What can the language teacher do to motivate students?

A thesis submitted as a partial fulfilment of the
requirements of the degree of Doctor of Teaching

by

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Thesis declaration

I hereby declare that the work herein, now submitted as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Teaching of the Charles Darwin University is the result of my own investigations, and all references to ideas and work of other researchers have been specifically acknowledged.

I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis has not already been accepted in substance for any degree, and is not being currently submitted in candidature for any other degree.

All research procedures reported in the thesis received the approval of the relevant Ethic Committees.

Candidate’s Signature ............................

Date .................................................
Abstract

This action research study examines the relation between learner motivation and class activities. I also explore the ways to teach self-motivating strategies. The setting of this study is in my classroom in an ELICOS (English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students) program in Australia.

A variety of data gathering tools was employed over twenty weeks and these included questionnaires, essay writing, student feedback forms, interviews, diary entries and class observations. Eight action research cycles are described, showing how class activities were utilised and modified to motivate students and to guide them toward more active and independent learning, for which students needed metacognitive skills. A small sample size (fourteen students) made it possible for me to describe motivational changes of all the students, and this close examination results in detailed descriptions of the lived experience of each student.

Analysis of the data suggests that class activities did not have a clear influence on learners’ trait motivation although they might have positively affected state motivation. On the other hand, their negative influence on state motivation was clear in the case of one student. Also the data suggest three results different from previous research. Firstly, instrumentality played an important role in the current study, whereas it was previously said to have merely an indirect influence on motivation. Secondly, an autonomy-supportive environment was not motivating for my students. Lastly, a mastery/performance dichotomy in terms of goal setting was not significant. Generally, the results indicate the importance of obtaining in-depth information about what students think in order to create a motivating classroom for a particular group of students. The findings accordingly point to the value of action research on a small sample size to help us to better understand the complexity of learner motivation.
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**Abbreviations**

AMTB: Attitude/Motivation Testing Battery  
BTN: Behind the News  
Cert III: a Certificate III class in the academic course in ELICOS  
DIMIA: Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs  
ELICOS: English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students  
EFL: English as a foreign language  
ESL: English as a second language  
IELTS: International English Language Testing System  
L2: Second language  
TAFE: Technical and Further Education  
TOEFL: Test of English as a Foreign Language  
TOEIC: Test of English for International Communication

**Abbreviations for the data**

WeekA1: First week of Term A, instead of the full description (other weeks follow suit)  
MonWeekA1: Monday in the first week of Term A, instead of the full description (other days follow suit)  
MonA1: Monday in the first week of Term A (in the line graphs)
Student Codes

Codes for students begin with the letter A or B to show the term the student started and this is followed by the letter S (for strong), M (for medium) or W (for weak) relating to the student’s proficiency in English. This in turn is followed by a number to distinguish otherwise similar students. The codes are thus:

AS1: strong student 1 who studied in ELICOS in Term A
AS2: strong student 2 who studied in ELICOS in Term A
AS3: strong student 3 who studied in ELICOS in Term A
AS4: strong student 3 who studied in ELICOS in Terms A and B
AM1: middle level student 1 who studied in ELICOS in Term A
AM2: middle level student 2 who started in ELICOS in Term A
AM3: middle level student 3 who started in ELICOS in Term A
AW1: weak student 1 who studied in ELICOS in Terms A and B
AW2: weak student 2 who studied in ELICOS in Term A
AW3: weak student 3 who started in ELICOS in Term A
BS1: strong student 1 who studied in ELICOS in Term B
BS2: strong student 2 who studied in ELICOS in Term B
BW1: weak student 1 who studied in ELICOS in Term B
BW2: weak student 2 who studied in ELICOS in Term B
Chapter 1

Introduction
Chapter 1 Introduction

This study examines the relationship between learner motivation and class activities, and explores how to teach students to motivate themselves. An action research type of approach with a small sample size was employed. The subjects were all my students, so I was a researcher and at the same time their teacher. The data was collected in one class of an English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) program over twenty weeks.

There is broad agreement among researchers that motivation is one of the most important factors for successful language learning (Song, 2005). Practising teachers too, wherever they may teach, will feel contented after teaching motivated students. On the other hand, teaching unmotivated students is excruciating because those students usually show no interest and poor concentration, are unwilling to cooperate and distract other students (Thanasoulas, n.d.). Seeking how to motivate students is a natural course of action for teachers considering that high motivation tends to bring academic achievement to students and satisfaction to teachers.

The remainder of this chapter provides background which influenced me in this project and explains the significance and the structure of this thesis.

1.1 Personal background

It may seem unusual to write about myself in an academic thesis. However, the personhood of the teacher is as important as professional characteristics (Mori, 2003) and my past experience influences my teacher cognition and practice (Borg, 2003). I became interested in motivation because of my experience as a language learner in addition to my experience as a teacher. Later in the course of this study I realised my individual knowledge had influenced my teaching practice too much, which could be negative for my students (see section 8.5), but I initially chose learner motivation as a broad theme for this project mainly on account of my own experience as learner and teacher. Also, this thesis is for a Doctor of Teaching degree, which focuses on aspects of the researcher’s own teaching practice. It is thus worthwhile to describe my personal experience in order to provide the reader with background for this study.

For a long time I wondered why my students did not make enough effort to achieve their goals. Students in ELICOS are all international students, most of whom come to
Australia to study English full-time, which is a huge investment. They leave their job and their family to study in a foreign country where their first language is not understood by a majority of people around them. Presumably they are committed to studying in order to achieve their goals. From my point of view, however, their attitude appeared to be far from conducive to this.

I am an English learner myself. I was born and grew up in a rural area of Japan where nobody spoke English around me. My very first contact with a native speaker of English was at the age of eighteen, when I started my undergraduate degree. Somehow I was fascinated with English language and wanted to understand both its spoken and written forms, and therefore I studied hard. I do not have a flair for language learning, which is why I have to make a lot of effort. I have strongly believed that I am walking evidence that anyone can acquire English skills to a certain degree if they have a strong desire to learn and make adequate effort. In that sense, I totally agree with the generally accepted perception that motivation is one of the most important factors for successful language learning.

My students’ behaviour which used to puzzle me was that they did not study outside of their class very much. Each individual student is different. Some are strong in reading, some in listening, while some are weak in those macro skills. Their class cannot cover everything each student needs. Accordingly, students are supposed to work on their weaknesses on their own to improve their language skills efficiently. On the other hand, I am aware that it is not realistic to expect this sort of student behaviour all the time because I have not always been diligent in learning English despite my strong desire to improve my language skills. For most of us, studying is not a pleasure, especially when we have to study something for another purpose; studying English to fulfil the entry requirements for an Australian university, for instance. Even though adult learners, like my students in ELICOS, are generally said to be independent and strongly motivated internally (Bernat, 2002), I do not believe that all adult learners consistently work until they achieve their ultimate goals. To that extent, my expectations were realistic. Even so, in my view, my students’ behaviours were not adequate for those who come to Australia to study English.

To understand my students better, I conducted a survey a couple of years ago (Kawano, 2004). I asked students what motivated them in terms of studying English.
Most of them at that time said that taking the examination called the International English Language Testing System (IETLS) and successful communication with people in English outside class were two motivating factors. Nothing was wrong with these two factors, but I could not help wondering whether I, as a teacher, ever contributed to their motivation or not.

This question in my mind was the beginning of the current study. I wanted to find out what I could do in order to motivate my own students in the classroom. To this end, I needed to understand my students very well because the complexity of motivation would not allow me to investigate their motivational factors without closely observing them and obtaining profound information about their feelings. In addition, I needed to understand myself as a teacher. We often hear that what we teachers see and what students see are different. I realised that what I did with good intentions to motivate my students might actually be demotivating for them.

Before starting the current study, I narrowed down my focus to the relationship between learner motivation and class activities. That was because class activities, of all elements in class, are at least to some extent under the control of teachers. Other elements, such as the textbook and the number of students in one class, may be out of the teachers’ decision making capacity. Accordingly I implemented an action research study in my class over two ten-week terms in the hope of finding how I could motivate them using appropriate class activities.

In addition to finding ways to motivate my students through class activities, I wanted to explore some ways to teach them how to motivate themselves. There are always individual differences in the classroom. If students manage and control their own motivation, they will probably be able to keep motivated until they achieve their ultimate goals regardless of unfavourable factors in their learning situations. Therefore I decided to attempt to lead students to more active and independent learning so that they could control their motivation.

