers'. This chapter focuses on one research participant whose data bring the themes discussed in Chapter 6 and 7 together in an intricately woven tapestry showing the process of vision formation and interaction among the participants. One purpose of this chapter is to portray the above-mentioned themes identified in the last chapters in a story of one research participant Aya. The other purpose, which is the main thesis of this chapter, is to propose a teacher's moral role beyond L2 teaching, which came to light during the interview. Although all the interviewees in this study were important in informing my understanding of the research questions I embarked on this study with, Aya's data has taken me beyond those questions and compelled me to inquire even more deeply into my role as a teacher in supporting Aya's development of her future vision. It was through Aya's data that I began to realise that it was not possible to apply exclusive constructs from traditional L2 motivational research but that I needed to ask deeper questions and revisit my own purposes for conducting both my classes and research in particular ways.

I will start the discussion by telling the story of this particular student Aya; her general background and past language learning experience, and how they shaped her engagement with my course. I then will describe a critical incident which made me very curious about her and gave me food for thought. The episode provided in 8.2.1, Aya modelling the teacher, was a big factor affecting my decision to choose her as one of my focal participants, and to have a special section in this thesis. It shows Aya's intriguing efforts to taste her future L2 self by modelling the teacher's classroom behaviour. This will then give me a basis for a more in-depth discussion of the role of L2 teacher not only in enabling Aya to 'find' her own future L2 vision, but also in facilitating her reflection on her life more generally.

8.1 UNDERSTANDING AYA AS A WHOLE PERSON

The purpose of this section is guided by a response to the empirical data which clearly points to the importance of understanding Aya (or indeed any L2 learner) as a 'whole person' first. It echoes Ushioda's (2009) argument that in order to appreciate students' motivation for L2 learning, "we need to understand second language learners as people, and as people who are necessarily located in particular cultural and historical contexts" (p. 216). This is because being a language learner is "just one aspect of their identity" (p. 216), and

others may be crucial in appreciating what and how language learners engage with language in the classroom and beyond.

8.1.1 AYA'S BACKGROUND AND HER INTERCULTURAL EXPERIENCE

Aya is from a small coastal town in Iwate Prefecture, a major disaster area in the Great East Japan Earthquake which occurred on March 11, 2011. We never talked about the disaster when the interview was conducted soon after the course had ended in August 2014 for it was still a highly sensitive issue. I discuss further details in 2.3. After the earthquake, all the teachers at my institution were instructed to give extra support to students who came from disaster-stricken areas. We had a brief training in how to deal with students who had traumatic experiences, and we were also instructed to suggest that they should go to professional psychologists if they wanted to talk about their experiences related to the earthquake. We were specifically advised not to initiate the conversation about the disaster. Therefore, I did not ask any specific questions about her experience with the disaster though I was ready to listen to whatever she wanted to tell me in case she brought up the issue. She did not tell me anything about the actual experience of the earthquake in class or during the interview, but she did tell me something else, which I took as an implicit cry for help, and I will explain about it in 8.2.

During the interview, she told me about the time she went to China on Kizuna Project. “Kizuna” means “bond” or “ties” in English, and the project was a part of Japanese reconstruction plans and aimed at promoting global understanding of Japan’s revival efforts in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake. Students from different parts of the world were funded to visit the devastated north-eastern Japan to support the affected communities through volunteer work and cultural exchanges with local residents. On the other hand, Japanese students from the affected areas were sent overseas on home stay and exchange programmes to explain the situation of reconstruction in their own communities to the audience in the countries they visited. The aim of the programme was to empower the young generations in the affected areas as well as to cultivate future leaders who would take the initiative in advancing Japan’s reconstruction and international exchanges. Further details of this programme can be found at the website of The Japan Foundation, Center for Global Partnership.

Aya went to China on this project. She told me she actually wanted to go to the States on this project, but she could not because there were too many applicants who wanted to go to there. She told me that she went to China anyway because she thought it would look good on her resume. This kind of government funded programme is very popular as it is a safe way to travel overseas. She was in the 2nd year in high school and she was there for 10

days during summer holidays. She seems to have experienced a culture shock, a typical reaction one can experience when immersed in an unfamiliar environment. This kind of experience can change idealised image of something foreign and exotic in the way Aya is talking about in the following extract.

Extract 1: Culture shock in China

A: I just had this ridiculous idea about foreign countries, you know, some kind of fantasy, they are all nice.

T: Uh, huh,

A: That was my whimsical speculation. But when I got there, the air was not great, it was dirty and there was garbage everywhere.

T: Ah.

A: And I thought, “What’s this?!” I really felt Japan was clean, you know, when I knew only Japan, I didn’t like it so much, for some reason. But, Japan is safe and all. I didn’t realise that until I went to China. (omission) And their culture, like the food, it was very different from the Chinese food we get in Japan. It was not tasteful, it was bland.

T: Really.

A: And the meat was all greasy, all grease.

(In all interviews extracts in this chapter, names are abbreviated: T for Teacher, A for Aya.)

As she says in the above extract, she did not enjoy her stay there so much, and used some rather strong language to describe her experience there; she found that the place was “dirty”, the food “greasy”, and Japan was “clean and safe”. This perspective can be categorised in the second stage “defence” of Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) proposed by Bennett (1993). In this model, the ways that individuals experience cultural differences are located on a developmental continuum and there are six stages, ranging from ethnocentric to ethnorelative. Ethnocentrism is the cognitive belief that

one's culture, people, and worldview are the centre of the world. Ethnorelativism is the cognitive belief that differences exist and are valid. On the continuum, the least developed stage of development is "denial". Through the stages of "defence", "minimization", "acceptance", and "adaptation", one's intercultural sensitivity is maximised when it reaches the "integration" stage.

Aya's quotes above such as China being "dirty", and its food "greasy", and Japan being "clean and safe" put her in the second stage "defence", which is characterized by acknowledgement of cultural differences with a negative evaluation of those differences. There is often a dualistic worldview (us/them), and one sees her/his culture as being the centre of cultural development, and other cultures as evolving from that. Having a negative view about another culture is not a characteristic of an "intercultural speaker" who has "a willingness to relativise one's own values, beliefs and behaviours, not to assume that they are the only possible and naturally correct ones..." (Byram, Nichols, & Stevens, 2001, p. 5). Therefore, it is assumed that Aya's L2 vision as an intercultural speaker was underdeveloped at that stage. However, there was a particular episode that Aya recalled with significant admiration for a group of Chinese students that she talked to, and this experience seems to have had significant impact on the typical 'black-and-white' assessment she made about China being "dirty", and its food being "greasy".

Extract 2: Impressed with good English speakers in China

A: I wasn't interested in China so much, but then, I met these students who were about three years younger than I, and spent some time together.

T: Yes,

A: And their English was so good! They were so fluent and I was really surprised, you know, they are different. And I felt I needed to work harder, every day when I was there.

As I will show later, this must have impressed her greatly because she told about it to the class when I asked the students to work in groups and share their significant international experience with the group members. She did not talk about the food she did not enjoy in China, but she chose to talk about the Chinese students who spoke English well. It is a common knowledge that Chinese people learn English as a foreign language as Japanese students do. To Aya, those girls who impressed her functioned as powerful near peer models, who are Asian and look like Japanese, similar age, but spoke English well. This was the experience that revealed the gap between her current L2 self and her ideal L2 self. At the same time, thanks to those Chinese near peer role models, her L2 vision as an L2 speaker might have been strengthened as Bandura (1997a) suggests "seeing or visualizing people similar to oneself perform successfully typically raises efficacy beliefs in observers that they themselves possess the capabilities to master comparable activities" (p. 87). More details

will be given in 8.2.1 to illustrate the significance of this experience to her. Moreover, how she spoke about this experience in class is the key theme in 8.2.1.

8.1.2 AYA'S PAST ENGLISH TEACHERS' INFLUENCE ON EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION

As Aya was such an enthusiastic and motivated student, I was curious to know what kind of L2 learning experience, particularly teachers, she had. It is now a well-documented understanding that L2 teachers play a key role on L2 learners' motivation (Dörnyei, 1994; Tanaka, 2005). As Tanaka (2005) explains below:

Generally speaking, in a foreign language learning context, the language is taught in school just for a few hours a week, and has no status as a daily medium of communication. Therefore, classroom experience will be one of the influential determinants for the quality of learners' learning experience, which in turn will affect their motivation. The teacher is the prime source of the new language, in contrast with the natural setting where exposure is often genuinely situational (p. 52).

At the beginning of the interview, when I asked her whether she liked English, she started talking about her English teacher in high school, who had pushed her hard but acknowledged her efforts. This is illustrated in the following extract in which Aya is talking about the impact of the so called "retelling practice" at her high school. This task is often used in English teaching and is considered effective by many English teachers in Japan in vocabulary building and enhancing integrated linguistic skills. It is a task in which students

reproduce orally what they have read or heard using some key words or sometimes completely in their own words. This task can be applied in many different ways. Wu (2008) explains:

Retelling has been a good strategy to know how much students have learned and to increase their comprehension. Retelling activities can facilitate students' reading retrieval because the activities can encourage students to try to recall. Their recalling help teachers understand how much information their students have obtained.

(Wu, 2008, Retelling and Reading section, para. 10)

Extract 3: Strict but attentive—Aya's English teacher in high school

A: We had to choose key words by ourselves, and then, we had to develop it with our own words, (omission) it was painful.

T: Yes.

A: But, after graduating from high school, I came to university

T: Yes.

A: Like when we have composition lessons, although I use simple words, I can use them. (omission) I think it was useful. (omission) Yes, she [her teacher in high school] was so enthusiastic, (omission) and she really looked after us.

T: (omission) Ah I see. Sounds like she had a big influence on you.

A: She was strict.

T: She was? (laughing)

A: Yes (laughing). But among those people, we were trying, and she took good care of those who were trying hard.

Aya says here although the task was “painful”, it turned out to be “useful” afterwards, and she comments “she really looked after us she took good care of those who were trying hard”. These comments indicate that in high school, her motivation to improve her English skills was not primarily for a significant L2-related personal goal. Instead, she was extrinsically motivated in that her hard work was a way to get recognition from the teacher. In the next extract on the contrary, she talks about another teacher who did not pay much attention to her thus did not help her motivation.

Extract 4: Discouraged by little attention

T: Sounds like you have always liked English. Have you ever disliked English?

A: In junior high school, I neither liked nor disliked English. But when I was in the 8th grade, I took an Eiken Grade 4 test and I passed. So I felt, OK, if I try hard I can do it. But my junior high school teacher, (omission) she knew some students were better than others. And I was not the kind of student who stood out, so she did not pay much attention to me. I think I am a kind of person who needs to be pushed and then I can work hard. But it was not like that in junior high school, so I just did the minimum. It's not like I really loved English but it was the only subject that I could feel a sense achievement with.

T: So you liked English better than other subjects?

A: The harder I worked, the better results I got. That made me happy.

What can be gleaned from the above two extracts is that she did not mind the work as long as it got acknowledged by a teacher or it brought good results in tests, which is related to her extrinsic motivation. As she says in Extract 4, “it’s not like I really loved English but it was the only subject that I could feel sense achievement with” her motivation to work hard was to pass a test and get a sense of achievement (“OK, if I try hard I can do it”), she acknowledges that some *painful* L2 practice can help both improve her linguistic skills and gain the teacher’s recognition. However, in contrast, her junior high school teacher in Extract 4 “did not pay much attention” to her and she “just did the minimum”. These comments indicate that up to high school, her motivation to improve her English skills was not primarily a significant L2-related personal goal. Instead, she was extrinsically motivated in that her hard work was a way to get recognition from the teacher, and thus it led to withdrawal of her learning efforts as soon as the recognition became unavailable from a different teacher. This confirms the widely acknowledged expectation that teachers play an important role in students’ motivation in learning, but this insight from Aya’s data reveals something of the actual motivational dynamics at work. In Aya’s case, the role was linked mainly to the extrinsic facet of motivation although it has been shown to lead to more meaningful forms of engagement in L2 learning. Her statements about her past language teacher affecting her learning motivation have been well-confirmed by research (Dörnyei, 1994; Oxford &

Shearin, 1994; Williams & Burden, 1997). What her teacher who was strict but attentive did for her was not just help her improve her L2 skills, but give her the taste of success, which suggests that showing this kind of support to students and being engaged in the process may be an important first step towards facilitating more meaningful engagement at a later stage.

In this section, I have discussed what Aya initially brought into my class as a result of her past experiences, primarily linked to her 1) L2 classroom and L2 teacher experiences and 2) her intercultural experiences with the Chinese near peer role models who were proficient L2 speakers. From what I discussed in this section, it can be deduced that the two possible visions of Aya had were associated with 1) an L2 learner as who lives up to a teacher's expectation and 2) an intercultural speaker.

In the next subsection, I will illustrate how Aya engaged in some of my course tasks based on her knowledge and belief she formed with the influence from her past English teachers.

8.1.3 FULLY ENGAGED IN CLASS—DRAWING ON THE PAST TO BE HERE AND NOW

My field notes document that Aya was always enthusiastic and actively engaged in the class. As most students did, she evaluated most of the class activities as “very useful”.

The highlighted cells in the table below show Aya's rating.

TABLE 8.1 AYA’S RESPONSES TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE ITEMS

Questionnaire item	Very useful	Useful	Don't know	Not very useful	Not useful at all
1 Talking in pairs and groups about future dreams and goals	8 (33.3%)	14 (58.3%)	2 (8%)	0	0
2 Talking in pairs and groups about intercultural experience	11 (45.8%)	11 (45.8%)	2 (8%)	0	0
3 Talking in pairs and groups about language learning strategies	18 (75%)	6 (25%)	0	0	0
4 Talking in pairs and groups about past language learning experience	9 (37.5%)	13 (54.2%)	1 (4%)	1 (4%)	0
5 Practising the skits in pairs	18 (75%)	6 (25%)	0	0	0
6 Answering the questions of Dr Shaules' questionnaire	10 (41.7%)	9 (37.5%)	4 (16.7%)	2 (8%)	0

Although her high ratings might come from politeness and also stem from her desire to live up to a teacher’s expectations as hinted through her past experiences as an L2 learner, most of Aya’s rating is similar to that of the class majority. She rated talking in pairs and groups about selected topics as “useful”, except for the questionnaire item 4: Talking in pairs and groups about past language learning experience, which she rated as “useful”. Her

perception about the usefulness of the course contents could explain her engagement in my course.

Also, in the free comment section of the course evaluation form, she wrote “It looks like you are having so much fun and it makes us happy. I feel like I was always smiling in your classes”. Even though this is just a short comment, it does suggest a possible impact a teacher can have on how a student orients herself to work in class. As I will show later, her comment “having so much fun” and “always smiling” in the class are also related to Aya’s language learning history and beliefs gained from the experience of her past language teachers, and she was trying to put her ideas into action in my class. The following extract from my field notes and interview provide an example of her attempt to do so.

Field notes extract

July 17, 2014

We practiced the skit from episode 6. It was a scene of the main characters ending their romantic relationship and students seemed to enjoy practicing the conversation. Aya and Kei are both usually very enthusiastic were a pair and they were really into it. The facial expressions and the paralanguage they used were a little bit exaggerated, but I thought they were doing a good job. So, I asked them to perform in front of the class. They were really good. They were not shy at all. Everyone was laughing (but impressed) because they looked like real actors. I think I will definitely interview them both.

Unlike many Japanese college students, Aya and her partner on this day Kei were not afraid of being expressive at all, and it made me feel curious and want to ask them about

their past language learning experience in an interview. As shown in the following extract, it became clear during the interview that Aya's proactive engagement in the course corresponded with her language learning belief 'the importance of having fun in L2 learning', which was strongly influenced by her past English teachers.

Extract 5: Aya acting on her belief about effective language learning

T: You always looked like having so much fun. I mean that's the impression I have about you.

A: (laughing) Yes.

T: Is that because you like English?

A: Yes. I like English and my English teacher in high school (omission) What should I say, she taught us having fun was the best way to learn (omission). She said "Just smile and talk", she used to say that, "And you will learn", she used to say.

T: Wow.

A: So, since then, I just talk in English classes.

T: I see.

A: That's what I try to do, and maybe that is what you saw.

This is the same teacher she is talking about in Extract 3, the teacher who was strict and attentive. As she says here "she taught us having fun was the best way to learn" and "she said "Just smile and talk", she used to say that, "And you will learn", her English teacher in high school seemed to have influenced Aya's belief about language learning; "having fun"

was important. She came to my classroom with that belief, which may also be why she expressed her positive regard for the class and the teacher, who made the kind of learning experience that she valued available to her. The following extract also shows how she was trying to put her ideas into action. Before this, I was commenting positively on how well she got into her roles in skits sometimes. Her reply below reveals her belief in language learning and her acting up to it. In the next extract, she is talking about how she tried to make her partner laugh, and tried to “have fun” with her partner while working on a class task, a role play.