1.2 The significance of this study

As described in the previous section, this project had a two-fold purpose: to identify class activities which would motivate my students and to explore ways to teach self-motivating strategies. Many articles have suggested ways to motivate students, but
how effective these approaches actually are has seldom been examined (Wu Man-Fat, 2004). Incorporating self-motivating strategies into language learning and teaching is a relatively new idea. The current study will contribute to these areas of motivation research as a case study which shows how my students reacted to the suggestions from previous studies and to the teaching of self-motivating strategies.

This study has a number of benefits. First and foremost, it helped me improve my own teaching. As mentioned in section 1.1, I decided to work on learner motivation mainly on account of my experiential and localised knowledge. Teachers’ experiential and localised knowledge is useful but it is not sufficient for them to develop further professionally (Wallace, 1991 p. 6). At the beginning of this study I did not realise this, but as I proceeded to read more literature, it dawned on me that in order to improve my practice I needed cognitive and behavioural shifts through reflection. The whole process of this study was my professional development.

For my students too it was beneficial because they were encouraged to use metacognitive skills and to reflect on their study. These skills are a pre-requisite for learner autonomy, which leads to efficient learning. Students were given an opportunity to participate in a decision-making process for class activities, which is important for developing self-motivating strategies (Lee, 2001). Their participation made me regard them as collaborators in the action research for creating motivating lessons, and their contribution demonstrated the importance of incorporating students’ opinions into lesson design (Wong, 2001; Yang, 2005).

Although this study was conducted in a particular classroom, other ESL teachers can benefit from it. In particular, teachers who teach international students in the target language country will find this study useful in attempting to find their own ways to motivate students. The findings of the current study only partially agreed with previous studies. This suggests the possibility that motivation is interdependent with other elements, such as teachers, cultural backgrounds and students’ disposition, which suggests that it is necessary for practising teachers to try out several motivating strategies and find the most effective ones for their own students. So far, motivation research has been mainly conducted in the settings where students learn their second or foreign language in their home countries. Although it is not yet clear whether there are cultural differences in motivation or not, the current study sheds
light on a dimension of motivation which has not been heavily investigated, namely, how adult ESL learners’ motivation fluctuates as time goes by while they are studying in the target language country. Even though this is an action research study on a small sample, I believe that the implications drawn from the findings will be informative and useful for language teachers who teach in a similar setting.

1.3 **Structure of the thesis**

This first chapter has introduced the background and significance of the current study. The next chapter outlines previous studies directly connected to this one, which provide four suggestions for motivating students in the classroom. In addition, Chapter 2 introduces the idea of self-motivating strategies and how to create the classroom which encourages students to move toward the use of these strategies.

Chapter 3 considers the methodologies usually used in motivation research and explains how the current study gathered and analysed its data. How action research was used in this study is also explained, as there are several types. The limitations of a case study and action research is described in this chapter as well.

Chapters 4 to 7 present findings. Chapters 4 (on the first term) and 5 (on the second term) describe action research cycles in terms of the whole class. The description is not entirely chronological, as most of the action research cycles revolved simultaneously, but instead each cycle is explained and analysed independently. Chapter 6 details how the motivation of individual students fluctuated chronologically over this study. Chapter 7 considers whether the suggestions derived from Chapter 2 worked in my class or not. It also provides additional findings which were discovered unexpectedly through the action research cycles in the both terms.

The last chapter presents implications and a warning for practising teachers and wraps up this study with my final reflection.
Chapter 2

Previous research in motivation and language learning
Chapter 2 Previous research in motivation and language learning

This chapter provides background to the current study by briefly reviewing the history of motivation research in language learning. The current study focuses on how language teachers can motivate their students through class activities. Therefore, several issues actively discussed in the past are not included in this literature review. For example, this chapter does not discuss integrativeness in Gardner’s (e.g. 1985) socio-educational model, although the model itself is one of the frameworks for the current study.

The chapter consists of six sections. First, the socio-educational model (section 2.1) and four other theories in cognitive psychology (section 2.2) are discussed as frameworks for this study. Then, the dynamic nature of motivation, which has recently started to be recognised, is discussed (section 2.3). Recognising that there are different kinds of motivation and they are fluid is particularly important for the current study as it examines the effect of class activities on learner motivation. Self-motivating strategies are also a relatively new aspect of motivation research and suggestions for the language teacher to help students acquire these skills are presented (section 2.4). Finally, teachers’ influences, both positive and negative, are discussed (section 2.5), as teachers’ behaviour affects learner motivation according to previous studies. The last section sums up the discussion of the preceding five sections.

2.1 The socio-educational model by Gardner

Without doubt, Canadian psychologist Robert Gardner (e.g. 1985) has been the greatest figure in motivation research in language learning. The current study employs his socio-educational model as one of its frameworks (see Figure 2.1).
An earlier version of this socio-educational model was criticised in the eighties (e.g. Au, 1988; Oller, 1981) because of contradictory results regarding the superiority of integrative orientations, and it was also challenged by several researchers in the nineties (e.g. Crookes & Schmidt, 1991) owing to restrictions caused by the model being so powerful. It was also argued that the socio-educational model was not appropriate in an EFL setting in particular, where integrativeness is usually not a major reason for studying English (Wu Man-Fat, 2004). Recently the model was applied to situations different from Canada, such as Spain (Gardner, 2005), and new elements suggested by Crookes and Schmidt (1991), Oxford and Shearin (1994) and Dörnyei (1994) were included (Tremblay & Gardner, 1995). Gardner (2005 p. 3) maintains that “the socio-educational model is a paradigm that is completely compatible with many of the new research agendas that have developed”.

[Figure 2.1 Gardner’s socio-educational model (Gardner, 2005 p. 12)]
The present study employs Gardner’s definition of motivation (e.g. Gardner, Paul, Tremblay, & Masgoret, 1997 p. 345), which involves three components, namely attitude toward learning English, desire to learn English and motivational intensity (motivational behaviour such as effort, persistence and attention). Three factors, integrativeness, attitude toward learning situations and instrumentality, affect learner motivation. Among them, instrumentality does not have a direct link to motivation whereas attitude to learning situations and integrativeness have a direct impact on motivation, as represented by the broken arrow and solid arrows in Figure 2. Gardner (2006 p. 11) states “Integrativeness and Attitudes toward the Learning Situation have the greatest influence on Motivation”. In this study, however, integrativeness is hardly discussed because it is influenced by historical, political and cultural factors, which go beyond a classroom environment. Integrativeness is socially relevant to motivation, as opposed to an educationally relevant construct (Gardner, 2005 p. 8). In a similar way, the current study does not deal with general “language learning motivation” but rather with “classroom learning motivation” in terms of Gardner’s distinction (2006 p. 2). Classroom learning situations include several elements, such as the course and teachers, implying that teachers play an important role in learner motivation. Instrumentality concerns practical reasons why learners study the language. Because the current study focuses on the relationship between learner motivation and class activities, it does not fully discuss the relation between motivation and achievement. The connection between achievement and language anxiety is not covered in this project at all.

Gardner’s socio-educational model is comprehensive and Dörnyei (2003 p. 11) calls it a macro perspective, which is important for a wide range of sociocultural issues. Because of its comprehensiveness, however, the model by itself is not sufficient when practising teachers try to explore how to motivate their students in their classroom. They must employ fine-tuned approaches to find out what in particular motivates their students in addition to the socio-educational model. Four theories in cognitive psychology are selected as other frameworks for this study, and are discussed in the next section.
2.2 Cognitive psychology and its connection with language learning

While the socio-educational model has been dominant in motivation research in language learning, cognitive psychologists have actively worked on motivation in such other areas as the sports industry and the workplace and have developed and redeveloped several theories. Among them, self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), attribution theory (Weiner, 1985), goal theory (Ames, 1992) and expectancy-value theory (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002) have been applied to the language classroom and are greatly involved in this project.

2.2.1 Self-determination theory

Self-determination theory focuses on:

the degree to which human behaviours are volitional or self-determined. In other words, its focus concerns the degree to which people endorse their actions at the highest level of reflection and engage in the actions with a full sense of choice (Self-determination theory: An approach to human motivation and personality, n.d.).

This theory uses an intrinsic/extrinsic dichotomy in discussing learner motivation and regards intrinsic motivation as a natural source of learning and achievement (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 55). It is also often said that extrinsic incentives undermine motivation (e.g. Bénabou & Tirole, 2003; Schneider, 2001), but several studies (e.g. Boekaerts, 2001; Chen, Clyde, & Chang, 2005; Wu Man-Fat, 2004) find extrinsic incentives effective, especially in EFL settings. These controversial effects of extrinsic rewards can be explained from the view point of Ryan and Deci’s (2000) sub-categorisation of extrinsic motivation. In their paper, Ryan and Deci (2000 pp. 61-62) revisit extrinsic motivation and describe its four subcategories.

- External regulation: motivation which entirely comes from external sources such as rewards
- Introjected regulation: externally imposed rules that students accept as norms they should follow in order to avoid guilt or anxiety or to attain ego-enhancement or pride
• Identified regulation: regulation by accepting the value of the activity as personally important, which leads learners to engage in activities because the individual highly values them and sees their usefulness

• Integrated regulation: involves choiceful behaviour that is fully assimilated with the individual’s other values, needs, and identity

This may account for the difference between the extrinsically motivated student who keeps showing motivational behaviour and the other extrinsically motivated student who stops making effort as soon as external forces cease. Even though the both students above are extrinsically motivated, the former accepts the utility and value of the task, and then internalises and adopts the extrinsic goals with a sense of choice. For example, when a student decides to study English for other reasons, such as better employment opportunities, his initial motivational orientation is extrinsic. But he may internalise the value of studying English and engage in the activity with a full sense of volition. Therefore, Deci and Ryan (1985) argue that self-determination plays a role not only in intrinsically but also in extrinsically motivated behaviour. Acknowledging the variation in extrinsic motivation is important for practising teachers, especially in the situation where their students are hardly intrinsically motivated.

Intrinsic motivation was proved to be positively related to two aspects of teacher behaviour, namely supporting autonomy and providing informative feedback. Noels (2003) applied self-determination theory to a language classroom to examine whether students’ sense of autonomy and competence, which supports intrinsic motivation, would be sustained when they perceived that autonomy support and informative feedback was provided from their teachers (pp. 97-98). Her study proved this assumption right, which is of great use for practising teachers. There is a caveat to predicting the same or similar results to Noels’ study, however. Her study was conducted on university students studying Spanish in the United States, and it should be remembered that the learning environment is likely to affect students’ motivation (Eccles & Wigfield, 2002 p. 128). Although cultural differences in motivation have not been explored very much, “There is obviously a great deal of research needed to understand the role of contextual and cultural processes in motivational science research” (Pintrich, 2003 p. 682).
2.2.2 Attribution theory

Attribution theory was first proposed by Heider (Universiteit of Twente, n.d.) and developed by Weiner (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002 p. 117). The basics of this theory are that individuals’ interpretations of their success and failure determine ensuing efforts for achievement. In a generally long process of language learning, students experience successes and failures and they attribute both to various possible causes. For example, if a student concludes that his efforts brought him a success in an examination, he is most likely to make an effort to achieve his next goal too. On the other hand, if students attribute their failure to their lack of talent, they will probably discontinue expending effort as it appears to be a losing battle to them.

According to Weiner, there are four achievement attributions, namely ability, effort, task difficulty and luck (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002 p. 117). These attributions are categorised according to three dimensions: locus of control, stability, and controllability (Theory Into Practice (TIP) database, n.d.). For instance, effort has internal control, is unstable and controllable. That is, effort is inside of the student, under his/her control and fluctuates.

Williams and Burden (1999) applied attribution theory to primary school students. They stated that the notions of success and failure in the language classroom were formed by “the expectations and demands of the curriculum and by social interactions with significant others, such as teachers, parents and classmates” (p. 199). They also stated that the messages that teachers convey affected their learners’ developing notions of what was meant by success and failure. Their findings lead to similar conclusion as Noels’ (2003), that is, that the teacher’s behaviour in class has a great influence on learners’ motivation. Another thing that William and Burden insisted on is that perceived autonomy and perceived competence may enhance motivation, which also agrees with Noels’ (2003) study.

2.2.3 Goal theory

Goal setting is regarded as an important element for learning. Two kinds of goals have often been discussed, namely mastery goals and performance goals (Wigfield and Guthie, 1995). With mastery goals, students concentrate on mastering tasks and increasing their knowledge and competence, while students with performance goals
attempt to perform better than others and obtain favourable evaluations. These two concepts are often given other names, such as task-focused goals and ego-involved goals respectively, but in this paper the terms mastery goals and performance goals are always used.

Ames and Archer (in Oxford & Shearin, 1994) extended several motivation theories and examined the relationship between motivation and goal setting, mastery and performance, in the classroom (Oxford & Shearin, 1994 p. 22). They concluded that when mastery was a goal, students focused on developing new skills, valued the learning process, and attributed mastery to effort. Furthermore, students liked the class more and believed that effort was essential for success.

In his comprehensive literature review on motivation research in language learning, Dörnyei refers to Tremblay and Gardner’s research in 1995.

Tremblay and Gardner introduced the concept of ‘goal salience’ as a central component of motivation construct, conceptualized as a composite of the specificity of the learners’ goals and the frequency of goal setting strategies used (Dörnyei, 2003 p. 15).

Their research suggested that specific goals and frequent reference to these goals lead to an increased level of motivational behaviour. In my view, goal-setting is extremely important when students have extrinsic motivational orientations. Those students are not studying for the pleasure of learning itself. They need to feel a sense of attainment related to their ultimate goals every now and then so that they can be continually aware of the value of studying English, and therefore they should keep making effort. Specific goal setting and frequent reference to it is also related to self-determination theory (section 2.2.1) and attribution theory (section 2.2.2) in that values in activities can be often assessed in relation to goals, and how students attribute their success and failure determines their attitude toward their subsequent goals.

Although there are hardly any other attempts before Tremblay and Gardner’s study (1995) to apply goal theory to L2 motivation research (Dörnyei, 2003 p. 9), setting up a clear goal and referring to it seems to positively influence student motivation, considering the previous studies on goal-setting and motivation in other fields (e.g.
Kelly, n.d.). Moreover, goal-setting is one of the characteristic behaviours of autonomous learners (Little, 1991) and it is connected with self-motivating strategies, which will be discussed later in this chapter (section 2.4).

### 2.2.4 Expectancy-value theory

According to the expectancy-value theory, a learner’s motivation is determined by how much they value the goal, and whether or not they expect to succeed. Eccles et al. (1983) identified four components of value, namely attainment value, intrinsic value, utility value and cost. Attainment value is the importance students attach to the task. Intrinsic value results from the enjoyment which participation in an activity produces. Utility value is how useful the task is for future goals, and finally cost refers to assessments of how engaging in one activity limits access to other activities, how much effort needs to be made to accomplish the activity, and its emotional cost (Seigle, n.d.). Expectancy for success is defined as “learners’ beliefs about how well they will do on upcoming tasks” (Eccles et al., 1983 p. 119).

This theory can be applied to the classroom situation as follows. When a learner tackles a task in class, she thinks whether or not the task is important, useful or enjoyable, and how much effort and time she has to expend and what she has to sacrifice. The learner may find completing the task is useful to achieve her goal, and may decide that the effort she must expend is worthwhile. She also considers whether or not she is capable of completing the task and decides that she is able to do it successfully. In this case she will be motivated enough to engage in this task. On the other hand, when a learner finds a task of little importance, use or pleasure, or she does not believe that she is competent enough to complete it, she will not be motivated.

Schneider (2001) employed pair taping, a practice in which learners record their talks freely in pairs, for fluency practice for Japanese university students. The students who practised pair taping rated this activity highly and reported a greater increase in self-confidence (expectancy), in enjoyment (intrinsic value) and wanting to improve (desire to achieve), and showed greater improvement (achievement) than students who did not participate in pair taping. He argued that finding pair taping useful is related to increased intrinsic motivation and desire to improve, which concurs with expectancy-value theory. As for class activities, the concept of value is particularly
salient because students’ task engagement is not only affected by their general motivation, but also by the situation-specific motivation (Dörnyei, 2001b p. 48). Students’ evaluation of tasks plays an important role in their motivational behaviour in class, and finding out how students evaluate class tasks is particularly important for the current study because one of its aims is to examine the relation between situation-specific motivation and class activities. The difference between general motivation and situation-specific motivation, that is, between trait motivation and state motivation, will be discussed in section 2.3.

2.2.5 Summary of the four theories

Overall, those studies in the area of cognitive psychology indicate the strong connection between learner motivation and teachers’ attitude and behaviour in the classroom. Teachers are largely responsible for sustaining and enhancing learner motivation. Those theories discussed above suggest that the teacher should:

- Create an environment supportive of autonomy and provide informative feedback
- Promote students’ self-efficacy and focus on efforts to be successful
- Encourage students’ orientation towards mastery goals
- Provide important, useful and enjoyable class activities.