Extract 6: Aya acting up to her belief to make a new friend

A: Well, as we practised together and I really got into it, and my partner was laughing. And I thought, “This is good” (omission). First we were not close (omission), but when we were paired up, and as we practised, she was laughing. And I thought, “Wow, she is laughing”. We have become closer and we talk often now. That was a good experience.

Based on her belief that having fun was important for learning (Extract 5), she was trying to make her partner laugh by getting into the character in the role play. It worked and it was “a good experience” for her. Although it was not about improving her linguistic skills, it was a significant experience for her. As Mercer (2011) observes:

...learners often refer to other domains, which they perceive as being relevant and related, maybe in unexpected ways, when describing themselves as EFL learners. Thus, in terms of understanding how a learner may view themselves in

a specific FL [foreign language] domain, a teacher may need to take a holistic view of the learner, in order to gain an insight into a learner's self-beliefs in other domains which the learner perceives as connected. (p. 168)

It seems like Aya was trying to complete two different tasks simultaneously in the situation: gaining linguistic skills by learning the phrases in the skit and trying to establish a relationship with her partner by making her laugh. The latter goes well beyond the concept of language learning motivation and L2 self, and yet seems essential to its success. She followed her belief influenced by the past language teacher she looked up to, acted on it, and succeeded in gaining a new friend through the use of L2. To her, this meant more than gaining particular L2 skills. This reminds us of the significance of learning “language as social practice” (Scarino & Liddicoat, 2009, p. 16), learning L2 to express thoughts and ideas to communicate with others in meaningful social interactions.

To conclude this section, Aya's proactive engagement in my course was due to her belief she formed with the influence from her past English teachers and her putting them in action. It promoted the language use, but not to only improve linguistic skills, but to express her identity and establish a good relationship with her classmates. In that sense, therefore, the match between Aya's language beliefs and the classroom experience available in this class enabled Aya to enter into a meaningful communicative event with the ‘other’ and enabled her to feel what is like to be an intercultural speaker, negotiating comfortable third

places between *the self* and *the other/the foreign*” (Lo Bianco et al., 1999, p. 1, emphasis in original).

As demonstrated in this section, a teacher’s impact on a student’s belief about L2 learning and engagement is remarkable. In the next section, I will develop the discussion by showing more data of Aya attempting to gain a new vision as a confident L2 user by imitating the teacher, whose behaviour confirmed her language learning beliefs. With some examples from the data, I will describe Aya’s endeavour to try out her possible selves in the classroom, and how she came to aspire a bigger vision beyond L2 self.

8.2 REACHING OUT FOR A VISION

8.2.1 TESTING A NEW VISION BY MODELLING THE LANGUAGE TEACHER

In this subsection, I will elaborate how Aya began to explore her new vision, which was linked to her past experience, through modelling the teacher’s language use. Takahashi’s (2013) interview study also suggests one of the teacher’s roles is to be a role model and share their own stories about their English learning. In the same way, Kaboody (2013) observes that being an “ideal model of the target language speaker” is one of the roles that teachers play in L2 classes along with being initiator, facilitator, motivator, mentor, consultant, and

mental supporter (p. 48). The purpose of this section is to illustrate how a teacher can impact on a student's language use and attempt to develop her L2 self by being a role model.

To start with, I will give an example of Aya's attempt in modelling the teacher, which was identified in one of the homework materials. She described her experience in China as shown in the textbox below. Bold indicates the similarities.

Textbox: Aya's assignment

These pictures were taken in August 2012 in China. A photo **in the top right**, I took the picture with my friends at the Great Wall. There were many foreign tourists, so I made friends with some Koreans at the Great Wall. **In the same picture, you can see me** wearing a cap. This cap given to us because the sunshine in China was very strong. The polo shirt in the picture was also given to us so that we will not lose other members of the group. I have these things as souvenirs even now. China's weather was very hot but I spent nice days in China.

The text she wrote is very similar to the one I gave in the example worksheet, which is shown in the textbox below (See the description in Week 9 lesson in 5.2.2 for details).

Textbox: Model description

These pictures were taken in December 2010 in Australia. **In the top right picture**, you see me holding a champagne glass. You know it is summer in Australia in December. The sun sets at about 10 pm at night, so people enjoy swimming until 9 pm! When I left Iwate on December 21, it was minus 3 degrees. It was 37 degrees in Australia! **In the same picture, you also see** my friends Andrew and Sarah. They travel around the world and make CDs with nature sounds.

Aya used the same phrases and similar syntax in her writing. For example, phrases such as: *These pictures were taken in, In the top right picture, In the same picture, you also see...* are exactly the same. The way she notes about the weather in China is also very similar to the way I did about Australian weather, and the same is true for her describing the people she met in China. Of course, students, especially those whose level is less advanced do naturally, and this was fully expected given the sample was produced for the exact purpose of modelling the language use. However, she was the only student in class who followed the model description so faithfully. Furthermore, as the next example shows, Aya's readiness to model the linguistic behaviour from the sources that she valued has wider significance for Aya's L2 vision development.

There was a critical incident that my field notes show as particularly significant, and it illustrates Aya's strong identification with the teacher as her role model. Modelling was obvious not only in written style, but also in the spoken style. This incident occurred in June 2014 and involved Aya imitating the teacher as a way to try out her possible L2 self.

The topic for the lesson was "Talking about your international experience as an English user" (see the content for Week 9 in 5.3). As I explained in 5.3, I had the students to

work in groups of four, and asked them to talk about what they wrote for Question 6 on the homework sheet: *Have you ever had any international experience (in Japan or overseas)? If yes, please write a little about it.* When students were working in groups, I noticed Aya and another student, who were in the same group. They were talking in English for the whole time and looking really engaged, using lots of gestures and facial expressions. They stood out because typically, most students resort to using Japanese when they need to explain something complicated, but they were using only English. In addition, their theatrical use of body language was also different from other students in class, who would express themselves in a much more reticent manner. After everyone in the group spoke, I asked the students to choose the most interesting story from the group to share with the whole class. The representatives' stories were all interesting and the class paid good attention to them. Aya was chosen as her group representative. When it was her turn, she talked about her experience in China. She was trying to look confident, at least with her face, staring at the audience, but there was a slight shake in her voice and I could sense a little nervousness with it. As I illustrate below, she looked like she was imitating how I talked with exaggerated intonation and the use of discourse markers and interjections when I showed them an example earlier in the same lesson. It made the class laugh, in a nice way. I presume it was because students knew Aya was trying to sound like me or they simply thought how she

spoke with exaggerated tone of voice was funny. The two extracts shown below are transcriptions of classroom video recording data, which illustrate Aya's attempt (Extract 7) to imitate the teacher talk (Extract 8).

Extract 7: Aya imitating teacher talk

- A: I went to China when I was senior high school student. Ah, this trip was, free, free.
T: Oh:
A: Yeah! (She laughs) So I talked to many Chinese in English. So Chinese talk English very well, *so* (class laughs) I was very surprised, huh... (Class laughs) I played a traditional instrument of Chinese. For example...hmmm (humming), yeah! (Class laughs) Yeah, I don't... I. I didn't remember name of Chinese... because I couldn't read their names. So... very difficult...
T: OK,
A: Yeah!
T: Thank you! (Class applauds)

During her presentation, she said *so* four times. When she said it the third time, the class laughed. It was probably because the class thought she was trying to sound like me as I often use *so* in class. In addition, how she said *yeah!* with an animated tone might have resembled my style of talking. Typically, many Japanese students whose linguistic level is not advanced would not use discourse markers such as *so* and *ok* as they are often not explicitly taught in L2 classrooms. In the above speech, Aya said *yeah* and *so* multiple times. My tentative conclusion is that she observed the use of those discourse markers in my talking style and proactively tried to use them in the public speech. To support my assumption, I

will provide a transcription of the instruction I gave to the class approximately four minutes before Aya stood in front of the class. Discourse markers are underlined in the extract.

Extract 8: Discourse markers in teacher's talk

T: OK! Ah, everybody, stop. Yes! OK, can you please choose, the *most* interesting story from your group. OK? Whose story was most interesting. So choose *one* story. I, I, I know everybody has, has great stories. But just choose one person.. whose story was *very* interesting and share with the whole class. OK? So choose one person.

Textbox: Transcription convention

.	falling intonation (as at the end of declarative sentence)
?	rising intonation (as at the end of interrogative sentence)
,	continuing intonation
!	animated tone
...	noticeable pause
:	lengthened sound
<i>Italics</i>	emphatic stress
(gestures)	
(omission)	indicates the part omitted from the original transcription text

In this short instruction, discourse markers are identified seven times. Not only the frequent use of discourse markers, but how some words are stressed was also the pattern Aya imitated in the public speech (*so*), and that was when the class laughed.

Aya made a strong impression with this incident because she was different from the other students who spoke in front of the class. Aya was much more expressive in her speech than the other students, who just read out the texts they wrote on the worksheet. Although she did not tell me during the interview that she was imitating me on this particular occasion, the tone she used to say certain words (*so*) and the use of discourse markers suggest intriguing similarities in my speech style and hers. In fact, I had a few colleagues of mine listen to the audio data of the above transcripts as they are familiar with the way I talk. They all laughed and said Aya's speech resembles the way I talk. The plausibility of this interpretation is further corroborated by Aya's own comment in the course evaluation form, which was given at the end of the course, and before the interview (See the text box below).

Textbox: Aya's comment in the course evaluation form

Shadowing your English was most useful because by copying you, I understood the accents and intonation. We don't do these kinds of things, so it was a very precious opportunity. It looks like you are having so much fun and it makes us happy. I feel like I was always smiling in your classes. I wanted to hear more about your experiences and learning strategies.

Expressions such as *by copying you* and *I wanted to hear more about your experiences and learning strategies* show that she sees me as a language learning role model. Also, her comment *It looks like you are having so much fun and it makes us happy and I was always smiling in your classes* are also related to her language learning history and beliefs gained

from the experience of her past language teacher in Extract 3 and 5, who told her having fun was the best way to learn.

To reiterate what has been discussed so far, Aya believed having fun was an important aspect in language learning as advised by her teacher in high school. Thus, it seems right to presume that by seeing the teacher having fun in class, her belief was affirmed. Interestingly, the desire to model the teacher is not only linked with re-affirming her past experiences but also with a new L2 vision as a confident L2 user who can express her identity. It can be inferred that to her, I was someone who encompassed her past and actualised her L2 vision. As Aya said in the course evaluation comment, it looked like I was having fun teaching classes and speaking in English, which was congruent with the belief she formed under the influence of her past English teacher. Aya was able to re-interpret her past experiences as a fertile ground for her own possible vision through me. In other words, it seems that I functioned as a mirror for Aya's own L2 vision and therefore she participated enthusiastically in L2 practices that enabled her to live up to her L2 vision.

Although there might be other reasons why a student imitates a teacher, my observation of her in class tells me that Aya imitating the teacher was her way of trying out her new L2 self. Because the teacher enabled her to see that possibility in practice (i.e. the teacher embodied a vision which was linked with Aya's past experience that she found

appealing), she was beginning to explore this vision through modelling the teacher's behaviour – a gateway to her own vision.

So far, I have provided data from the course evaluation comment and interview conversations, in which Aya's past language learning experience and beliefs are revealed. I have also shown that this belief was reconfirmed by her seeing the teacher "having fun" in class and how it enabled Aya to relate her past experience to create her own possible vision through modelling the teacher in public speaking and written homework.

In the next section, I will endeavour to demonstrate that Aya's vision inspired and enacted through modelling L2 teachers' behaviours grew into aspirations beyond L2 learning and led her to seek guidance from me in relation to broader visions.

8.2.2 FROM IMITATION TO ASPIRATION

When Aya agreed to participate in the interview in August 2014, she also asked me if she could get advice on her career saying "I am also looking forward to talking to you in the interview. As a matter of fact, I would like to get your advice on something (about my career and future). Would that be OK?" This e-mail message is an evidence of her desire to get advice from me beyond L2 learning. The following excerpt from the interview shows her strong hope to have a practical goal or purpose for learning English, which was why she

came to me asking for advice. In this moment, we were talking her experience visiting China. I had just commented on the strong impression she made when she spoke about it in front of the whole class. I asked her if she went there on a school trip and she told me she went there on Kizuna Project, which was explained in 8.1.1.

Extract 9: Feeling lost and dissatisfied—“I need a vision”

(She is talking about her experience visiting China.)

A: So it's not like I had a clear goal, and I just had a good time. But then, when I came home, people asked me what I had learnt (omission) and for why I had gone there. Without a clear goal or a purpose, you don't gain much. I started thinking that way (omission). At that time, I did not have a purpose or a goal (omission). Without a clear goal or a purpose, I can't work hard.

T: Oh, I see, ah, huh. Do you have a goal or purpose now?

A: I don't, so during this summer vacation, I don't know what to do. For example, I want to improve my English, but then, for what? (omission) I don't have any goals or aims or future dreams, so every day I just look at books (omission). And I tell myself, this is not the way it should be. And I can't concentrate on anything (omission). So, even when I am studying English, I feel like I am not learning much. I don't like where I am now.

Up to the high school level, there are homeroom teachers besides subject teachers who give students general support and guidance. Some colleges and universities have the similar system, but my college does not. Although there are professional counsellors and nurses who take care of the students' mental and physical well-being at my college, Aya must have found it easier to talk to me than talking to other professionals she did not know, and probably because I was someone who pushed her to think about the future during the course.

As described earlier in 8.1.2, from her past language learning experience, she knew hard work would get rewarded. She was willing to work hard as long as she had something to work towards, whether it was an acknowledgement from a teacher or a sense of achievement. However, here she is saying “Without a clear goal or a purpose, I can’t work hard” she cannot work hard without having a goal or a purpose. Just having fun and practising English conversation skills does not serve her need to find a larger goal in her life. In a micro social level (English classroom), she was successful in expressing herself in L2 and gaining new friends, but she was feeling she needed to have a bigger vision to guide her in her life.

This interview was conducted right before the summer holidays after the completion of the intervention course, which incorporated activities to promote students’ future visions of themselves. Clearly, the course has awakened Aya’s desire to do something with her life. Through some of the course activities, in which she imitated the teacher behaviour and reflected on her past experience in language learning and intercultural encounters in China, she came to gradually aspire for a larger vision that goes well beyond her L2 self. She saying “I don’t have any goals or aims or future dreams” and “this is not the way it should be” shows her frustrations and aspirations for finding a direction in her life. As she says “Without

a clear goal or a purpose, I can't work hard", she feels the need to find a vision that motivates her to follow the path she should be on.

My institution is a two-year college. The students are encouraged to seriously think about their career soon after they enter the college in April because they have less than two years before they graduate. Whether they want to continue studying at a higher-level institution or get a job after graduation, they are encouraged to think about the next step and start working towards their goal. As explained in 5.4.4 and 8.1.1, this interview was conducted in August after the course, right before the summer holidays, when students try to use their time meaningfully by going on volunteer and internship programmes during the holidays while others work and travel. In many job and university admission interviews, the students are asked about in what kind of extra-curricular activities they were involved in besides what they have studied. Extra-curricular experiences are believed to contribute to the character building of young people. Therefore, a lot of students at my college try to find something to do during summer holidays that may be useful for their future, even though they might not have clear future visions of themselves. However, Aya seemed to be someone who needed to have a clear purpose before she took on a project. It was almost like she is trying to find a way to intrinsically motivate herself to do it.

It is difficult to say to what extent these concerns were triggered by the course itself or also in combination with the timing. As explained in the last paragraph, this was at the end of the semester, whatever the course was; therefore, it was time to think about what to do next. The fact that Aya thought most of her friends knew what to do with their lives and she did not could be highlighting the dissonance between her ought-to-self and her ideal self rather than showing the role of the course in developing Aya's vision. Her concern about her future is expressed not only because she does not have a clear goal, but also in relation to her friends' orientation as is shown in the following extract.

Extract 10: Friends have visions, what about me?

T: Well, I have asked everything I wanted to ask. Do you have anything? Oh, you said you wanted to talk to me about something.

A: Yes. I think about my future a lot. Everyone is talking about going on to a four year university (omission). They say you have to graduate from a four year university, you know, for a job (sigh). Recently, I think I want to study more.

T: Oh yeah,

A: But I don't know what I want to study, and I don't know what I want to be. I talked to my parents, and they say I should go to a four year university if I have something I really want to do (sigh). And I say to myself "goal again". I think about big goals, you know.