The last item is particularly salient to the current study, which focuses on the relation between motivation and class activities. Also, importance, usefulness and enjoyment of activities are connected to students’ goals, attribution and expectancy, and incorporating these elements in class is the undercurrent of motivating class activities.

When teachers incorporate the suggestions above into their own teaching situations, however, attention must be paid to students’ responses to what teachers do. It is essential for teachers to monitor continuously how students react, because students’ motivation is not stable, as discussed in the next section.

2.3 Trait and state motivation

Motivation was traditionally regarded as a personality characteristic and a relatively stable belief that is an important reason for behaviour (Boekaerts, 2001 p. 10,114). Lee (2001) pointed out that motivation research had primarily focused on describing
motivational components at given points in time (p. 4), and hardly any studies had tracked how motivation changes over time (p. 21). Consequently, in the classroom, teachers asked students their motivational orientations only at the beginning of the courses and did not monitor changes in them (Oxford and Shearin, 1994 p. 16). Recently, however, the literature increasingly suggests that motivation is fluid. Dörnyei states that motivation fluctuates even in one lesson (Dörnyei, 2003 p. 17; Kormos & Dörnyei, 2004 p. 2), not to mention over a whole course.

Teachers must be aware that there are two types of motivation. When teachers ask about students’ motivational orientations, they are looking at a different type of motivation from the one they refer to in the remark “Bill is very motivated today”. For this reason, Tremblay et al. (1995) distinguished trait motivation from state motivation. The former concerns relatively stable motivational attributes while the latter motivational responses to the learning situation (p. 356). Kormos and Dörnyei (2004) contend that students’ task behaviour is promoted by a combination of general and situation-specific motivational orientations. If certain class activities accelerate students’ task engagement, which is part of students’ motivational behaviour, choosing appropriate activities for students is crucial, as that will result in more efficient learning by using the target language in the activities. Also, one can wonder if state motivation that is increased by suitable class activities may positively affect trait motivation. Although Tremblay et al.’s (1995) study showed that trait motivation influenced state motivation, it should not be overly unreasonable to assume that the other way round is also a possibility. On the other hand, Boekaerts (2001 p. 10,115) warns that students’ trait motivational behaviour should not be confused with state motivational behaviour because situation specific motivation is a deliberate choice in a local context. These two types of motivational behaviour may thus act independently.

Regardless of whether state motivation affects trait motivation or not, choosing appropriate and suitable class activities for students leads them to better learning, according to Tremblay et al.’s (1995) study. In order to deliver class activities that motivate students, the teacher needs to take students’ feelings for the activities and fluctuations in learners’ needs and preferences into consideration. It has been pointed out that students’ evaluation of class tasks can be very different from the teacher’s (e.g. Bada & Okan, 2000; Nunan, 1989), although the opposite has been found in
other studies (e.g. Hanh, 2005). These contradictory results show how complex and probably dynamic students’ feelings are and that it is essential for the practising teacher to know what students think about class activities not only cross-sectionally, but also longitudinally.

In spite of the importance of this issue, the relation between fluctuation in learner motivation and class activities has been a neglected area, and to my knowledge, there has been only one study which focuses on class activities and changes in students’ motivation over a period of time. Kuramoto (2002) conducted an action research study on Japanese high school students. She was in charge of three classes which aimed to develop students’ oral skills in English, where the students’ initial motivation was low. She examined changes in their motivation and interest in class activities over two terms. In response to the feedback which students provided her by using sticky-notes, she removed the activities which students found less interesting and kept the more interesting ones. Two questionnaires conducted at the beginning and end of the terms revealed that students’ interest increased, but the students’ trait motivation did not increase as much as their interest. Two of the three classes, in particular, did not show any substantial increase in their motivation.

This result goes against an assumption I had, which is that appropriate class activities enhance learners’ motivation. However, it should be noted that Kuramoto’s students were high school students in Japan who had to study English as a school subject, and she stated in the introduction that the students generally showed little motivational behaviour in the class, which was the reason she had decided to conduct her study. Considering the environment outside of their classroom, where the necessity to speak English is almost nil, it is understandable that the students did not internalise their extrinsic motives, did not set up goals regarding their English learning, particularly acquisition of oral skills, and did not find class activities useful or important although they found activities more interesting than before.

Another important point to remember in discussing the results of Kuramoto’s study, in addition to its context, is that generally students’ motivation decreases over a period of time (Gardner, 2005 p. 15; Pintrich, 2003 p. 680). Kuramoto’s students showed a slight increase in their motivation, that is, their motivation was sustained and enhanced. Those students had few opportunities to speak English outside of their
classroom and they studied English because of external forces. Nevertheless their motivation did not decline, which can be regarded as significant.

Kuramoto’s study is noteworthy in that she examined motivational fluctuation as the effect of class activities in her own classroom. The learning environment is important for understanding learners’ motivation because it is said that the classroom and school environment students are in influence their motivation in complex ways (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002 p. 128). Different types of learning situations and learner groups are likely to lead to different characteristics in motivational fluctuation. Even though numerous suggestions to motivate students have been offered, there have only a few studies on how these suggestions in fact affect motivation (R. Ellis, 1999 in Wu Man-Fat 2004). Practising teachers in particular should endeavour to find out whether these suggestions work on their students in their classroom. This is related to the action research approach used in the current study, as discussed in Chapter 3.

2.4 Self-motivating strategies/motivational management

Another important issue in motivation research concerns self-motivating strategies. On account of individual differences, no matter how much the teacher tries, it is next to impossible to cater to what all the students want to do. One activity which is motivating for some students may be extremely demotivating for the others. Therefore, it will be most useful if learners know how to motivate themselves.

Lee (2001 p. 94) refers to learner autonomy as a potential step toward motivational management. He conducted qualitative research on fluctuation in learner motivation over a three-month period. From his findings, he concluded that once students become aware of the cyclical motivational process, they may be able to intentionally manage their learning activities and strategies with questions of motivation in mind.

In fact, learner autonomy is an important factor in Noels (2003) and Williams and Burden’s (1999) studies as well (see sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2). However, their studies do not define what learner autonomy is. Even though people tend to agree that autonomy in language learning is “a desirable goal for philosophical, pedagogical, and practical reasons” ( Cotterall, 1995 p. 219), it is not easy to answer the question, “What is learner autonomy?”

Little (2003) surmises discussions over learner autonomy as:
There is … broad agreement that autonomous learners understand the purpose of their learning program, explicitly accept responsibility for their learning, share in the setting of learning goals, take initiatives in planning and executing learning activities, and regularly review their learning and evaluate its effectiveness (Little, 2003).

These characteristics involve learners’ capacity and behaviour that hinge upon metacognitive strategies and resource management strategies, which are part of self-regulated learning (Pintrich, 1999). Therefore, in this study, learner autonomy and metacognitive strategies and resource management skills in self-regulated learning are interchangeable. Metacognitive strategies are classified into two types, metacognitive knowledge and self-regulation. Metacognitive knowledge is the knowledge the learners have about themselves, their tasks, and strategies to tackle the tasks. Self-regulation is divided into three types, planning (goal setting, planning), monitoring (tracking attention, self-test) and regulating (bringing back in line with goals or coming close to criterion after monitoring) (Pintrich, 1999 p. 461).

These strategies overlap five self-motivating strategies suggested by Dörnyei (2003 p. 25), namely:

*Commitment control strategies* for helping to preserve or increase learners’ original goal commitment

*Metacognitive control strategies* for monitoring and controlling concentration and for curtailing unnecessary procrastination.

*Satiation control strategies* for eliminating boredom and adding extra attraction or interest to the task.

*Emotion control strategies* for managing disruptive emotional states or moods and for generating emotions that will be conducive to implementing one’s intentions

*Environmental control strategies* for eliminating negative environmental influences and exploiting positive environmental influences by making the environment an ally in the pursuit of a difficult goal.

The second item actually uses the word ‘metacognitive’, and the others, except for the fourth, are all related to metacognitive strategies. The first concerns goal-setting
and referring to the goal (i.e. self-regulation), the third is about monitoring and resource management, and the last is the same as resource management. The fourth, which is the only item not mentioned as capacity and behaviour of an autonomous learner, is related to students’ feelings.