As Kawaura and Kawakami (2013) observe, college students, whose professional career have not started, tend to be very sensitive to the social atmosphere and influenced by it. Her peers' decisions are influential in making her own as discussed in 3.3.3.

Also, she brought up the issue of her career when I thought that the interview was coming to an end. Although she expressed her frustration with not having a tangible vision for the future earlier, she still needed to talk about it. It appeared that lack of a bigger vision of herself was bothering her, and it had been amplified by hearing her friends talk about their future ("Everyone is talking about going on to a four-year university"). Dörnyei (2009) observes that "the ought to self is closely related to peer group norms and normative pressures" (p. 20). She felt she needed to go to a four-year university to get a decent job ("they say you have to graduate from a four-year university, you know, for a job"). It felt somewhat appealing to continue studying ("Recently, I think I want to study more", but she did not know exactly what she wanted to study ("I don't know what I want to study") or what kind of work she wanted to have ("I don't know what I want to be").

What seems to be happening here is Aya is actively engaging with her ought-to-selves and although she may previously have taken them for granted, and as in fact many of her peers may be. The intervention course with more explicit emphasis of 'vision' may have encouraged her to reflect more carefully on her own desires as opposed to the 'expected'

desires, and perhaps highlighted a gap. Her frustration for not having a clear goal in relation to her parent's expectations as well as her friends' orientations is expressed in the following extract.

Extract 11: How do I find “my own” vision?

A: So, I can't visualise anything. My parents say maybe I should get a job. You know, it costs money to go to a university, but I like English (omission), so I want to study. But, I wonder what kind of standard everyone has. How do they choose the university they want to go to?

T: Right.

A: Do they have a clear goal? Many of my friends have decided which four year university they want to transfer into, and I think it is great, but I feel a bit left out.

Her struggle to find “her own” vision is well expressed in the Extracts 10 and 11. What her friends and parents tell her matter significantly, but she is clearly not simply going with it and therefore feeling caught between ought-to-self and ideal self, which she is yet to find, and feeling anxious about it. As noted earlier in 3.2.3, during the formation of possible selves, views of peers (Boyatzis & Akrivou 2006) and parents (Zentner & Renaud 2007) have great impact on the formation of adolescents' possible selves. However, here she says she “cannot visualise anything”. I speculated it was because the visions that her friends and parents talk about were not her own, and then, I thought it was time for me to step in, to help her create her own vision.

Interestingly, this came at the very end of the interview which has a striking resemblance with a feature well-known in counselling where the punch line or, in other words, the key issue is revealed last. In this way, Aya's interview with me possibly functioned as a preparation ground for what is discussed in the next section, where I shift the focus of discussion of findings from Aya to the teacher, in this case, myself, and offer my proposition which has to do with the role of a teacher in helping students beyond language learning. I will show an example of a teacher intervention outside a language classroom, and propose that, in line with recent debates in applied linguistics, it may be profitable to conceive of the moral role of a teacher (Kubanyiova & Crookes, 2016).

8.3 DIALOGIC CO-CONSTRUCTION OF AYA'S VISION

I initially prepared this course to promote students' visions as intercultural communicators, hoping to cultivate students' skills to communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds, more specifically with people from different countries. I thought about doing it because the students would gain some intercultural awareness without spending time overseas, which would have been difficult if not impossible for many of them, due to the financial and psychological damages caused by the earthquake.

However, in due course, and mainly through my exploration of Aya's data, I realised this course had potential of a much bigger effect. It provoked Aya's aspiration for

finding a vision beyond L2 self and my desire to be involved in the process. I came to understand that my role as a language teacher and the moral call to enter into a much deeper relationship with students than typical techniques for vision building may assume. In this subsection, I will describe how Aya and I collaborated on the co-construction of Aya's vision through our dialogue. Although I did not intend to do so prior to the interview, some factors interplayed in creating the situation, and one big factor was my desire to do something to make a difference to the life of Aya, who was striving to find a direction in her life and asking for help during the interview.

8.3.1 INTERVENTION OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

In this subsection, I will provide more interview data to show examples another teacher intervention outside a classroom to help with what students need. Of course, I realise my primary job is to teach assigned English classes at my college. However, I believe a teacher has a more holistic role to help a student grow as a human being. This professional philosophy of mine was strengthened because of the extreme situation brought by the earthquake, and it forced me to make sense of my own professional life, "which are moral practices carried out under often challenging circumstances" (Crookes, 2015, p. 486).

A friend of mine who is a medical doctor once told me, “Once a doctor, always a doctor, wherever I am and whenever it is. Even if I am on holidays on a tropical island and lying on a beach, but I see someone who has got injured or looks like in pain, I will immediately try to help him/her”. Another friend of mine who is a Christian reverend told me something similar: “Whether inside or outside of the church, I will try to listen to someone who is in need of compassion and sympathy”. How I feel about teaching is similar to those friends. My job as a teacher is not limited to the classroom practice. My knowledge and beliefs “include one’s own experiences as a student, one’s personal values, and broader life experiences and reflections” (Crookes, 2015, p. 486).

My initial purpose of the interview was obviously to gather data for this study. I thought I would be the one who was asking the questions, but during the interview with Aya, I started to feel that I had to play a different role. I had to listen to her concerns, frustrations, and aspirations. I realized that I was in a position of being involved in her deeper inner world that Aya decided to expose. At that moment, I reacted intuitively and tried to listen to her carefully and give her what she was wanting from me. Here is an example of me trying to help her reshape her vision by giving her tangible and practical advice towards the end of the interview.

Extract 12: Start with smaller goals

A: So, even when I am studying English, it feels like I am not learning much. I don't like where I am now.

T: I see. Well, here is what I think. I don't think you need to have a great purpose or a big goal. Some people are like, "I am definitely going to be a diplomat", and of course they would work hard. But it doesn't have to be like that at all. How about something like trying for the next level of the Eiken test, or get 700 in TOEIC? You told me you passed the Grade 4 in Eiken. Something you can achieve if you work a little bit harder, that is fine. There is nothing wrong with that. You can start with something like that.

A: OK.

T: I can see that you feel you have to have a great dream or a goal.

A: Yes.

T: Well, you are only 18 or 19, and it is almost impossible to have a goal of your life.

A: Really?

T: Really. You take your life seriously (laugh), it is great (laugh).

A: (laugh)

Acknowledging her aspirations for a big vision, which she repeatedly mentioned during the interview, I suggested smaller goals that were more achievable, I was trying to convince her that it was OK to make small steps. If she can achieve something, even if it is something small, her self-efficacy belief is likely to be strengthened. It would then eventually give her motivation to work towards a bigger goal and have a bigger vision. The next extract shows my attempt to tell her the importance of preparing herself for the time when she had to use English although we did not know when that would be.

Extract 13: Be prepared for a critical moment

T: I mean you never know when you are going to need it. If you can't use it when you need to use it, really, what did you learn English for, right? So it is important to prepare yourself so that you can use it when you have to. You don't start going on a diet when summer comes, right? You start way before that so that you can take off your clothes any time when summer comes, right?

A: (laughing) yeah.

T: So, that is your goal (omission), like I talked to myself in English, mumble, mumble.

A: (laughing)

T: (omission) Without doing these kinds of things, you can't use it when you want to.

A: I see.

Here I am attempting to show her that it is important to prepare her for a moment she needs to use English whenever it will be. My analogy of diet attempted to convey that message. As Aya seemed to be concerned with immediate goals such as tests, scores, and grades as many Japanese students do, but starting to feel it was not enough, I was trying to show a bigger picture. The energy you put into something will be useful in time, and keeping faith is important in pursuing whatever path you may take. In the next extract, I am trying to give her a realistic situation that she might be using English in.

Extract 14: Offering practical and realistic possible images

T: For example, if you work at a hotel, it is very likely that some foreign guests will stay at the hotel.

A: Yes.

T: It is realistic, or maybe a restaurant. It is very possible that people who do not speak Japanese might come to the restaurant. Whatever you do, it's not like you will not need English at all.

A: I see.

T: Also, if you work, you will save money, and maybe you will travel overseas. And then, you want to be able to do shopping by yourself, right?

A: Yes.

T: Maybe you will order something at a restaurant. Maybe you will try something on, and then it might be too big or you don't like the colour (omission). Like in those moments, you will need English, and you need to prepare yourself for that. That can become your goal. There is no need to have a big goal, like be a diplomat or anything like that.

A: (nodding)

Before this, she kept saying she could not 'visualise' anything, so I was trying to help her by giving some practical advice which she had heard in my class before, and by helping her visualise very realistic situations that she was likely to experience. Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) suggest that when a student does not see any purpose for learning a foreign language, language teachers should spend good amount of energy into "creating the vision", "making it plausible", and "keeping it alive" (p.33). The next extract shows how I tried to intervene to help with her seemingly unproductive belief about language learning by giving an example of my former colleague Oliver, who was originally from Scandinavia.

Extract 15: Reshaping Aya's belief—No perfection needed

T: You also told me you e-mail friends who live overseas in English? Do you still do that?

A: Ah, yes.

T: Well, that's great, isn't it?

A: I don't know what I am writing is correct.

T: I don't think you need to worry about that too much as long as you can get your meaning across (omission). I think too many people wait until they become perfect, and they never do. That is really unrealistic. You know, Oliver, his Japanese is really good, right? But sometimes he makes grammatical errors.

A: Right.

T: But it does not bother us, does it? We understand him and admire him for speaking such good Japanese. You know what I mean? We really don't care about small grammatical errors in his speech, do we?

A: No, we don't.

T: So, I think that is how other people think when they hear our English, it might not be perfect, but that's not a big deal.

A: Ah, I see.

To repeat what Dörnyei (2001) claims, "Most learners will have certain beliefs about language learning and most of these beliefs are likely to be (at least partly) incorrect" (p. 66).

As many learners of English in Japan do, Aya believed that she needed to use grammatically perfect English, even when she sent e-mails to her friends. This kind of belief is not helpful when trying to promote the language use, so I intentionally shared my language learning beliefs here; your grammatical English knowledge does not have to be perfect to communicate with people or to express thoughts and ideas. Although I often give similar advice in class, when it is given in a more personal setting like this, I am focussing on just Aya and I believe it has a different effect and the message becomes more powerful.

The interview served as a context for this type of facilitation in addition to the classroom. Although the practical vision I was trying to offer to Aya here seems to be L2-related, I was only focussing to be engaged in a dialogue with her to help her have a tangible future image of herself by giving practical advice, whether it was L2-related or not. One might argue here that Aya's limited contribution may give the impression of the absence of dialogue. Yet, my in-depth knowledge of the student and the general theoretical and philosophical understandings of communication in the available literature both point to the possible dialogic nature of this exchange. Although Aya might not be making many utterances, it does not mean she is not contributing to the dialogue. The act of her listening to what I am saying and trying to process it itself is a meaningful interaction as valued by Augustine as an "inner dialogue" with a notion of interior and exterior words (Stock, (2010). Also, it is a well-known fact in communication studies that communication can occur without words (e.g. Andersen, 1999; Knapp & Hall 2006).

In this subsection, I illustrated my attempts of intervention to give explicit advice to Aya and point out her ideas that did not seem to be helping her outside a language classroom. In the next subsection, I will summarise the significance of this process.

8.3.2 DIALOGIC POWER OF INTERVIEW FOR VISION BUILDING

“Truth is not born nor is it to be found inside the head of an individual person, it is born between people dialogic interaction” (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 110).

It was only when I started to transcribe the interview data that I felt Aya reaching out for me. I started to hear her crying for help as I was listening to the recording of the interview with her. I interviewed eight students in total, but I transcribed Aya’s data first as it somehow made the biggest impression. As I started analysing the interview data and synthesising them with other kinds of data, I realised what I learned through the interaction with Aya inside and outside the classroom was profound, which totally resonates with a great psychologist Carl Rogers:

When I can really hear someone, it puts me in touch with him. It enriches my life. It’s through hearing people that I have learnt whatever it is that I know about individuals, about the personality, about psychotherapy, about the personal relationships (Rogers, Lyon, & Tausch, 2013, p. 68).

I believe interview was a great learning process for me and probably for Aya too. In the interview, we were trying to make sense of her past and work towards the future. It was a story making process as Le Hunte and Golembiewski (2014) say “it is through narrative that we learn about ourselves and prepare ourselves for the future in an evolutionary sense” (p. 75).

I feel grateful for Aya, who trusted me enough to expose her vulnerability. It was an unforgettable experience to me as Sakurai and Kobayashi (2005) think the moment when a ‘conversation’ in the interview is turned into a ‘dialogue’; it gives catharsis to the interviewee and a kind of ecstasy to the interviewer who has gone deep into the interviewee’s life experience.

Aya talked openly about her issues and thus helped us work collaboratively to explore Aya’s possible selves. As I saw that she needed practical advice and guidance for making decisions for her future and that vision construction is a relational activity, I felt the need to engage more deeply with that process and wanted to enter into a deeper relationship to support her in a meaningful dialogue. My previous training and experience as a counsellor was useful in enabling this dialogue turn into something I will remember as my critical moment. Most importantly, it was the impetus I felt to get deeper into Aya’s life was the primary factor for this facilitation and engaging in a dialogue with her outside the classroom. I was not thinking so much about being a good teacher or someone knowledgeable, but be there for her as an individual working with another individual. Here I am again referring to my favourite psychologist Carl Rogers:

When we can, within ourselves, be real and open and the caring and understanding, beautiful results occur. And for any of us – parents, teachers, physicians – what we do then would be appropriate. When we really are in the process of being ourselves, then

what we do will be appropriate in a situation. The most important element in person-centered learning climates is the teacher's way of being (Rogers, Lyon, & Tausch, 2013, p. 152).

After the earthquake, just like many people were, I was trying to make myself useful in different social domains. The pain people were going through in the area I live in was enormous and I could not help but do something about it. Therefore, I tried to do whatever I could to help the community. For example, I took commodities to the shelters in the coastal areas, I spread the information about the people who needed commodities on Facebook, I donated money, and I volunteered to teach English to the children who live in shelters. I volunteered to interpret for international groups who came to help. I am a member of the local astronomy club, and I went to the shelters with other members of the club with telescopes and showed stars and moon to the people in the affected areas to distract them from their suffering, even for a short moment. Because I was in this kind of mindset, it was natural for me to feel that I wanted to do something to help Aya as an individual.

In this section, I illustrated how the teacher became attuned to Aya's desire to do something with her life and what she did in response, namely, engaging in dialogue with her and helping her create her own vision beyond language learning. This has implications for

what teachers might be tasked with as they embark on their efforts to support the development of their students' visions.

8.4 SUMMARY: A TEACHER'S MORAL ROLE IN MOBILIZING STUDENTS' VISION BEYOND L2 MOTIVATION

My first conclusion is that we need to take a theoretically and empirically fuller account of learners as individuals, building on Mercer's (2011) account of language learner psychology. It was through Aya's data that I began to realise that it was not possible to apply exclusive constructs from traditional L2 motivational research but that I needed to ask deeper questions and revisit my own purposes for conducting both my classes and research in particular ways.

Secondly, empirical evidence suggests the need for language teachers as 'moral agents' (Kubanyiova & Crookes, 2016). This means that teachers' genuine efforts to help students engage with future visions in the L2 classroom may open channels for students' deeper reflection on their lives more broadly. While teachers' capacity to respond to scenarios meaningfully may be assisted through well-designed L2 vision tasks and materials, the moral nature of this responsiveness has consequences for the moral dimension of teacher

development (Kubanyiova, 2014) and therefore for a changing focus in research on language teachers.

Perhaps to Aya, I was initially a teacher who was a linguistic role model. The intervention course components I prepared for the purpose of cultivating students' L2 vision facilitated her reflection on her past experience and aspiration for finding her possible self. However, it is not so much about what skills, personal characteristics, or strategies teachers must possess, but rather about their 'desire to enter into that relationship' – i.e. desire to really know the students for who they are with their own backgrounds, histories and multiple identity roles beyond being just 'learners', let alone L2 learners. This is in line with the "job crafting" idea by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001). In their words, job crafting is "the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work" (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001, p. 179). According to Berg, Dutton, and Wrzesniewski (2008), "[t]he primary outcomes of job crafting are altered perceptions of the meaning of work and one's identity at work" (p. 3).