In practice, unfortunately, convincing learners that they should be responsible for their own study is not easy. My experience in ELICOS tended to be with Asian students, and for the most part these students were passive and dependent. That is probably because of their cultural backgrounds and past learning experience. Another possible reason is that most of our students study English for extrinsic motives, such as for better job opportunities or other further study in Australia, namely in courses at university and Technical and Further Education (TAFE). Previous research shows that extrinsically motivated students tend not to use deep learning strategies, such as metacognitive skills (Young, 2005 p. 25). Although this does not mean that they are not able to use such skills or become autonomous, changing students’ perspective is not easy, not only in ELICOS but also in other settings, especially in the case of adult learners (Bernat, 2002; Wong, 2001).

Lee (2001) suggests linking a decision-making process to motivation management, meaning that the teacher shifts the locus of control to students by making them aware of fluctuation in motivation. Similarly, Bada and Okan (2000) maintain that learners and learners’ preferences are of crucial importance in the development of learner autonomy. If students participate in a decision-making process of designing class activities, the process may help them gradually appreciate the value of controlling their own learning.

Pintrich (1999) incorporates several motivational beliefs into self-regulated learning and found that they promoted learners’ metacognitive and resource management strategies. The beliefs incorporated are beliefs in self-efficacy, which is similar to expectancy to success in Eccles’s definition (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002 p. 110), task value, and goal orientations, all of which have been discussed earlier in this chapter (section 2.2).
In conclusion, Pintrich contends as follows:

The research on motivation and self-regulated learning does suggest that classroom practices can be changed to facilitate adaptive efficacy beliefs, encourage interest and values, and foster the adoption of mastery goals. If these changes are adopted, they will tend to promote the use for self-regulatory strategies (Pintrich, 1999 p. 469).

If the practising teacher incorporates expectancy-value theory and goal theory into classroom practice, students’ perception may be affected and move toward self-regulated learning. To this end, the class should:

- Provide opportunities to exercise some choice and control
- Provide feedback that stresses competence and importance of effort
- Provide tasks that offer opportunities to be successful
- Provide interesting, useful and important tasks
- Use organisation and instructions that encourage students to attain their goals.

It should be noted that students may need quite a long time to acquire self-motivating strategies and this can be a big problem for practising teachers who want to nurture self-motivating skills among students. First of all, it is often pointed out that students need a lot of time to develop learner autonomy (e.g. Pintrich, 2003). Before students develop learner autonomy they may finish their course and move on to another. Second, most of the devices for promoting self-regulated learning mentioned above are teacher-centred. The teacher is the one who gives feedback to students, organises the lesson and gives instructions. Although students may be able to learn to motivate themselves gradually and the teacher may be able to remove the scaffolding, there is no guarantee that students will keep self-regulating their learning after the teacher stops providing the scaffolding. Lastly, students may be motivated to learn English, but may not be motivated to be responsible for their learning. Learning to be autonomous may seem to have nothing to do with language learning itself and students may not see the significance of spending time and making effort to acquire this new non-language skill.
2.5 Teachers’ influences, positive and negative

Noels (2003), William and Burden (1999) and other studies (Bennett, 2005; Brewster & Fager, 2000; Huit, 2001) contend that the teacher has a great influence on learner motivation, but the influence is not always positive. Several studies show that one of the greatest culprits for students’ demotivation is their teachers (e.g. Arai, 2000; Christophel & Gorham, 1995; Ushioda, 1998). Demotivation is different from amotivation, which is “the state of lacking an intention to act” (Ryan and Deci, 2000 p. 61) from the beginning. Demotivation “concerns various negative influences that cancel out existing motivation” (Thanasoulas, n.d.), and one of the negative forces which often cancels out learner motivation is the teacher.

Chambers’ (1993) study revealed that what kinds of teacher behaviour were demotivating for students. They were:

- Going on and on without realising that they have lost everybody
- Not giving clear enough instructions
- Using inferior equipment
- Not giving sufficient explanations
- Criticising students
- Shouting at students when they do not understand
- Using old-fashioned teaching materials, etc.

This result indicates the negative effects of teaching styles on learner motivation, as well as the positive influence in Noels’ (2003) and William and Burden’s (1997) studies referred to in section 2.2. Oxford (1998), Ushioda (1998) and Dörnyei (1998) also state that inappropriate teaching styles or teaching methods can demotivate students. It is therefore crucial for teachers to find how their students feel about the way they teach.

When Noels (2003) examined the effect of teaching styles on intrinsic motivation, she categorised teaching styles into two, autonomy-supportive or controlling, whereas Teven and Herring’s (2002) study classifies the nature of teachers’ behaviour into the five groups of teacher power, legitimate, coercive, reward, referent, and expert power. Teacher power is defined as “an individual’s capacity to
influence another person to do something s/he would not have done had s/he not been influenced” (Richmond & McCroskey, 1984 p. 125). Legitimate power resides in the position as the teacher, rather than in the personal individual. Teachers possess legitimate power because of their formal position in the classroom. Coercive power depends on students’ perception that they will be punished by their teacher if they do not conform to what teachers require. Reward power depends on students’ perception that they will be rewarded by their teacher if they conform to what teachers want. Referent power derives from the positive relationship between teachers and their students. Expert power derives from the knowledge or abilities of the teacher.

Teven and Herring’s study (2002) found that student perceptions of their teachers’ use of expert, referent and reward power was positively related to their perceptions of their teachers' competence, caring, and trustworthiness. Student satisfaction was positively and significantly related to both teacher referent power and expert power while negatively related to teacher coercive power.

However, as the authors state, there are limitations in their study, one of which is that the data was obtained from only one university in the United States. It goes without saying that communication styles are different from culture to culture and preferences for teaching styles are affected by students’ cultural backgrounds. Therefore, it is too simplistic to assume that the findings of this study can be easily applied to any other situation.

2.6 Summary

Motivation research has been evolving rapidly especially since the 1990s. Although Gardner’s socio-educational model has been dominant (section 2.1), several researchers have suggested expanding its horizon, and accordingly four theories in cognitive psychology have been explained to provide clearer background and direction for the current study (section 2.2). Motivation is now regarded as dynamic, although it used to be considered stable (section 2.2), and how students can motivate themselves has started attracting attention (section 2.4).

Considering the salience of motivation for language learning, practising teachers should work on how they can motivate their students more, bearing in mind that there are two kinds of motivation, trait and state motivation, and that they are
unstable. Owing to individual differences among students, it is natural that motivation research turns to self-motivating strategies. These strategies seem to have a lot of potential as they overlap learner autonomy and self-regulated learning, which are important factors for successful learning not only in language learning but learning in general. Teachers’ influence on learner motivation is undeniable and it can be both positive and negative. Therefore, reflecting on their teaching in a critical manner is important for teachers in order to deliver motivating and effective lessons.
Chapter 3

Methodology
Chapter 3 Methodology

This chapter deals with the research methodology employed in the current study. Methodological issues in L2 motivation research are reviewed, which leads to the rationale of employing a case study and action research approach. Then how the data was collected and analysed is described, followed by a discussion of how the quality of research was maintained.

3.1 Methodology in L2 motivation research

Robert Gardner (e.g. 1985) and his associates have used factor-analysis and correlational methods to analyse data collected by questionnaires, and such quantitative approaches are still strong in motivation research (Clement, Dörnyei, & Noels, 1994; Donista-Schmidt, Inbar, & Shohamy, 2004; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Gardner, Masgoret, Tennant, & Mihic, 2004; Gardner et al., 1997; Lee, 2001 p. 33; Noels, Pelletier, Clement, & Vallerrand, 2003). On the other hand, as the complex and dynamic nature of motivation is recognised, different ways to examine motivation are called for. Lee (2001), for example, conducted qualitative research with three subjects, and his main data collecting tool was semi-structured interviews over three months. The small sample size and ongoing detailed interviews enabled the researcher to closely monitor the motivational fluctuation of the three subjects and led him to the idea of ‘motivational management’, which he believes language teaching and learning could help to develop.

As several researchers speculate that situation-specific motives closely related to the classroom play a significant role in the L2 motivation (Dörnyei and Csizér, 1998 p. 204), it is important for motivation research to investigate small groups closely and longitudinally as well as large samples cross-sectionally. The importance of a small scale study was pointed out by several researchers. Crookes and Schmidt (1991, p. 502) suggested the use of “survey instruments along with observational measure, ethnographic work together with action research and introspective measure” in addition to conventional questionnaires and correlational analysis. Ehrman (1996) also suggested that qualitative case studies were also necessary in motivation research because motivation was context and individual specific. In another study, practising teachers are particularly encouraged to take up action research on this issue:
Although a lot of suggestions on how to increase motivation have been made… there has been very little systematic research on how these suggestions affects [sic] motivation. Teachers, as action researchers, should try to conduct more research in this area. (Wu Man-Fat, 2004)

3.2 Methodology in the current study

The current study is a case study employing an action research approach. A case study is defined as a detailed examination of an issue (Wiersma, 2000 p. 206) to examine deeply and to analyse intensively the multidimensional phenomena (Cohen & Manion, 1989 pp. 124-125), and it provides researchers with in-depth understanding and discoveries by rich data collected. The definition of action research, on the other hand, is not clear cut as it has many types and they are slightly different from one another (Farren & Ryan, 2004). However, widely agreed characteristics of action research are that it is cyclical (Sproston, 2005), small scale, localised (Boyle, 1997) participatory (Connell, 2001 p. 40), collaborative, and self-evaluative (A. Burns, 2000).

The aims of this study were to find out a relation between learner motivation and class activities, and seeking ways to teach self-motivating strategies. In order to closely monitor the fluctuation of motivation in association of class activities over a period of time, an action research type of approach with a small sample size seemed most suitable. This study followed Kemmis and McTaggart’s (1988) action research model, which consists of four phases, to plan, act, observe and reflect in a cyclical manner. The study was conducted in my own classroom, which was small scale and localised, and participatory, and offered opportunities for collaboration and self-evaluation. I asked my students to help my research by participating in it, and their contribution was more than just being subjects. They can be regarded as collaborators in this study.

Before commencing this study, I had tested the data collecting tools in a preliminary study where several shortcomings were detected and addressed. For example, it originally took students more than twenty minutes to fill out a feedback form after class. I simplified the questions and changed the format so that students could more easily and quickly complete the form. Also, I practised filling in a class observation form, as I had been aware that it would take me some time to get used to teaching,
observing and systematically keeping a record at the same time. Thanks to the trial, the data collecting instruments became more practical and I familiarised myself to data gathering.

3.3 Subjects

The subjects for this study were my students in a general English class within an English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) program. They were what Bruce Berg (Sproston, 2001 p. 63) calls a ‘convenient sample’. Before the students decided whether or not to participate in the project, its purposes and participants’ roles were explained to them through a plain language statement (see Appendix A) backed up with a discussion. Students were then asked to read and sign a consent form (see Appendix A) if they agreed to participate in the project. It is desirable for researchers to involve their students actively in the project (Cornwell, 1999). Accordingly, wanting the participating students to be collaborators, I told students that they and I would together try to improve our class and asked them to give me advice and suggestions so that I could make the lesson better and could become a better teacher. I explained what information we were going to gather and that being honest and open was of crucial importance. At the same time, I made it clear that I would definitely respect their comments no matter how critical they might be.

All the subjects in this study were international students in the general English class. They were between eighteen years old to mid-thirties, mostly from Asian countries, and one from Europe. Students in the general class studied non-academic English for everyday life, travelling, work in Australia and rudimentary academic English. Their language levels were diverse, ranging from beginners to intermediate. Therefore, the lesson content ranged from survival English to preparation for an academic English course, which was the more advanced course available in the same school. Although general English students could commence on any Monday and could study with us for any duration, either full-time or part-time, the curriculum of the class was designed for a ten-week term. Therefore, in this study I handled the twenty weeks as two separate terms, Term A and Term B.

One of the purposes of the present study was to see the relation between learner motivation and class activities. In order to examine changes in motivation, especially
trait motivation, those who studied with us for less than three weeks were not included in this study. Of the remaining students, only one declined to participate. The other students were eager to help me create better lessons and become a better teacher. The number of participants was ten (five females and five males) in Term A and nine (six females and three males) in Term B.

The participants are all represented by coded terms to preserve confidentiality. The students who commenced their study in Term A have A at the beginning of their codes while students who started in Term B have B. The codes also represent their language levels by S for strong, M for middle and W for weak. For example, AS1 means strong student 1 in Term A. This classification of students’ language skill levels is based on the director, another teacher and my observation and test results which students took before the commencement of each term. Students’ levels are important in motivation research because the previous studies maintain that lower level students tend to lose motivation while strong ones keep motivated over the course even though they experience the same teacher and activities (e.g. Gardner, 2001). I was hoping to keep all the students motivated regardless of their levels by providing suitable and effective class activities.

Five subjects started in Term A and continued to Term B. Throughout the project, they keep the same codes even in Term B. AW3, for example, started studying with us as of Term A and continued until the end of Term B. She is always called AW3 in the project.

Permission to conduct action research on the general English students was sought and obtained in the form of letter from the ELICOS centre. An application was also submitted to obtain the university ethics clearance, and approval was given before the data collection.

3.4 Data gathering and analysis

The duration of data collection was twenty weeks in all, which was divided into two ten-week terms, Term A and Term B. The general English class was conducted from Monday to Friday for five hours a day. I taught two days a week, Monday and Thursday, while another teacher taught on the remaining days in the first term, and two other teachers in the second term. Naturally, the influence of other teachers on
student motivation was unavoidable. It will be mentioned in the finding chapter in 6.11.

There were six different data collection instruments, which facilitated validation through triangulation (see section 3.5). These included questionnaires administered at the beginning and end of students’ study (section 3.4.1), feedback from students obtained at the end of Monday and Thursday lessons (see section 3.4.3), essay writing (section 3.4.2), weekly diary entries (section 3.4.4), class observations (section 3.4.5), and individual interviews (section 3.4.6). In addition to these six instruments to collect data about the students, I kept a journal of my lessons and my own reflections on them, a record of my interactions with students which took place outside of lessons, and a record of conversations with the other teachers.

The six instruments were embedded in the action research cycles to monitor motivational fluctuation in the following way. When students started studying with us, a questionnaire was given to them to gather the information about their trait motivation and their preferences for class activities. Also in Week 1 of the first term students were asked to write an essay about their English study. Based on the information obtained through the questionnaire and essays, initial class activities were planned to increase student motivation. Self-motivating strategies were also incorporated into class activities. The effects of the class activities on their motivation and self-motivating skills were then monitored through student feedback forms, diary entries, observations, and interviews. Depending on these, activities were modified, eliminated or repeated. Modified or new activities were then tested in class and their effects were again examined. Before students finished their study, they filled out the second questionnaire, which included the same questions as the initial one so that I could see how their motivation changed over a period of time. The initial and final questionnaires essentially measured trait motivation, while day-to-day state motivation was measured by means of feedback forms, diary entries, class observations, individual interviews, and occasionally my journal.

Not all subjects participated in the six instruments. As mentioned in 3.3, general English students could start on any Monday, and therefore some subjects were not present when the essay writing was conducted in the first term. Two students (BW1 and BW2) participated in only two instruments, observation and interviews. That is
because initially their language levels were not high enough to understand the questionnaire and the feedback form, or to write diaries and essays. More detailed information about each subject is given in Chapter 6.

Originally the questionnaires and the feedback forms were intended to be anonymous. However, although I said to students that they did not have to write their names when they filled out the first questionnaire, most of them wrote their names. In the same manner, when they filled in the feedback form, some kept writing their names. Therefore, I decided that they did not mind letting me know their identity, and so stopped reminding them not to write their names in the feedback forms.

The lack of anonymity might seem to have a potential disadvantage in that students might feel uncomfortable with being honest with me. However, since the results include a significant amount of critical comments on my practice (e.g. in sections 4.3 and 5.2.1), I do not believe that the students letting me know their identity caused much distortion of data. Despite the fact I had initially planned to examine motivational changes only for the class as a whole, thanks to this unexpected student reaction to the questionnaire and feedback form I was now able to trace individual changes. Consequently, I found interesting and significant findings which explained the possible causes of motivational changes and I could not have found these otherwise. Yet, protecting confidentiality and students’ identities is first and foremost important, and therefore I use code names to refer to each student in later chapters.

Data analysis was a continuing process because action research proceeds cyclically, drawing on-going cycles of planning, action, observation and reflection. This project contained various small cycles inside of a big cycle. The big cycle was around the purposes of the study, motivating students through class activities and attempting to nurture students’ self-motivating skills over twenty weeks. To this end, in this big cycle there were several small cycles where different activities were implemented depending upon the skills I focused on. Each small cycle varied in its length as the time spent on anticipated effects was different. Each small cycle contained the four phases of action research and the data was analysed independently of the other small cycles. When one term was over, I again analysed the data collected from all the small cycles individually and holistically, both for the whole class and from the individual students’ point of view, and then I planned for the second term. The same
procedure was repeated in the second term. After the second term finished, I analysed the data from that term and read through the data from both terms in order to see any longer term substantive elements and counter-examples.