Interviewing Aya made me think much about the moral role of a teacher and in what way I can both make a difference in students' lives and create a greater "chance of meaningful development that would have significant consequences for language students' classroom" (Kubanyiova & Crookes, 2016, p. 124). Some would argue that 'moral' is a

loaded word and needs justification of its use. However, how the word ‘moral’ is used in this thesis has nothing to do with a specific religion or philosophy. It simply refers to how one tells what is right from wrong and how one decides on what is the ‘right’ thing to do. When Aya started asking for advice on her as yet unclear future L2 vision, I put the purpose of my interview aside, and tried to focus on the information and advice she needed from me, rather than focussing on my research agenda. I did it because it felt like it was the ‘right’ action to take. This kind of judgment based on the here-and-now moment of educational action (cf. Kubanyiova & Crookes, 2016) is what is meant by the word ‘moral’ in this thesis. Certainly, providing the students with L2 education was in my job description. However, working consciously and deliberately on the development of students’ future visions helped me realise that I wanted and needed more than this. I desired to make a contribution through my job and give hope and faith to my students for the future. The teacher’s own development is critical; as some researchers have pointed out that language teachers’ identity development is more important than the acquisition of teacher knowledge (e.g., Kanno & Stuart, 2011; Kubanyiova, 2012).

9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I will first summarise the key findings based on the research questions and discuss the pedagogical implications (Section 9.1). The study's limitations and recommendations for future research are given in Section 9.2. I will conclude this paper with my personal notes in order to offer the insights I gained from this EP inquiry.

9.1 RETURNING TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

9.1.1 WHAT L2 VISIONS AND L2 VISION-RELATED EXPERIENCES DO THE COURSE PARTICIPANTS HAVE WHEN THEY BEGIN THEIR COLLEGE LIFE?

I presented my findings related to the first research question, “What L2 vision do the course participants have when they begin their college life??” in Chapter 6 by identifying socio-cultural factors that had a likely influence on students' vision formation: public discourse and educational policy. The overall dataset shows that students had vague ideas of what they might want to do and what they were supposed to become and were able to provide a range, albeit a fairly narrow one, of future possibilities when prompted to do so. However, in general, they did not display, in words or action, a genuine commitment towards attaining such visions, partly because of a lack of opportunity to engage with such visions in any concrete way. In other words, these vague and transient visions were likely to have been the reflections of family values and the wider societal expectations and ideologies. As discussed

more fully in Chapter 6, it is quite likely that these values, ideologies and public debates have shaped the students' awareness of what futures might be possible for them and this awareness was reflected in the data gathered (such as homework material that asked the students to articulate their visions more explicitly). But it also became clear that the visions that the students named were not necessarily the ones they really 'owned' and, as a result, the motivational consequences assumed in the literature on possible selves were not particularly obvious from the students' data.

However, I also illustrated, by focusing on three participants, namely Chika, Asami, and Masaya, that it was the students' concrete past experiences that had a demonstrable impact on both their vision formation and the motivational consequences for their engagement with L2. Of all the research participants, Chika's future L2 visions were most vividly brought to light and the data showed the significant influence that her mother had on Chika's desire to be connected to 'foreignness' and foreign languages as a way of mediating that connection. The letters that she exchanged with her foreign pen friends using L2 helped her feel "connected" to things and people that were "foreign" and "cool" to her, and that she had "akogare (longing)" for.

In contrast, although Asami provided an explicit articulation of her future L2 vision as an English-speaking bus tour guide, the absence of any concrete experiences or

connections that Chika described in her data, meant that her attitude towards English learning and the actual engagement was a far cry from the energy and dynamism seen in Chika's data. It is true that Asami articulated her L2 vision as an English-speaking tour guide. However, this clearly was in mere compliance with the requirements for her English class assignment rather than a genuinely desired vision. In the absence of concrete experience of what L2 could mean for her life, Asami picked up clues from elsewhere about what she believed she was 'supposed to' write. Asami's data, in contrast to Chika's, show a latent influence of public discourse on students' L2 vision as the skill of being able to explain tourist spots in English to foreign tourists was part of the government policy. Compared to Chika, Asami had fewer opportunities to 'use' English and she did not like learning English through grammar translation in junior and senior high schools.

Masaya's data, on the other hand, offer glimpses into the transition from the abstract 'visions' seen in Asami's data and the concrete and vivid guides that energise L2 engagement and motivation as demonstrated in Chika's account. To start with, Masaya did not describe his future L2 vision as concretely as Chika or indeed Asami in the class material, but he did offer the same future occupation as Asami did. He wrote that he wanted to work for a travel agency and this was an example of an influence of an occupational role model intertwined with other factors such as public discourse and intercultural experience on a

vision construct. His experience of visiting Scotland affected his awareness of the importance of L2 learning, and seeing an English-speaking travel agent planted a seed of his L2 vision in his mind. Interestingly, after Masaya graduated from the college in March 2016, he found a job working as a clerk in a resort hotel on Miyakojima Island. Of course, it is hard to speculate whether this was by design or chance, but his beginning career trajectory may suggest that an important transition from vision as abstract to vision as a genuine future guide may have taken place. Initially, “using English for work” might have been an abstract idea that was part and parcel of the discourse that Japanese young people like Masaya had been well socialised into. Similarly, “becoming the tour conductor” may have initially formed part of his obligatory repertoire of future images for those same reasons. However, it appears that Masaya’s actual use of English in an international setting gave some resonance and substance to those vague images and enabled him to explore the possibility of actualising the vision. I cannot claim with any sense of certainty that my course had something to do with pursuing his L2 vision, just like I cannot claim that what Masaya’s post-course circumstances show is a genuine pursuit of one’s L2 vision rather than a pure coincidence. The data required for such claims would go well beyond the scope of this thesis. What I can say, however, is that Masaya’s data offer the possibility that a vague vision can turn into a tangible and consequential one thanks to specific and concrete experiences that

seem to mediate that transition.

I started this research by asking the question about what visions Japanese students have when they begin their college life. Although I still find the question important, both as a researcher and an educator, and my study has indeed offered interesting pointers in this direction, it has also forced me to open up my inquiry much further than I had originally envisaged and examine the nature and origins of these visions. Paradoxically, it turned out that the ‘what’ of L2 visions is less significant for students’ L2 engagement than the students’ commitment to them, which, as this study has shown, is mediated through specific encounters with L2 in the students’ daily lives.

9.1.2 THE IMPACT OF THE COURSE ON THE STUDENTS’ L2 VISIONS—PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

The second research question, “How is the students’ L2 vision impacted by English course components that aim at facilitating their L2 vision as intercultural speakers?” was at the core of this EP inquiry and my summary of the findings is provided in connection with what these mean for me as a language teacher, for my own practice and for L2 pedagogy in general. I offered two key pedagogical implications in this thesis, in relation to 1) the role of peers in creating enjoyment and enhancing L2 vision and 2) the role of pedagogy in creating enjoyment that enhanced students’ L2 vision.

The empirical evidence indicated that students' L2 visions were facilitated by working with their classmates who acted as their near peer role models, and who offered possible L2 self-images to them. Peers act as mirrors reflecting a student's own possible future selves as an L2 user. A student might have a vague idea or an image of himself/herself as an L2 user, but this kind of vague image can be turned into a realistic image by seeing a peer's behaviour that he/she wants to follow as a model, making a student's idealised L2 vision more attainable. By sharing language learning strategies and history, a peer can offer roadmaps to fellow students because seeing a peer who they find successful in learning and using L2 can make them want to try what has worked for the peer. Therefore, peers play a significant role in facilitating students' L2 visions in classroom dynamics. In relation to my conclusion to the first research question, peers in the classroom seem to be an important source of the direct here-and-now encounter with L2 that, as outlined in the previous section, played a significant mediating role between students' abstract visions and future self guides.

Pedagogically, role-playing activities in which the students enjoyed expressing their L2 identities through prescribed roles and interacting with their peers helped them engage in tasks and stimulated their imagination as L2 users. They were effective in enhancing students' visual images of themselves as L2 users in the imagined communities. Overall, the L2 classroom in general, and the one I examined in this study in particular, can be described as

a “community of practice”, where the students interacted with other members (peer students and the teacher) to move onto a more developed stage as L2 users in the imagined community for intercultural communication. My findings show that if the pedagogical effort is invested into creating such communities in the L2 classroom, such classrooms can become important spaces in which students’ meaningful L2 visions can grow; in other words, they can become the sources of students’ direct experience with what their L2 future may look like. The relevance of principles discussed in the theoretical part of this thesis, including motivational teaching (cf. Lamb, 2017) or group dynamics in the language classroom (cf. Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003) is therefore of broader value to the L2 vision agenda and should be seen as complementing rather than replacing specific vision-oriented pedagogy (cf. Dörnyei & Kubanyiova, 2014).

Another unexpected finding regarding the course impact on the students’ L2 vision was what was featured in the last chapter through a story of Aya. It was the role of the teacher in affecting the student beyond L2 learning. As I explained in Chapter 8, by just observing her engagement in my course would have made me conclude that she was a fine student, perhaps with a good sense of humour, and who worked well with her peers and followed my instructions faithfully. It was not until I spoke to her after the course in the interview that I discovered how her experience of past English teachers shaped her belief about language

learning, which was also revealed by her behaviour in my class: her attempt to make her partners laugh, trying to imitate the teacher's language use. Then, during the interview, she started asking me for help which went beyond language learning. She asked me how to find a larger vision beyond her L2 self, and I described how I facilitated her coming to terms with her visions. It can be concluded this research project has yielded powerful empirical evidence attesting to the need to view the role of language teacher as a "moral agent" (Kubanyiova & Crookes, 2016), which, in turn, confirms as well as extends a well-established notion of L2 self as a motivating force in supporting language learners' engagement in L2 use. I will elaborate the significance of this in relation to teacher education in the next section.

9.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY

Firstly, this study was able to address an issue raised by by Dörnyei and Ryan (2015) about scarce activity recently reported on group dynamics and motivation. As summarised in 9.1.2, the findings of this study elucidated the power of "social unit of the classroom is clearly instrumental and supporting the motivation of the individual" (Ushioda, 2003, p. 93) and vice versa, individual affecting the group dynamics. The choice of pedagogy is important in maximising the power of group dynamics and enhancing students' L2

motivation. In this study in which tasks incorporating pair and group work were perceived favourably by students and facilitated L2 use among the students in the classroom. The positive emotions such as feeling ‘fun’ and ‘enjoyment’ were conducive to the students’ motivation to use L2 in the classroom. In short, these findings point to the importance of focusing research efforts on the actual classrooms (cf. Ushioda, 2016), on expanding L2 vision investigations to include constructs from past research (e.g., group dynamics, engagement, interest, enjoyment), and on employing a broader range of methodological designs and approaches, an EP inquiry being one such example.

Secondly, this study has shed light on the complexity of L2 vision development, which a quantitative approach, typically deployed in studies of L2 future selves, would not have been able to uncover. A closer look into the students’ L2 learning and intercultural experience enabled me to understand how the focal participants’ L2 visions might have been formed. Influential factors such as family and societal values, L2 learning history including different teachers, peers and materials were examined in this study. In addition, as Asami’s example indicates, even a vivid description of a student’s future vision as an L2 user (English-speaking bus tour guide) turned out to be something that had not been thoroughly internalised. This means that in order to understand learners’ L2 vision, it may be important to expand research efforts to include a thorough investigation of the context in which

students' lives are embedded and appreciate more fully its role in feeding into, nurturing or even constraining what students think is or is not possible for them.

Finally, this study highlights the importance of language teacher's visions of themselves in facilitating students' L2 visions as Dörnyei and Kubanyiova (2014) claim that this is relatively an undeveloped territory but needs to be incorporated more into teacher training (Kubanyiova, 2013). It is said that a French writer and aviator Antoine de Saint-Exupéry wrote in his 1948 book *Citadelle*, "If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people together to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea". Good teachers would have the knowledge on how to build a ship and can explain the procedure of building one clearly. However, as is put in the above quote, unless he has his own vision of the immense sea, how can he teach his students how to long for it? Teacher's vision development determines the quality of classroom and how students learn. Therefore, teacher's identity development needs to be acknowledged more as some researchers claim (e.g., Kubanyiova, 2012; Kubanyiova & Crookes, 2016), and future research should focus more on examining "how language teachers make sense of their professional lives at different stages of their career (to the extent that they do) and how (or whether) they become moral agents within their sociocultural, historical, and political contexts ... (Kubanyiova & Crookes, 2016, p. 124).

9.3 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY AND LOOKING FORWARD

This study is not without its limitations and the above recommendations for future research and practice must be understood in the context of these. Firstly, the use of in-class material to elicit students' future visions may not enable us to gain a fuller description although it had theoretical and pedagogical value. As noted in Section 5.4.1, my students' linguistic skills were not advanced enough to express complicated ideas and they might have resorted to writing something simpler in order to just complete the task given by the teacher. Therefore, it is difficult to tell if what they described represented their genuine perception or not. This disadvantage is concerned with the advantage of EP that uses "normal pedagogic practices as investigative tools" (Allwright, 2003, p.127). It is indeed two sides of the same coin. Finding a tool to elicit students' vision that can serve multiple purposes (pedagogical, theoretical, and methodological) is needed in the future.

Similarly, the level of detail offered by the students in interviews might not provide strong evidence of their commitment to their visions, and we probably need to examine what actions students take in order to grasp a fuller picture of their visions rather than just to rely on what they say. This is a methodological implication highlighting the challenge in discussing visions as we understand them from the literature. We also need to further consider the unseen influences of political, cultural, and individual family contexts on

students' self-described L2 visions, as proposed in the previous section. It was beyond the scope of my research to do so, but I hope that with these limitations in mind, my study has nevertheless provided an impetus for the future inquiry along those lines.

My study, while spanning a whole academic semester, can still only aspire to offer a snapshot of the students' lives. In order to appreciate more fully the issues raised in this thesis and to deepen the investigation of those that were hinted at but could not be fully substantiated because of the limited time-span, more long-term studies are needed to elucidate the complexity of L2 vision development. Arguably, such longer-term studies would also be better positioned to examine the multiple social, cultural and political dimensions of classroom life and gain a fuller understanding of students' experiences inside but, significantly, also outside of the classroom. Therefore, we may need to pay attention to other aspects of the life of a learner and view him/her as an individual with different identities (e.g., daughter, brother, student, and gymnast), and this is why I advocate the need for more long-term studies with qualitative approaches to gain further understanding on learners' L2 vision development.

If I was to conduct this study again, I would probably add another material such as a diary in which I would ask the students to keep the record of their L2 and intercultural learning. If I also had a choice, I would like to follow the students' trajectories over a longer

period to see the vision development and transition in order to contribute to the need for more narrative-oriented research called by Dörnyei and Ryan (2015).

9.4 PERSONAL NOTES

Considering the nature of this study, which I framed as EP, it seems appropriate to conclude this paper with my personal reflections. I mentioned at the end of 2.2.2 that I intended to make my classroom a “community of practice” (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger 1998) for my students to use L2 for communicative purposes. It was only after I conducted this study that I realised I was also very much part of the community and appreciated what this exploratory practice brought to me. As Kubaniyova (2012) argues reflective practice is critical for teacher growth, and this study has helped me make sense of my teaching. I have been a language teacher for more than 20 years, and usually my hunches and intuitions tell me what would work and would not in class. However, while teaching the course in the current study, I was more aware of the process of reflection-in-action as Farrel (2007) describes “teachers systematically gathering data about their teaching and using this information to make informal decisions about their practice” (pp. 12-13). Moreover, this reflection facilitated the ‘tinkering’ (Huberman, 1992) which incorporates reflection-on-action in addition as I am doing now. In summary, conducting this Ph.D study was a way to

making explicit and subjecting to in-depth scrutiny the intuition I have been using for years in teaching.

This study has also reignited my vision as a teacher. Having been a teacher for a long time, I am used to teaching, for better or worse. I do not have to think or spend so much time on planning before I go into classrooms. It is more of a routine now. I get up, eat breakfast, drive to work, and teach. However, in conducting this study, I carefully designed the course and spent more time on planning for each class than usual. I paid more attention to each student, and recorded my thoughts and observations in my field notes after each class. Of course, doing this was more time-consuming and demanded more energy, but it did help me appreciate the interactions I had with my students in my classroom. To me, this improved the “quality of life” (Allwright, 2003; Hanks, 2015) that was attained by working collaboratively with students and by encouraging cooperation among students by incorporating pair and group work. The energy spent to create this course was rewarded by the enthusiasm of the students in class and the insights they offered in collected data. Most importantly, it enabled me to get to know the students better, create a better learning environment for them, and appreciate the value of my job that goes beyond motivating students’ L2 learning.

As I demonstrated in Chapter 8, where I presented the findings about Aya, I was

reminded of my moral role as a language teacher, which has now become my vision as a teacher. I came to understand much better than I did before that my role and task is not simply to help students with their linguistic skills and cultural knowledge. Having conducted this study and engaged deeply with the data, I now envision myself having a more holistic task of helping students develop their identity and grow as human beings through my work as L2 educator. I would like my students to feel comfortable with themselves using L2 to interact with different kinds of people; including people who may or may not come from the same cultural backgrounds. Therefore, I will continue to strive for providing my students with a space to help students turn into 'intercultural speakers' who are “successful not only in communicating information but also in developing a human relationship with people of other languages and cultures” (Byram, Gribkova, & Starkey, 2002, p. 4). To quote Phipps and Gonzalez (2004), “The student of a language other than their own can be given an extraordinary opportunity to enter the languaging of others, to understand the complexity of the experience of others to enrich their own. *To enter other cultures is to re-enter one’s own*” (p. 3; emphasis in original). My exploratory inquiry has enabled me to appreciate and become firmly committed to the role that I can play in helping my students encounter new people, new ideas, and their own selves.

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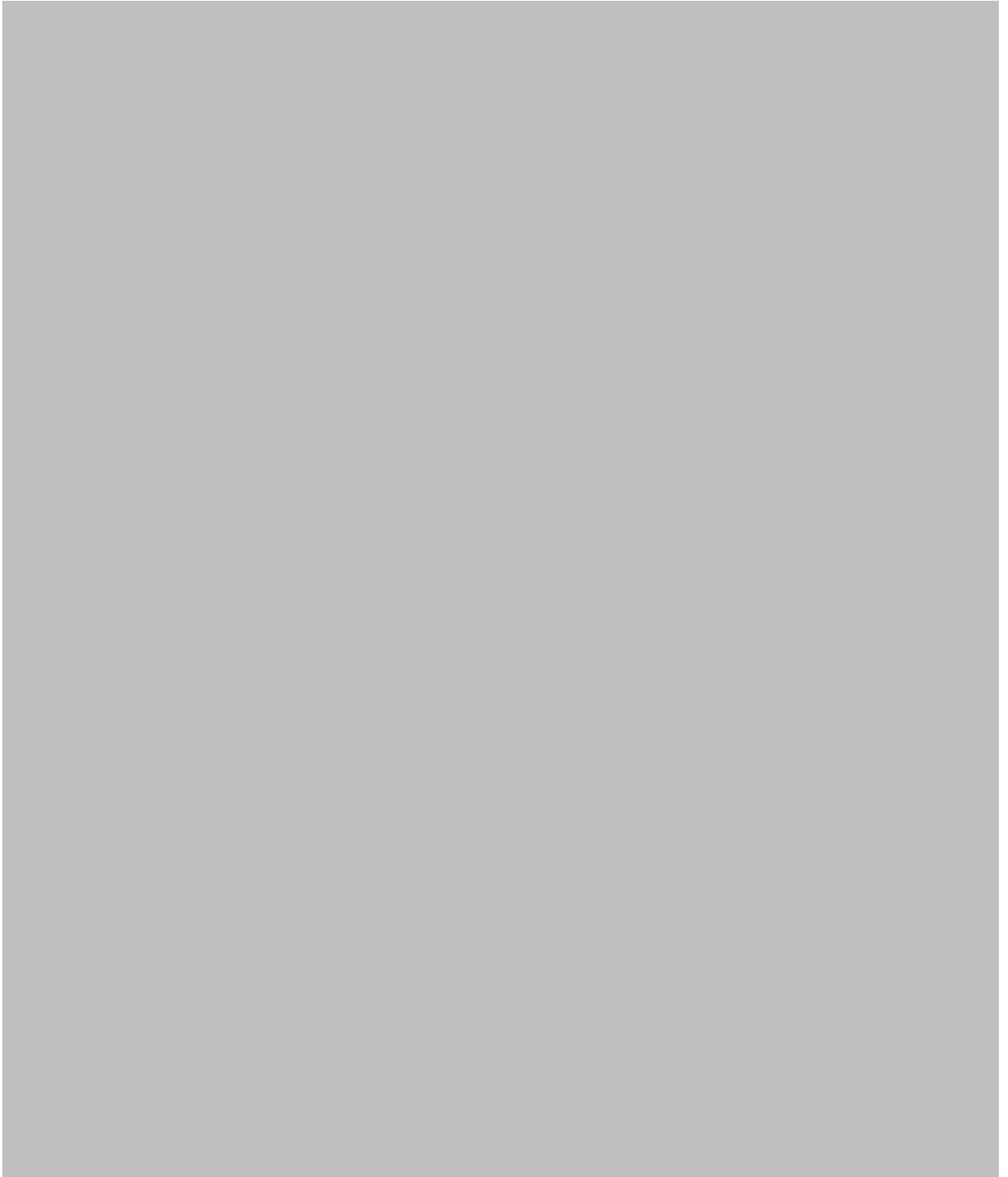
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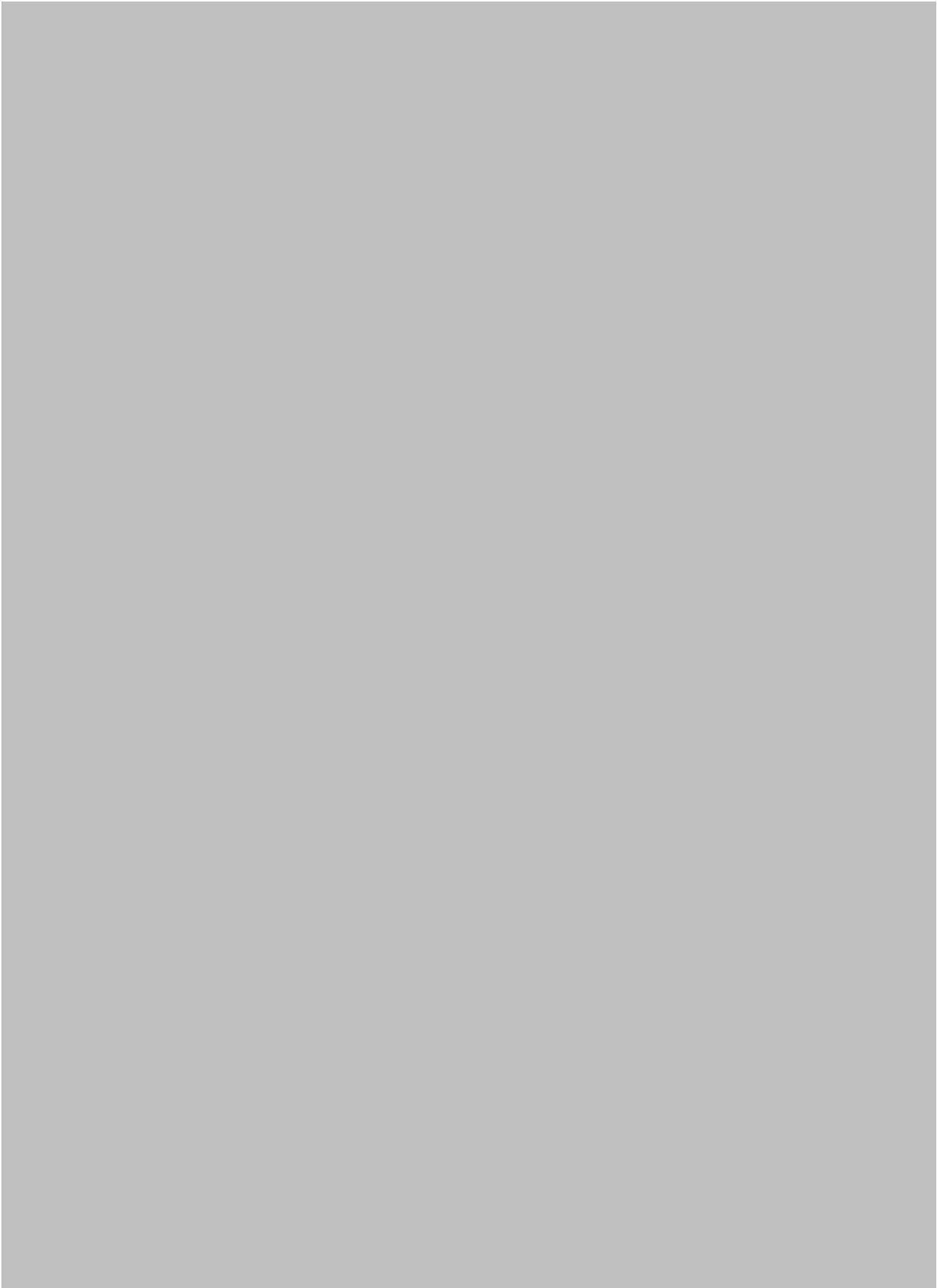
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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: THE COURSE MATERIALS USED IN THE STUDY