My journal, in which I kept a record of my lesson plans, reflections on my practice, and interactions with students and other teachers, worked as my self-reflective tool in that it helped me be critical about my practice, behaviour and attitude to the class. Keeping a record of what happened in the classroom from my point of view and comparing my views with the data from students assisted me in thinking analytically about incidents in the classroom and effects of my behaviour on them. Honestly speaking, it was an unpleasant experience to see clearly my flaws as a teacher and researcher nearly every week. Thanks to that experience, however, I discovered many things, which are described in Chapters 4 to 7.

3.4.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires are frequently used for language learning motivation research. The best known such questionnaire is the Attitude/Motivation Test Battery (AMTB), which Gardner (1985) created and which is reported to have good validity and reliability (Wu Man-Fat, 2004). For the current study I modified the AMTB using plain English and reducing the number of questions because my students were studying English. Gardner (2001 p. 11) himself suggests that the original test can not be used in all contexts since the items in the test should be meaningful to the participants. I also modified it by adding a questionnaire by Hanh (2005) to find out students’ preference for class activities. The resulting questionnaire is shown in Appendix B.

The questionnaires were administered at the beginning and the end of each student’s study. Their aim was to find out:

- Students’ trait motivation, i.e. their attitude to learning English, desire and effort to learn English, and their changes over time
- Their preferences for class activities (only in the initial questionnaire)

The questionnaires used a five point Likert scale from ‘strongly disagree (1) to ‘strongly agree’ (5). Students were asked to fill them out in their free time and to put them in the ELICOS suggestion box or return to staff. The same questions were used
as Part A of the questionnaire twice, at the beginning and the end of the study. In Part B of the second questionnaire, students were provided with the opportunity to assess their motivation and to make a comment on their motivational changes in a semi-open-ended manner.

Students’ answers for the questionnaire about motivation were categorised into five groups:

- Attitude toward learning English,
- Desire to learn English,
- Effort to learn English,
- Instrumental orientation, and
- Integrative orientation

Their ratings were quantified and averaged to find out how they were motivated as a class. Their responses were also recorded individually to compare their initial ratings with second ratings, and to find out how their trait motivation changed over time (details are in Chapter 6). Their preferences for class activities in the first questionnaire determined the initial class activities (for the results of the questionnaire see section 4.1).

Although the total number of subjects in the first term, Term A, was ten, only five subjects filled out two questionnaires within the term. That is because the other five continued into the second term, Term B. Before they finished studying with us they filled out the second questionnaire. It should be noted that not all the subjects in both terms shared the same study period because students were allowed to start the general English class on any Monday and finish anytime. Four students started their study in the middle of Term A and one in Term B, and two students finished halfway through Term A and one in Term B.

The small sample size made it impossible to obtain statistically significant results from comparing the two questionnaires, even with the nonparametric sign test (Hatch & Lazaraton, 1991 p. 294). Still, it seemed meaningful to examine changes as a whole class because they might indicate certain characteristics as a class related to class activities. While each individual student is precious, “any class teaching is a
compromise to suit the greatest number of students” (Cook, 2000 p. 102). It seemed also important to see changes in individual students’ self-assessment on their trait motivation.

3.4.2 Essay writing

Essay writing was selected as a data gathering tool because it is unobtrusive, and it allows students to express themselves under less stressful environments than interviews. As Maleki (2005) notes, writing is “a private negotiation with the self” that helps eliminate anxiety and fear which could raise the risk of less truthful responses. Essay writing was also part of students’ normal course work and thus it did not add to their workload.

There were three essay writing tasks related to this study in the two terms. In the first week of Term A, all students present were asked to write about why they studied English and about their plans after finishing the English course. Later in Term A they were also asked to reflect upon their learning and describe their strengths and weaknesses, while in Term B they worked as a class on a joint essay about what a good English lesson was.

The initial essays provided more detailed or different sorts of information from that obtained through the questionnaires regarding the students’ motivational orientations, and this is regarded as method triangulation, as explained later in section 3.5. In reading their essays, I looked for students’ goals and motivational orientations in terms of integrativeness, instrumentality, and their intrinsic or extrinsic nature. These points are connected with the socio-educational model and the other four theories introduced in sections 2.1 and 2.2. The students’ essays are found in Appendix E.

The second essay writing in Term A, where students wrote about their strengths and weaknesses in learning English and how to overcome their weaknesses, required them to use metacognitive skills. This essay writing had not been planned before the term and it was conducted as part of my attempt to develop learner autonomy. The aim of this exercise was not exactly related to motivation, but rather metacognitive skills. I read their essays to see whether students understood and analysed themselves as learners. I tried not to be too judgmental because students’ language levels might have prevented them from expressing themselves sufficiently and as a result their
analysis might not have looked insightful. Therefore, as long as they noted their strengths and weaknesses and suggested how to get over their weaknesses, I inferred that they had used metacognitive skills to understand themselves as learners (section 4.2.3).

In the final essay, which was joint-writing as a class, students described a good English lesson. Students wanted to practise writing a discussion essay at that time, and their final product was so well structured that I could easily analyse what they expected of their English lessons (for the whole essay see Appendix E).

Before students wrote essays, I showed them a model for the structure, but did not give any restrictions for the content. For the first two essays, students were given time in class for writing and those who could not finish the task wrote the rest of it at home. Thus students did not write in a hurried manner and had time to think and plan what and how they were going to write. This was important for obtaining reliable information, because ESL learners sometimes fabricate stories in order to complete the writing task. Providing plenty of time and putting no pressure on them is necessary for dependable information.

3.4.3 Feedback from students

At the end of Monday and Thursday, students were asked to fill in a simple feedback form (See Appendix C) that was designed to elicit fluctuation of their state motivation and their opinions about class activities. This was used to trace learners’ state motivation and their preferences for class activities. I had trialled and modified the form before commencing the study, which resulted in a simple and easy format that students could fill out in a short period of time. The form was administered immediately after class because data reliability is enhanced when the data is collected as soon as possible after the event (Nunan, 1992).

The feedback form was modified once again before Term B because I found that one student had misinterpreted a question. Thanks to the action research type approach, I was able to detect the misunderstanding and improve the form so that everybody would easily understand it. The detail of this episode is in section 4.3, an interaction with student AW3 (also see section 6.10).
The feedback forms were analysed as soon as class was over. Students rated their attitude toward learning English and their desire and effort to learn English on an 11 point Likert-scale (0-10); these three factors follow from Gardner’s definition of motivation (see section 2.1). They also chose ‘good’ and ‘not good’ activities (Term A) or activities they wanted to do again and activities they did not want to do again (Term B), and the reasons, which were multiple choices. In general, I discarded or modified the activities on which more than a third of the students were not keen or when one student expressed strong dislike. For example, when most of my students found an activity bad because they thought it too challenging, I modified the level of the activity, whereas when students thought an activity bad because it was ‘boring’, ‘sleepy’ or ‘tiring’, I did not repeat the activity.

To see the fluctuation in state motivation, the students’ scores were averaged in order to find how motivated the whole class was. Individual scores were also kept to trace the motivational fluctuation of each student. The average score and individual scores were recorded in the form of line graphs using a spreadsheet and they are presented in Chapters 4 to 6, although the numbers can not be treated as statistically significant.

3.4.4 Diary entries

Students were required to keep and submit a diary once a week as part of their course work. They were encouraged to write about not only English learning but anything they were interested in telling or asking me, although they were asked to write mainly about their English study. Through this I hoped to be able to understand students’ attitudes towards the target language, internalization of their extrinsic motive, the level of self-confidence and perception of class and class activities and their skills, and accordingly I looked for descriptions related to these in reading their diaries.

This instrument is an unobtrusive tool for enabling subjects to express themselves. The importance of diary entries as a self-reflective tool has been pointed out in numerous articles (e.g. Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Thanasoulas, 2000; Wallace, 2003). At the same time, van Manen (1990) alerts us to its potential difficulty. For many people writing is a difficult task, and in the case of my students who studied English as a second language, writing about their study in a reflective manner was a challenge. Nonetheless, the use of diaries as a data gathering tool was important.
because of their possibility of being used for counselling and discussions in a written form. Some people are not extroverted and may feel more comfortable with writing to the researcher than talking to her in an interview. Also, I thought that students might give me information which they forgot to tell or did not have time to tell during the feedback and/or interview sessions.