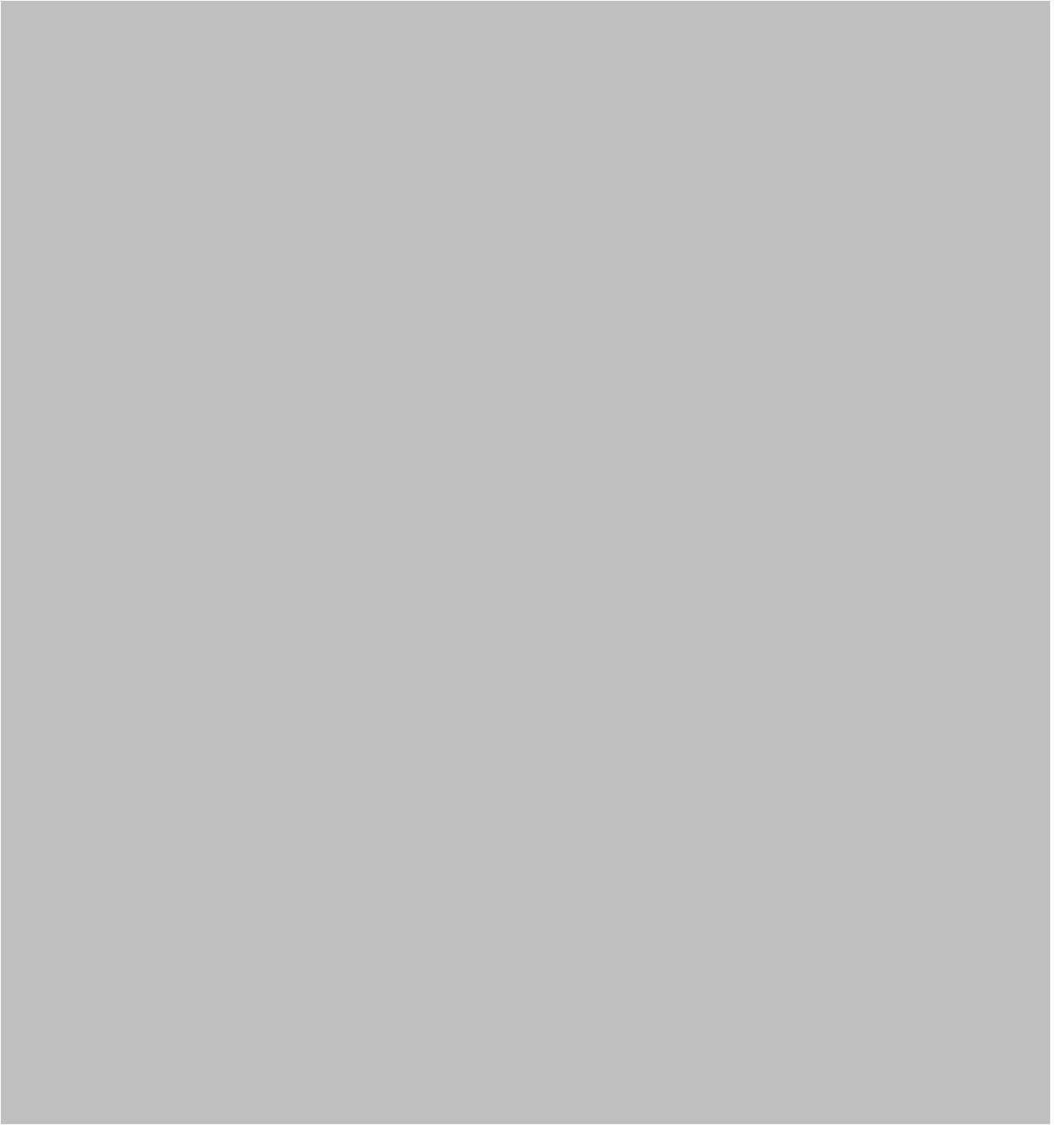




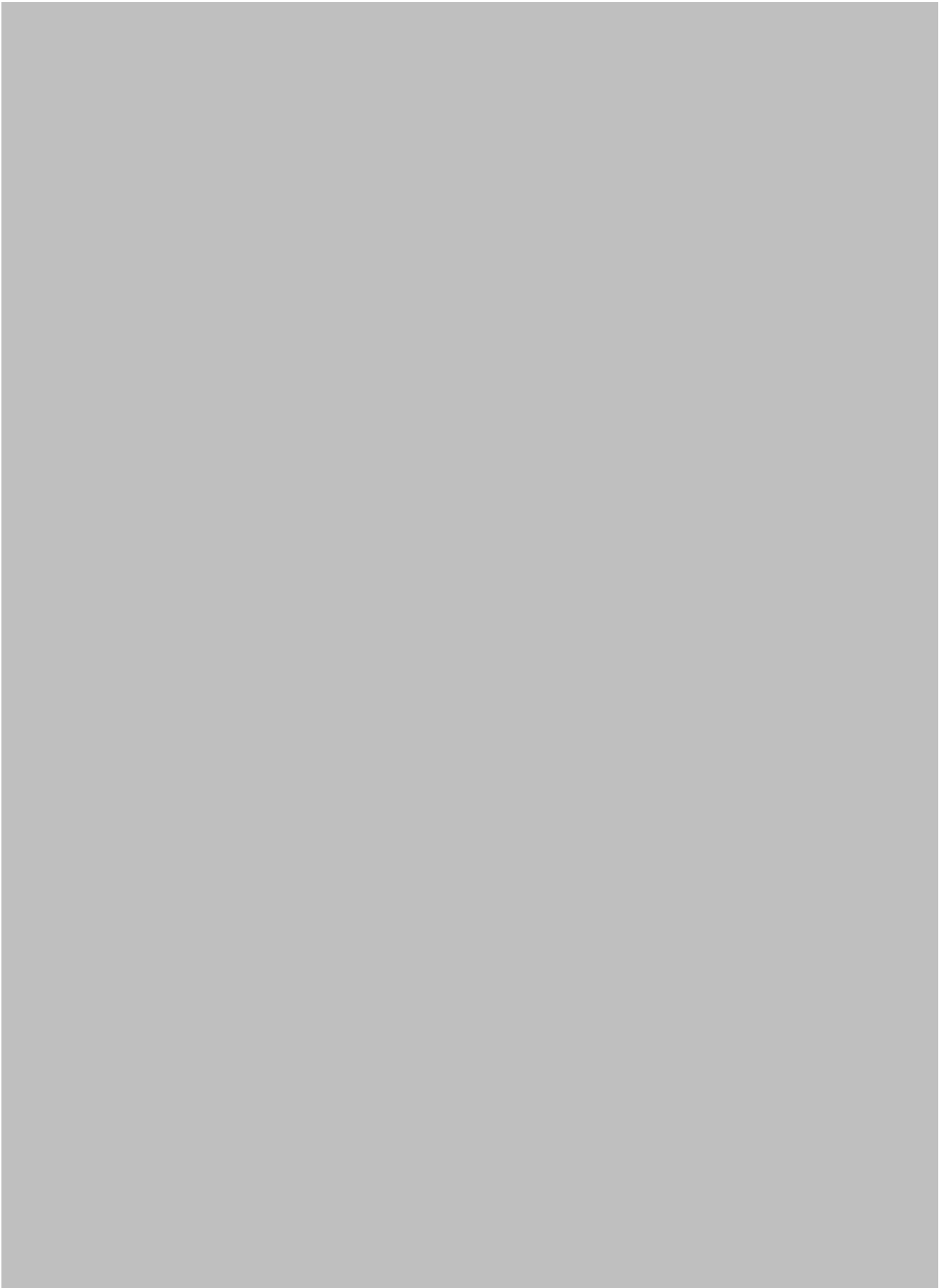


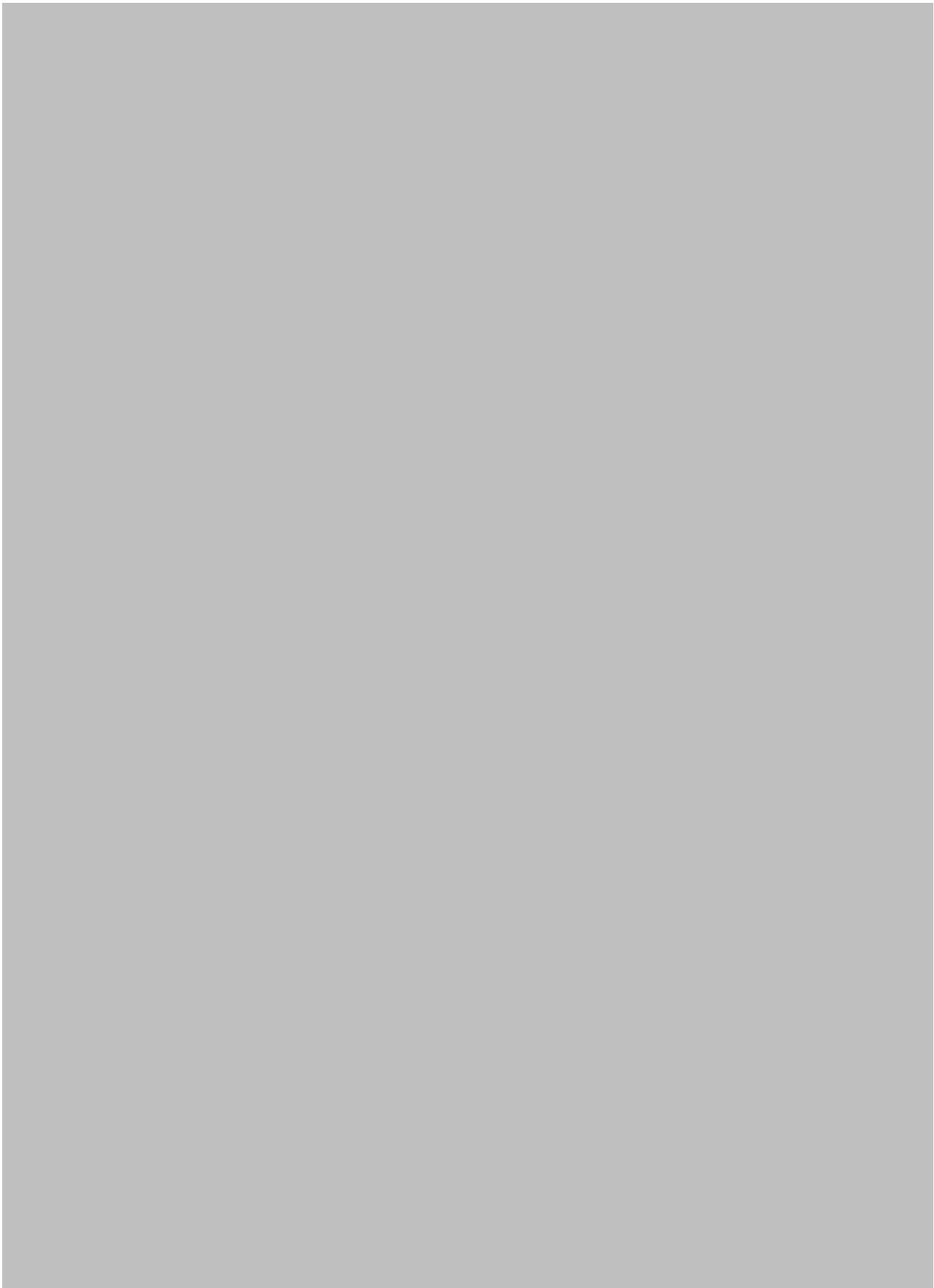














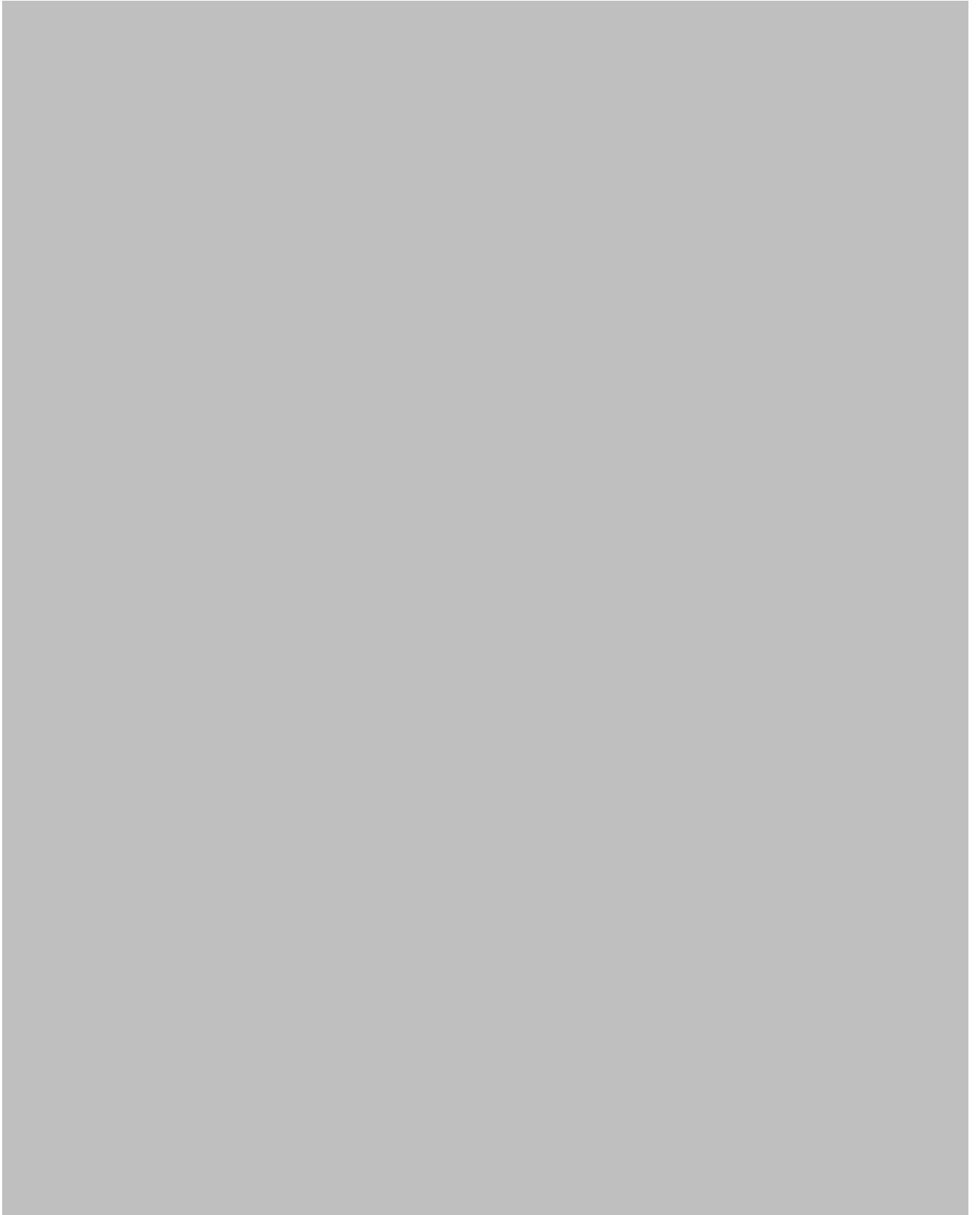


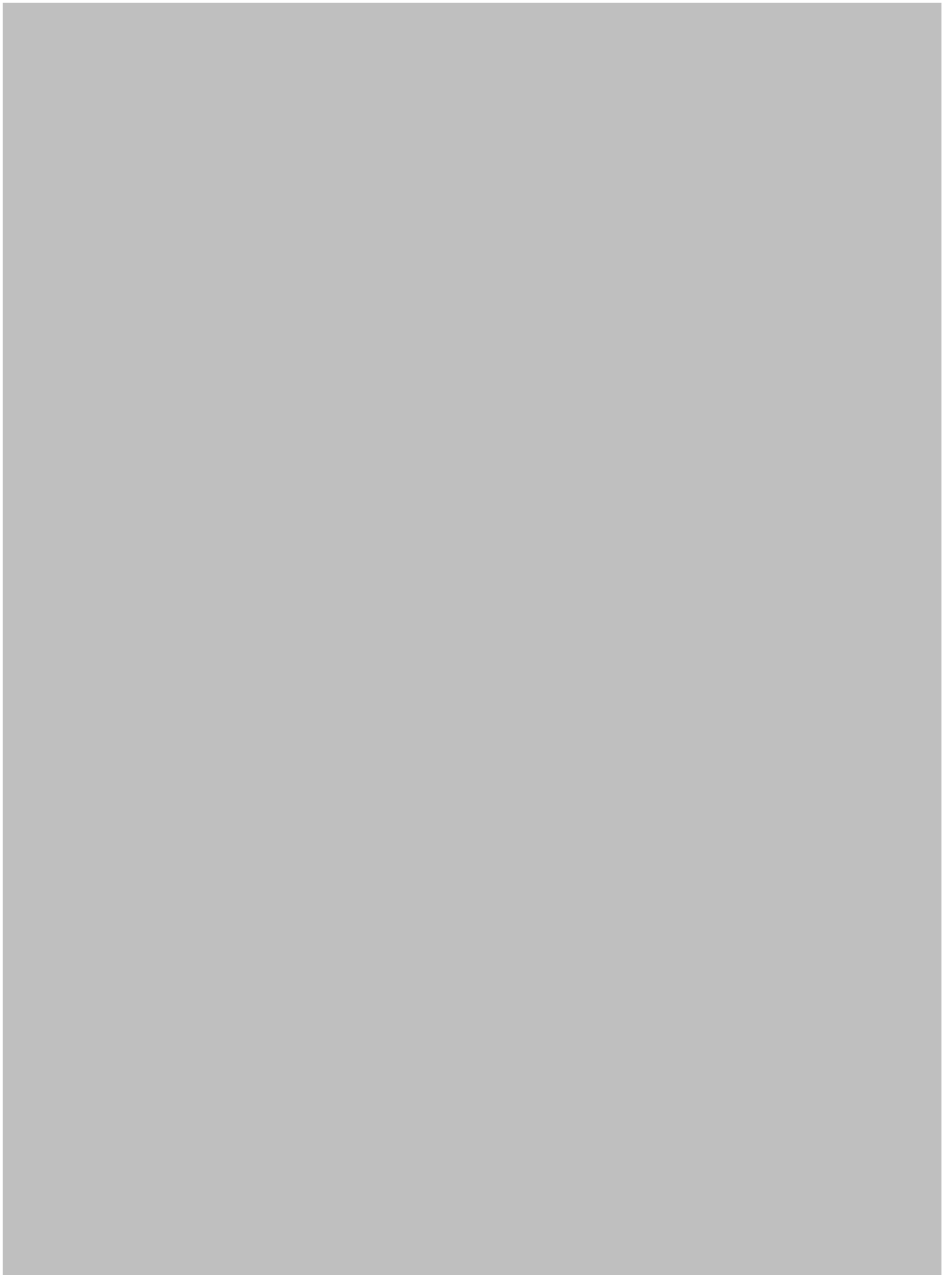




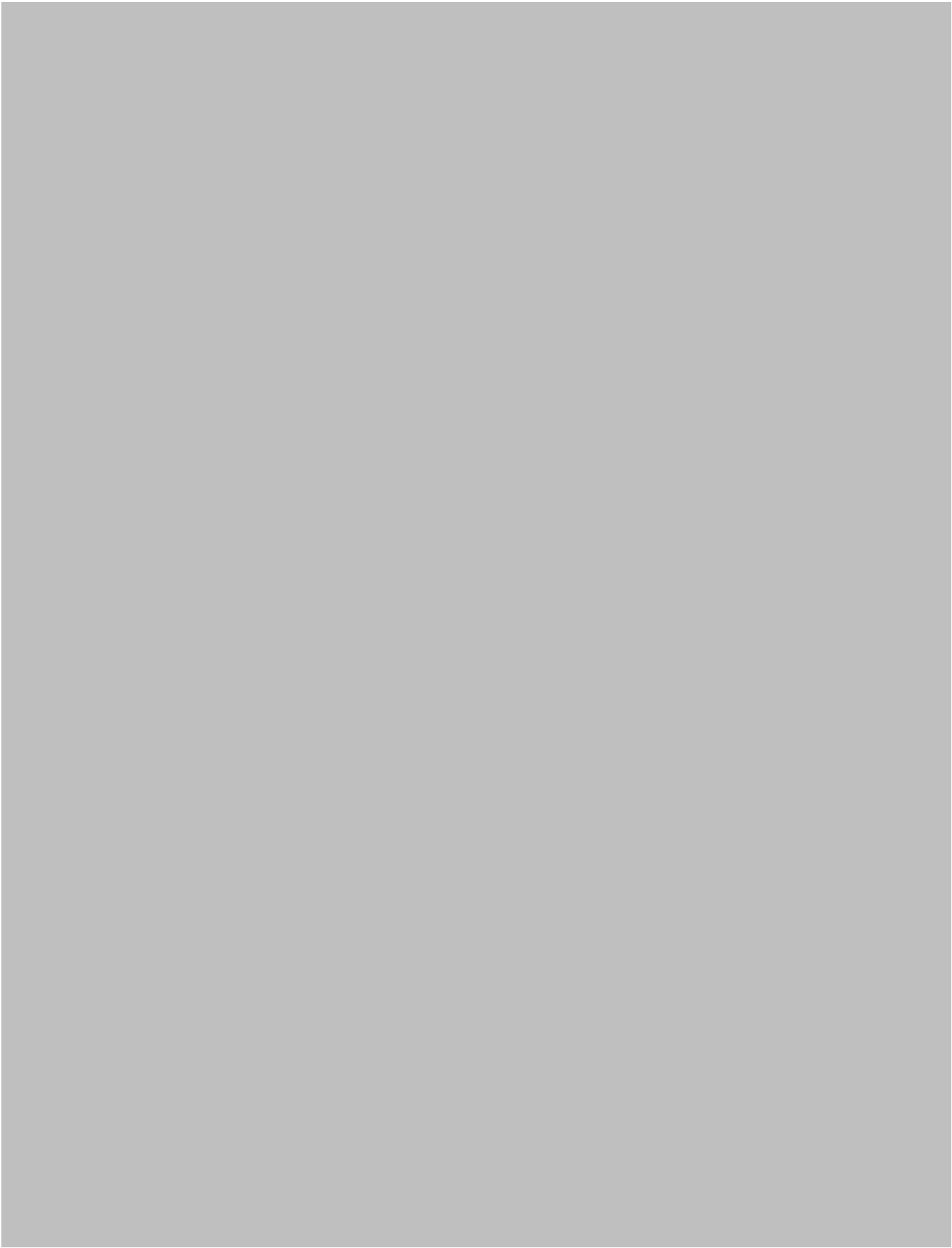


APPENDIX 2: THE ORIGINAL PARTICIPATION INFORMATION SHEET



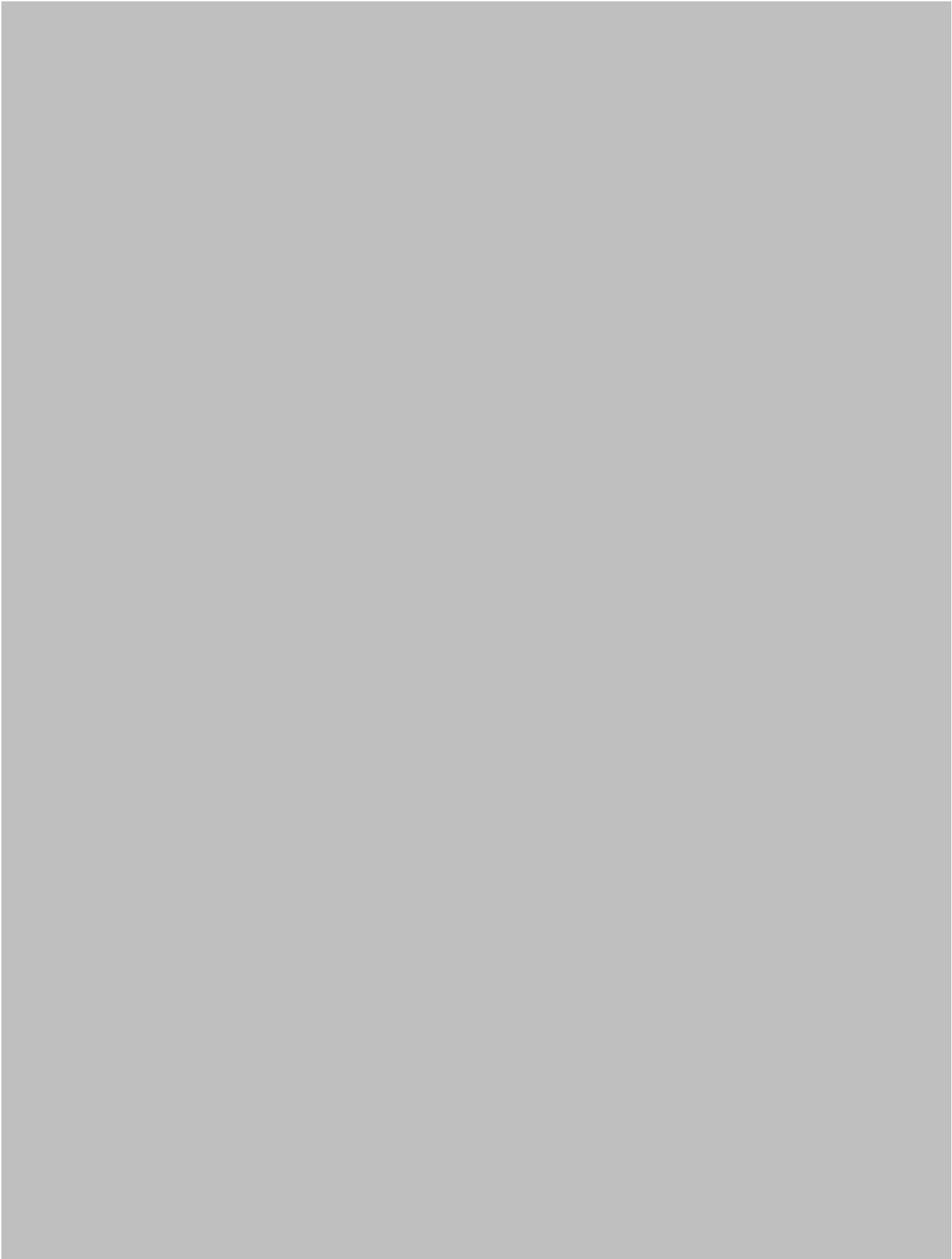


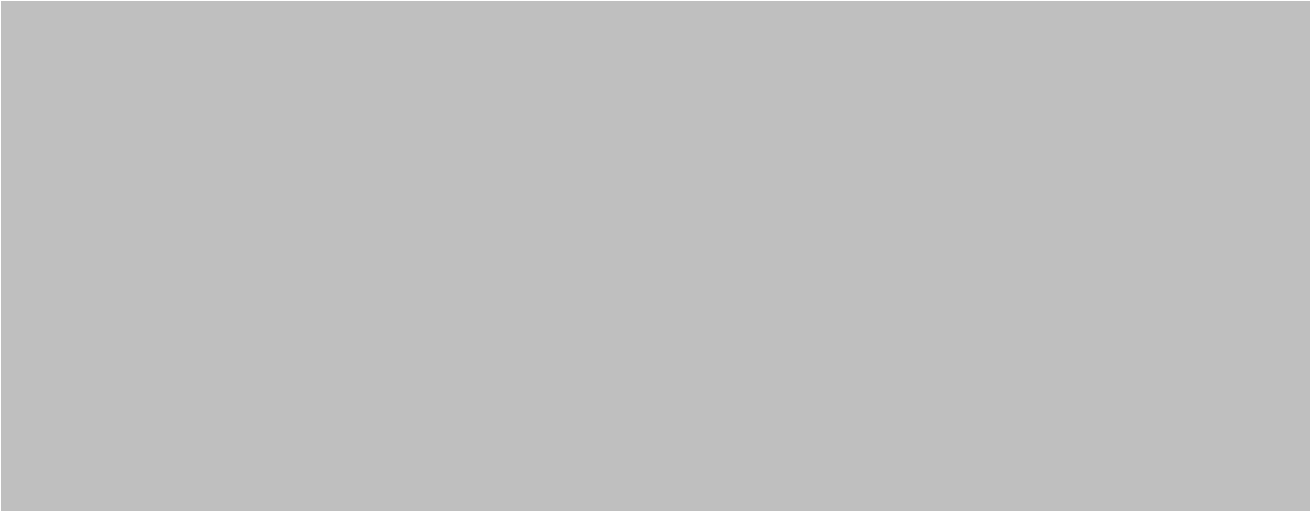




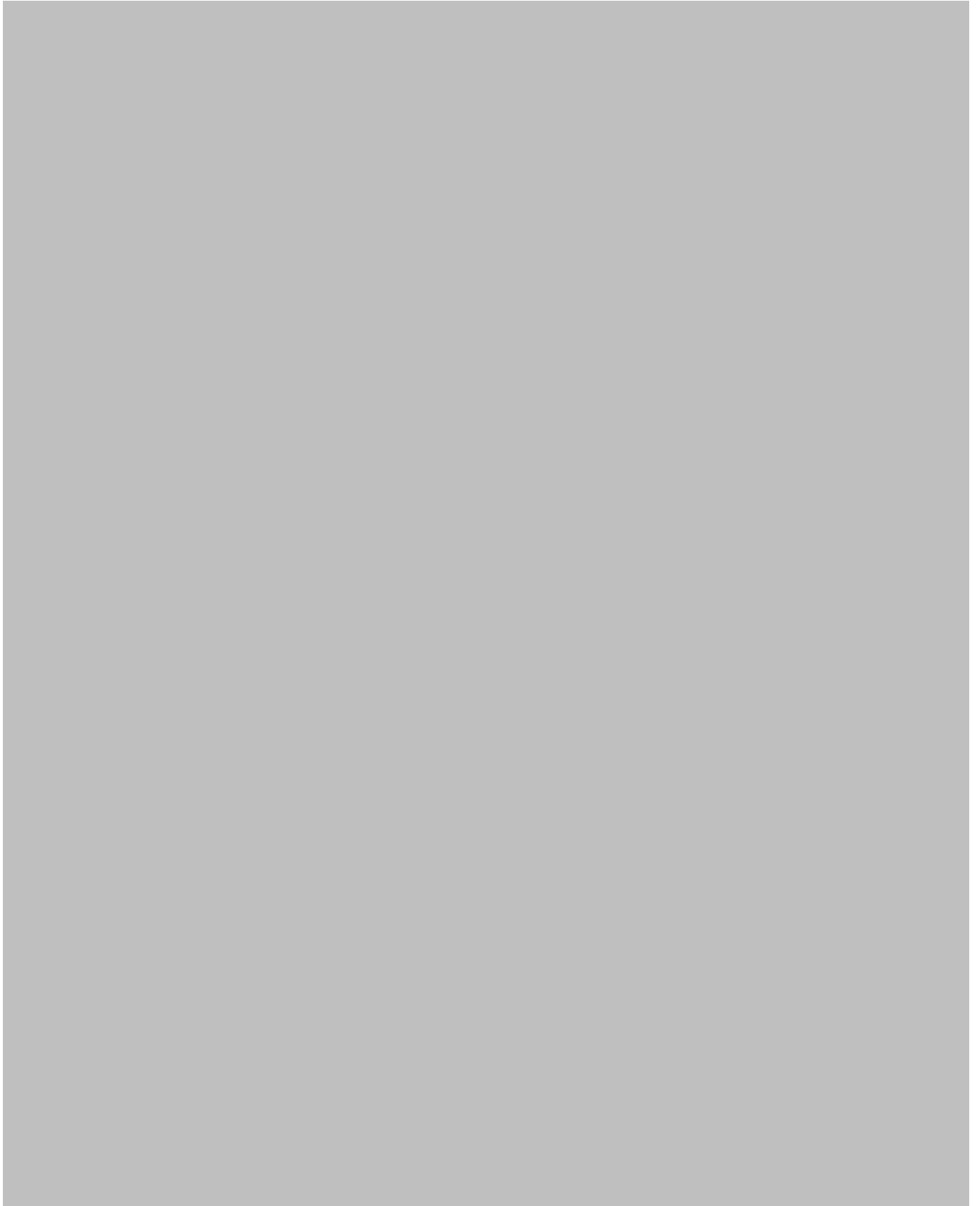




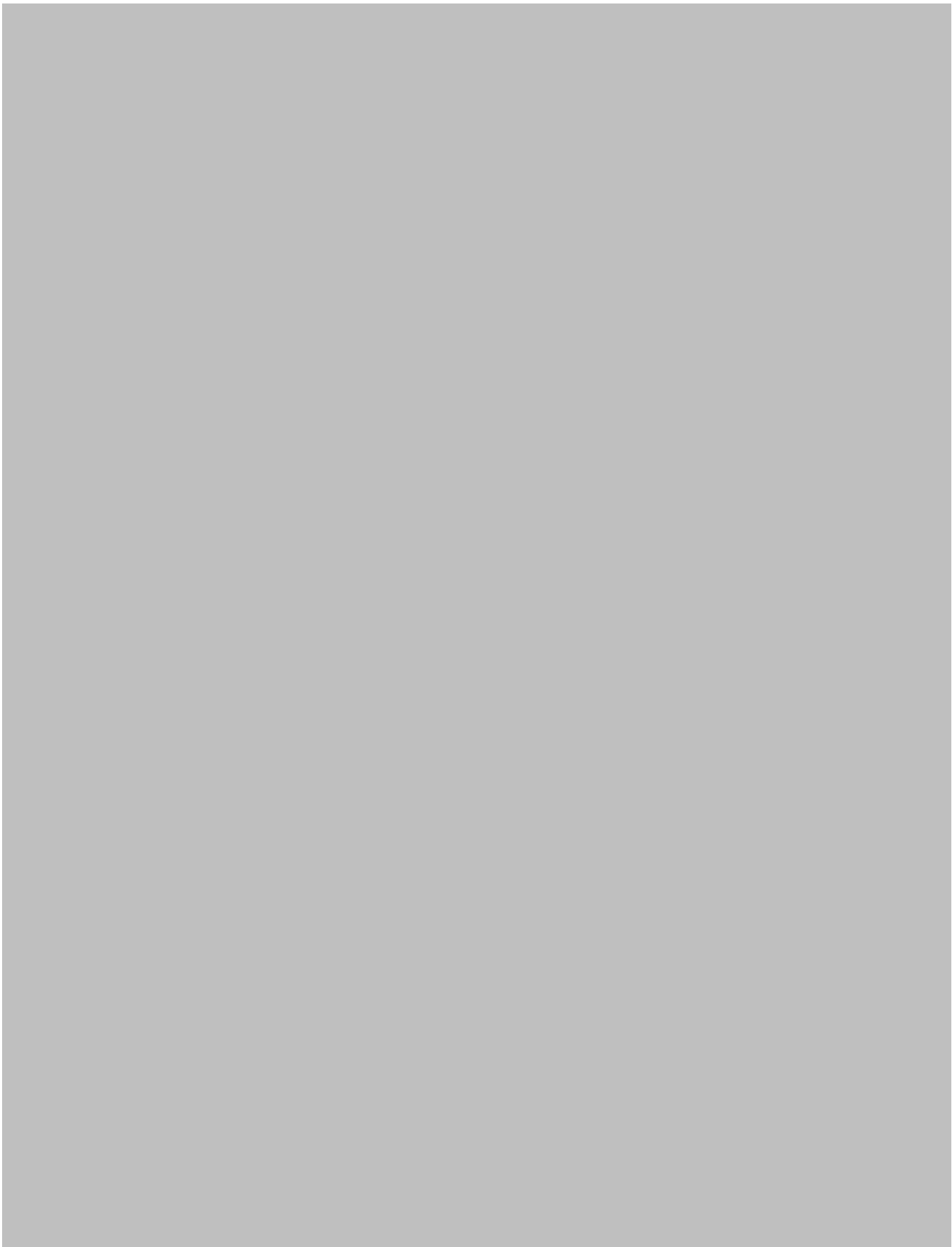




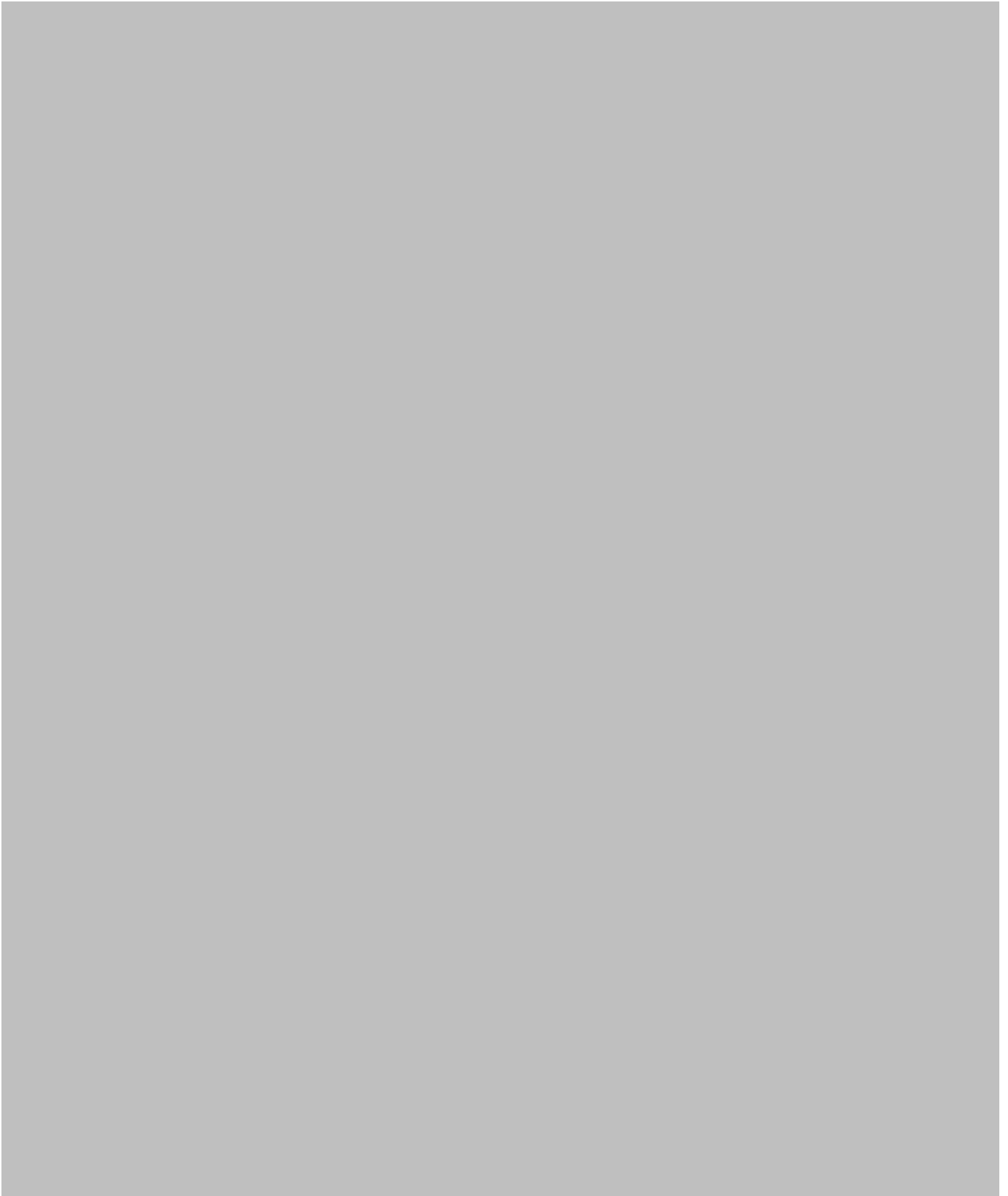
APPENDIX 3: THE ORIGINAL CONSENT FORM







APPENDIX 4: THE ORIGINAL COURSE EVALUATION



APPENDIX 5: FIELD NOTES

(Names have been changed to pseudonyms.)

April 17, 2014

1 person absent (A.T.)

Very enthusiastic class. Self-Introduction material went well. I talked about myself as an example first (also as a listening practice). Students seemed to be engaged in the conversations with the partners. They respond to my talk positively, lots of nodding and attention were given. Language Learning History side was given for homework. I also told them about my research: motivation in language learning, language learning history affects motivation etc. Class was audio-recorded. I talked about research and the ethical issues (being able to opt out, privacy protection, non-relevance to their grades etc). I told them to come and see me or e-mail me if they have any concern about this research or class.

April 24, 2014

1 person absent (A.T.)

Several students came because they were visiting the RMR to ask for help with their homework for Oliver. I told them nicely that they should not be late for a class even they were working for another class. I also told them that I would talk to Oliver about the homework.

Started the class with talking about their homework. Students sat in pairs (cards) and they shared their language learning history. Four students had not done the homework, but I told them to bring the homework later and focus on speaking then. Nobody disagreed to participate in the research.

Some students wrote a lot and others struggled to write and also present in front of the class. There were some interesting ideas about Question #1. One student told the class that she learned English from reading comic books and watching movies in junior high school. That is unusual because at that level, students are used to learning English by reading textbooks aloud and memorizing vocabulary. It might be interesting to interview her and ask her if it affected her motivation. I talked a little bit about it is important to have a good language learning strategy, but we will get to that later, so I made it brief.

And then, I said now they thought about their past to understand where they came from, but I also told them that now we were going to focus on 'future'

and introduced the idea of 'vision'. I talked about a famous baseball player Ichiro and an Olympic medal gymnast Kohei Uchimura, and about that they had a clear vision of their own when they were young. Those stories are famous and many of them had read an essay Ichiro wrote when he was in the 6th grade. I showed the essay to the class because a few had not seen it. I also talked about Kohei Uchimura. When he was 5, he drew some pictures of the moves he wanted to do when he grew up and it was reported on TV a lot when he got the medal. I gave the second material to the students and explained the questions. They will complete it by next week.

I don't know how much they were able to relate Rebecca's 'vision' to their own. But, I thought it was a good idea to introduce the subject today because we had just watched CWE Episode 1 and the skit we practiced from the episode included the main character talking about her 'vision'. Students seemed to enjoy practicing the conversation. I was originally planning to do the activity from the Hadfield & Dornyei's book, but after I started teaching this group, I thought it was better to make my own material. The passages from the book were great, but it was probably too foreign to them, and I also thought it was better to relate it to the episode (Rebecca's vision).

May 1, 2014

Three students were absent today. Most students had done homework (Material 2: Thinking about your future and English). Some wrote really detailed descriptions. Students seemed to be having fun talking about what they wrote. I told them to talk about what they wrote in pairs (20 minutes) and made it as a conversation practice, too. I.e. they should not read out the text, but they should look at each other during this activity and ask questions or make comments while talking. I felt it was important to do so because it would feel more real, by making it as a real conversation, not as a presentation practice in class. After that I commented that some people have really practical visions and others have very big visions, but it is important to have a vision in your life if you want to achieve something and we know we all want to be able to speak English well, as we all made a choice to be in the Department of International Cultural Studies.

After that, we watched CWE Episode 2. Students took notes while watching the episode. After watching the episode, they wrote some sentences together and I had each pair come to the board and write one sentence. We

worked on the summary of episode 2 and practiced the conversation of episode 2. Next week, I need to talk about the importance of getting into the character (なりきり法) . Advice giving activity would be interesting for next week, too. They have homework for next week (Skills for Better Writing).

May 8, 2014

I forgot to take the voice recorder. Five students were absent today and it was disappointing, but I gave the intervention material anyway. We did the essay writing exercise first using the textbook “Skills for Better Writing”. Did the typing lesson also.

Intervention material #3 (Giving Advice) was given to the class. Asami seemed to be happy. Some girls sitting around her knew it was hers and they were giggling. I talked about the importance having a vision again, and added it was also necessary to think about how to realize it specifically. The students seemed to be giving the best they could. Some had hard time making their plans specific. I tried to help them individually as much as I could. We ran out of time and we could not get to the discussion, but we will next week. I think Asami is eager to hear the different kinds of advice.

Looking through the worksheets, it is clear that many students had hard time making specific plans. I might have to do the NPRM videos or “Recommended learning strategies” (お勧め英語学習法) , Because a lot of students don’t know what to do, or how to study.

May 15, 2014

Intervention Material #4 was given to the class. We looked at the example advice given to the future bus tour guide. I talked about the importance of practicality and plausibility in setting one’s goals. I also stressed that having a clear vision is important, but we also need the strategies to achieve the goals of our life and realize our vision.

Today’s Material included Rina’s NPRM video activities. They first watch the 8 minutes video clip of Rina talking in English about her English learning beliefs and strategies. The students seemed to be really engaged. That is probably because I told them that Rina had graduated from this college two years ago and entered Utsunomiya University, which is considered to be prestigious.

The students answered the questions on the handout after watching the

videos and checked their comprehension and their answers with their partners. I got some people to come to the board and write their answers. Most students seemed to understand what Rina was saying on the video. Like Rina says in the video, I said it was OK to make mistakes and using English without worrying about making mistakes was more important. I also talked about having a role model would also make a difference relating it to Rina's story.

After that, I talked about my own strategies learning a foreign language and students also wrote what they do in the worksheets, which were collected at the end.

CWE Episode 3 was shown and we did a repeating practice using the episode summary. I reminded of the HW for next week (essay). For next week, I will type up the strategy comments and give them on a class worksheet.

May 22, 2014

Two students were absent again. The homework essays were collected. We did the intervention material 5 (Learning Strategies 2). The students read each sentence aloud in pairs and checked if they understood all the words and phrases. They then, they put circles and stars in the brackets as instructed on the worksheet. When I asked them to write specific plans (eg. When, for how long etc), some students erased some stars they put. I told them again that it is important for them to have a practical plan that they can follow. I photocopies the worksheets right away while they were working on translating CWE Episode 3 conversation and gave the worksheets back to the students. They seemed to be interested when reading the items on the worksheets and they were making comments on some of the items to each other.

We practiced the conversation of CWE Episode 3. We worked on pronunciation of some words and intonation of sentences and phrases. The students seemed to really enjoy it. They practiced in pairs for about 20 minutes (with PPP method), but they have not learned the whole conversation yet, so I told them that we would work on it again next week.

At the end of the class I asked them to keep them in a file they bring every time when they come to take this class. I told them that I would ask them if they really followed their plan, but it will have nothing to do with their grades.

May 29, 2014

It was the 7th lesson today. I video-recorded the class for the first time.

The students seemed curious about it first but I told them it was not for grading, but for my research and for students who have been absent from this class for a long time. They know A.T and N.M have not come to the class for a while. I told them I might use this video to show those students if they want to come for make-up sessions.

First I gave them the essays the students had handed in last week. They were supposed to hand in the essay after showing it to the assistant language teacher (ALT), but many of them didn't. I told them to hand it in after showing it to the ALT again because I was able to identify a lot of grammatical errors and some things they wrote did not make sense. I told them they need to get into a habit of getting a consultation with the ALT because they can get individual assistance from her. I deliberately paired up students who did well and who didn't do well. They talked about how to improve their essays and one pair (Rinko and Naomi) asked me how to form a sentence to mean 小学生には英語を学ぶのは早すぎる (It is too early for a primary school student to start learning English). I taught the difference between 'fast' and 'early'. The students seemed to work on this task seriously. It is understandable as I imagine a lot of them believe the ultimate goal of learning a language is to have perfect grammatical knowledge.

After that, we worked on practicing the conversation of CWE Episode 3. The classroom was a lively place when we did this. I could see a lot of smiles on their faces and they were really trying to imitate the intonation of the characters in the episode. This was the part I felt the students were most engaged. I asked two pairs (Kiyomi & Yuka, Seiji & Kei) to perform the skit as they were really into it. They (especially Kei and Yuka as Rebecca) acted out the skit very well.

Then, I handed out the intervention material #6 'monitoring your progress'. They had to look at Material 3 and 5 to answer some questions but a lot of them did not have Material 3. It was given on May 8th, when 5 students were away. Some of them had lost the worksheet, so I showed them the photocopies I had. They worked individually and quietly on this task for about 10 minutes. I told them that they generally need to organize their class materials for themselves.

Lastly they watched CWE Episode 4. Erina and Honomi were sleeping. It was 30 degrees and many of them must have been tired. This class is from 1:00 to 2:30, the sleepest time. After the episode was finished, I turned on the lights in the room saying, "Wake-up!" in a joking way, to really wake them up.

Honomi seemed a little worried. I could not see Erina's face. I showed the conversation material we will work on next week. First, I showed the Japanese translation of the conversation and asked them to try having a conversation in English to act out the scene. Of course many of them were not sure how to say some phrases but I told them just to try. Half of the class is going to the States in September and they will experience the situation where they need to express themselves using the words and phrases they know, even if they cannot do it perfectly. Some of them like Erina were nodding. I showed the English translation at the end and gave the summary for homework.

I collected the worksheets, wrote positive comments and made photocopies. Maybe I can ask if the comments made a difference in the interview. Next week, I will show 「英会話なるほどフレーズ 100」 to the class. Mami wrote in the vision sheet, 'I will master daily conversation English by the end of July 2014'. I wrote 'Maybe this goal is too high? How about something like I will learn 100 phrases used in English'?

Next week, I think I will do the Shaules questionnaire.

June 5, 2014

I decided to do the Shaules questionnaire later because I still need to talk to him. He might still change some of the items on the questionnaire. I will talk to him on skype on June 13, so I will do the questionnaire after that.

I had another inspiration though when I was preparing for this class yesterday. Tomorrow, they have attend the presentation given by some 2nd year students who went on the American Trip. I made a worksheet (Intervention material 7) with some questions that they have to answer after listening to the presentation; eg. Where did they go? When did they go? Which episode did they like etc... And then I thought it would be good to use this topic as a catalyst to reflect on their own international experience.

I started the class with making an announcement about tomorrow's presentation on the American Trip. All first year students are required to attend anyway. I told them they will have an assignment related to that later. I could see some of them did not like the idea having an assignment. When I entered the classroom today, many of them were preparing for a test for Oliver's class (next Monday). Apparently, his classes are really hard for them.

We revised the conversations from Episode 1 to Episode 3 for about 5

minutes. After that, I showed the Japanese translation of Episode 4 conversation and asked them to speak in English as the characters in the scene. Many of them had trouble doing that. I showed the segment again and some of them were able to pick up some phrases when they tried to do it again. After that, I gave the bilingual worksheet of the Episode 4 conversation. I wanted them to try to make themselves understood in English using the words and phrases they know, even if they cannot express themselves perfectly. I also told them that.

They worked on practicing the conversation I pairs with PPP method. I got them to try to have the conversation in Japanese and they really loved it. The classroom was full of energy and became very lively. Their voices were louder and they were more expressive. I said, 'You can really get into the character when you do this in Japanese, don't you? Try to put this energy when you do it in English!' They practiced for a while and I think it was different from how they were practicing before.

I got them all to stand up at the back of the room and they practiced the conversation from Episode 1 to 4 in pairs changing partners. They loved it! I was able to see a lot of smiles and they were getting really into it. The classroom was filled with energy during this time.

After I got them to come back to their own seats, I gave the intervention material 7 and explained what they need to listen for tomorrow. I got them also to write a little about their own international experience and gave them to write about their experience. None of them said they had never had an international experience before. I think I can get them to do photovoice after this. I would like to see what kind of story they have. I will be collecting the material from them next week.

June 12, 2014

Today's class was interesting. The presentation by the second year students last Friday went really well and the students in my class really enjoyed it.

First I got them to get into groups of four using cards. They talked about what they wrote for homework (Intervention Material 7). When they shared their international experience episodes, they were having fun, especially, Aya & Kei's group. They were talking in English for the whole time and looked really engaged with their gestures and how they were responding to each other. After

everyone in the group spoke, I asked them to choose the most interesting story to share with the whole class. Everyone's episode was interesting and the class really paid attention to the speakers. Chiharu talked about her experience in Australia. She went there when she was 10 and she did not understand English. I commented that Australian accent is difficult to understand and she went there when she was 10, which is really young. Aya talked about her experience in China. She was really lively and enthusiastic, made the class laugh. Masaya talked about his experience in UK, his homestay family in Scotland. Yuko talked about her trip to Russia, seeing a Russian dance. The students seemed impressed because it is an unusual destination. Yuki's experience was One World Festa at Aiina last year. I commented it was possible to meet people from overseas even in Japan. Basically I made comments on every speaker's experience positively.

After that, I gave a sample worksheet with my experience in Australia. I asked them to make something similar for the next lesson. This will be a photovoice data. I think students will enjoy making it as they had a good time talking about their own and listen to other students' international experience. I think this went really well and I have a feeling this can be one of the main data I will analyse and will relate this to other things I will do later in the course, or ask questions about this in the interview.

June 26, 2014

I did not see them for two weeks, but they all had the assignments. Some of them like Kei and Erina had it out already and showing it to each other. I think having photos are good.

I divided them into groups of four using playing cards. There were 24 students today, so there were 6 groups. First, each student read their assignment to the group members as showing the photos. I asked them to make comments and ask questions after each speaker, but it was hard for some groups. Kei, Asami, Kyoka were in the same group and they are probably good friends. They were making comments in a nice and fun way.

Then, I asked them to choose one speaker from each group and the representative came to the front and read the assignment. I showed only the photos on the OHP. I made comments or asked questions after each speaker.

When it was all done, I asked them to choose a favourite story out of their group or the representatives and they wrote on the back who they chose

and why. I collected their work at the end.

We reviewed the conversation from episode 1-4. Watched Episode 5, did the summary (fill-in the gaps) and translated the conversation of Episode 5. They seemed to really engage in this translation activity. I told them that they could work in pairs, but most seem to want to do it on their own first. Most of them had difficulty translating "...just like that". I think it is good that they get to learn some new expressions.

I had to give them a questionnaire about entrance exams, so I finished the class a little early. No homework was given today.

July 3, 2014

I made an announcement about next week's class. They need to be in the computer room. I am going to get them to try the Shaules questionnaire online. We practiced the conversation of Episode 5. Masaya was nervous when he did the conversation with me as Sandy and Rebecca. When I pretended to cry, apparently he came closer to me and everyone laughed (in a nice way). I think it was considered as a great 'communicative' move. Too bad it is not in the video, but we can see how the other students responded to his behaviour.

We reviewed conversations from episode 1 to 5. I told them that they had to know all the conversations for the exam. Students all lined up and practiced with half the class. They seemed to have fun. They were really into it. I think because we focus on communicating the meaning by looking at intonation and pauses. The class was very lively during this practice.

After that, we watched episode 6 'Saying good-bye'. I think this was an interesting episode for them because Rebecca says good-bye to her boyfriend. I jokingly said this episode was full of useful expressions because they sometimes have to say good-byes to their friends.

They worked on the summary and translating the conversation. They seemed to concentrate on these tasks. I think it is good to have these different activities, listening, speaking and etc.

July 10, 2014

We were in the computer room. I first showed the website of NHK ニュースで英会話 and showed a picture of Joseph. None of them had watched it. After that, I showed a segment from the video of his talk from last year where he talks about the four stages of intercultural language learning. They were

impressed to know that I was friends with this celebrity. Then, I gave the material which explains how to log into the JII website and take the online questionnaire. We went through the initial stage first, but they answered the questions on their own basically. I had to explain some items, but most of them did just fine. They were really quiet and seemed really engaged in doing this activity. I asked them to print out the result and write what they understood from it. I am looking forward to reading what they wrote.

I was also playing the video of Joseph's talk while they worked on writing their reflection. Many of them were watching, especially the last part, when students asked questions. I think they were impressed to see their peers asking questions in English. I told them Nana is the one who does ECC. I also told them Sonoka went to Tsuda College. They were impressed. After the class, Yuko came up to me and they wanted to join ECC. She will bring Namiko along. I said they were most welcome.

July 17, 2014

I returned the reflection paper from the Shaules' online questionnaire to the students and made random pairs as I did it. First I gave them information about the exam. Exam will be given on the 31st. They are asked to write a short essay individually and perform a skit from the video episodes in pairs.

We practiced the skit from episode 6. It was a scene of the main characters ending their romantic relationship and students seemed to enjoy practicing the conversation. Aya and Kei, who are usually very enthusiastic were a pair and they were really into it. The facial expressions and the paralanguage they used were a little bit exaggerated, but I thought they were doing a good job. So, I asked them to perform in front of the class. They were really good. They were not shy at all. Everyone was laughing (but impressed) because they looked like real actors. I think I will definitely interview them both.

I got them to answer the questionnaire at the end. I told them they did not have to put their names if they did not want to. I made sure that they understood this questionnaire was only to evaluate the course and the answers they give will not affect the grades. 20 out of 24 put their names. The students who I am thinking of interviewing put their names!

July 24, 2014

We reviewed essay writing and the episode conversations for the exam.

At the end of the class, I called the ten potential participants outside the classroom and explained orally about the interview. Some like Kei and Chika seemed pretty excited about it already and I think they want to participate. I could not tell what the boys were thinking. Yuko had already told me that she wanted to do it, so I feel relieved. I asked them to sign the consent form and put it in the envelope on my office door by the 31st if they want to participate.

APPENDIX 6: Attitude/Motivation Test Battery

Obtained from: <http://publish.uwo.ca/~gardner/docs/englishamtb.pdf>