When students submitted their diaries, I typed all they wrote and kept it electronically. In reading what I had typed, I highlighted any remarks concerning the lessons and the words related to their reflections on their learning. I also marked their remarks indicating their positive and negative emotions, not only about their study but also concerning their personal life, such as family problems and part-time jobs. I read their diaries over and over to see any patterns in them, and to see if what they wrote in their diaries agreed with their behaviour in class, the student feedback form and their responses in the weekly interview as a means of triangulation.

### 3.4.5 Observation

There is the possibility that subjects may fill in the questionnaires and feedback form to please their teacher. Accordingly, observation was used to monitor students’ motivational behaviours in class. Robert Burns (2000 p. 411) says, “Sometimes a study demands that what people actually do and say be compared with their account of what they did and said”. For investigator triangulation explained later in this chapter, three lessons were observed not only by me but by third parties, my supervisors who were experienced researchers, for more objective and close monitoring. In addition, several lessons were videotaped.

An observation form (see Appendix D) was designed to make it possible for me to concisely record my observation while teaching. In considering criteria, I utilised Tudor’s (2004) four clear signs of positive motivational behaviour in class which were fairly easy to recognize. They include:

- Students participate actively and willingly with one another in learning activities.
- They are attentive to what the teacher and other students say and the questions they ask.
They are willing to cooperate with one another or with the teacher when practical difficulties arise.

They are willing to “have a go” even if they find an activity difficult or unfamiliar.

These four elements were focused on when my supervisors and I evaluated students’ behaviour in class. Explanations about the criteria and the observation form had been provided to my supervisors before they observed the lessons.

When I observed my class, following the four criteria mentioned above, I used the observation form to comment on students’ engagement, their responses to each other and me, and their voluntary utterances. In order to efficiently jot down comments in the form, I filled in planned class activities before each lesson, although I sometimes had to change or skip activities according to the students’ reactions to them. After class I amended the planned activities and added more comments on the students’ behaviour and my impressions, if any, on the form before I forgot. Then, I compared the observation form with the student feedback form, diaries and interviews to mediate their comments to see if there was any discrepancy in the data and kept anything possibly meaningful in my journal.

When my supervisors visited the classroom for investigator triangulation and dependability of the data, they wrote down their comments according to the above criteria. After the observation, the observer and I discussed what they had seen and felt and compared it with mine. Each time, there was no significant difference between their observations and my own.

My use of observation forms should not have affected the students’ behaviour. This is in part because I had always been writing something on students’ performance in class so as to give them feedback regardless of this project, and I had practised using the observation form prior to Term A. As a result, continuing students were used to me writing down something during the lesson. Also, the students, new ones included, usually wanted me to make comments on their language skills individually (for examples see sections 5.3.4, 6.1 and 6.10) and they knew the feedback I gave them was based on my notes I made in class.
Robert Burns (2000) warns that there is a danger of changing behaviour among subjects because of the presence of observers, especially in the case of small groups. My presence naturally did not change students’ behaviour because I was their teacher.

Strangely, the third parties did not seem to change their behaviour either. Instead, after the third party observation some students asked me if I had been nervous. They thought that the third party came to observe my teaching, not them studying, because I had told the students that ‘my teacher’ would come to class. I took advantage of their misunderstanding and students largely ignored the presence of the third parties. Consequently, there seemed to be few changes in their behaviour at the time of third party observations.

Videotaping was another story. When I videotaped at first, students did not act normally. So, I set up a video camera even when I was not recording so that students started ignoring the presence of the camera. The video footage in the accompanying CD was recorded in Week 9 in Term A and Week 9 in Term B, by which time students stopped paying too much attention to the camera.

3.4.6 Individual interviews

The interview as a data gathering tool is advantageous in that the researcher can gain more qualitative information than a questionnaire (Macintyre, 2000). The interviewer can elicit more complete responses or reasons for responses and personal exchange can help interviewees understand the question clearly. In this project, the sample size was small enough to enable me to conduct individual interviews every week. In addition, third party interviews were conducted for triangulation.

All students were individually interviewed every week in a room adjacent to the self-study room so that no one except me could listen to their responses. Because I was their class teacher, I knew how to use plain English and speak slowly and clearly enough for students to understand me. The interviews were planned as semi-structured, starting with a general question about students’ study, for example, how their week had been, if there were any problems and so forth. What I sought was information about their motivated/demotivated state in and outside class. I asked students whether or not they had a problem or lethargic, sleepy feelings, if they got over it and how they did it. I also asked if they felt happy and satisfied with the class.
I asked what they did at home so that I could gauge their motivational behaviour outside of their classroom. The session was not audio-taped because recording would probably have made the subjects nervous and the risk of untruthful responses might increase. Instead of that, the data gathered during the interview sessions was recorded in the form of notes.

As soon as the interview session was over, I transferred my notes to my journal. I tried to keep everything students had said as it was in order to maintain its authenticity and to eliminate premature deduction, but occasionally I added my words in square brackets to complete students’ remarks grammatically. I organised the data from the interview chronologically as a whole group and individually in different electronic files. Students’ remarks were categorized into positive and negative types and highlighted in different colours, and then were classified into a number of sub-themes, such as ‘about listening activities’ and ‘goal orientation’. I repeated reading the data to find any small changes in their motivation on a weekly-basis and to see the changes in a longer span, such as bi-weekly, monthly, one term and for the students’ whole study period. I also cross-checked the data with the students’ behaviour in class, what they wrote in the feedback form and diaries.

Some students were interviewed by third parties, my supervisors, in both terms for triangulation. Only one student was interviewed by a third party in Term A while all subjects were interviewed once in Term B. The interviewers took notes during the interviews in the same way as I did. The third party interviews revealed two striking contrasts to the third party observation in which there was no major disagreement between third party observations and mine. One was that some students gave different answers to a third party from what they gave me. The other was that some students told third parties some things which they had not talked about when I interviewed them.

Two students gave the third party different reasons why they studied English. There are two possible reasons behind this. First, as discussed in sections 6.5 and 6.11, some students did not have a stable long-term goal. Second, the reasons they gave to the third party were more elaborated than those they gave me. It can be said that they possibly wanted to impress the interviewer, with whom they would not talk again.
The second thing that the students told only to the third party carried more significance than the first. The students complained about the school to the third party whereas they had not shown a hint of their dissatisfaction with it to me until Week 9 in Term B. Their different attitudes to the third party and me may suggest that my students differentiated their teacher from their school. This incident did not weaken the dependability of the data I obtained, but rather expanded my understanding about students as discussed in sections 5.3.1 and 6.4.

3.5 Quality of research

This project is a case study with an action research type of approach. Criticisms often heard about case studies and action research are lack of validity and of reliability (e.g. Bassey, 1999; R. Burns, 2000; Groundwater-Smith & Mockler, 2005).

I was well aware of this point and tried to enhance validity and reliability by using triangulation in the process of data collection. There are four types of triangulation, which depend upon different sources, methods, investigators and theories (Denzin, 1978). ‘Source triangulation’ means using different data types, ‘method triangulation’ is the use of multiple data collection tools, ‘investigator triangulation’ refers to the use of different investigators, and ‘theory triangulation’ is taking several related theories into consideration (Lee, 2001 p. 31). As seen in sections 3.4, 3.4.2, 3.4.5 and 3.4.6, method triangulation and investigator triangulation were employed. In addition to triangulation, I carefully and repeatedly read the data for the whole class and for individuals in order to disconfirm my personal bias and premature judgment, as Brennan and Noffke (1997 in Sproston, 2005 p. 86) contend that reading and analysing data repeatedly “may be a more important approach to validity than cross-checking with other data”. During and after the data collection, whenever I was not sure about what was beneath students’ behaviour, remarks and ratings, I conducted extra, reflective interviews to make things clearer. By reading the data repeatedly, I made an effort to search the data for agreement and disagreement and examined if there were any exceptions for the agreement and the reasons for the disagreement (Sproston, 2005 p. 86). The considerable triangulation and effort to eliminate personal bias and misinterpretation of the data in the current study assisted me in drawing an accurate picture of what had happened in the classroom. This accurate picture should help other language teachers relate this study to their own
practice and infer its usefulness for their own classrooms and motivate their own students, which Robert Burns (2000 p. 473) describes as the meaning of validity for the case study.

Another criticism of action research is that researchers are too close to the subjects (Sproston, 2005 p. 84). However, a close, trustworthy rapport between subjects and the researcher is desirable in action research because the researcher’s familiarity with the subjects gives a measure of confidence to his/her judgment (R. Burns, 2000 p. 473). Groundwater-Smith and Mockler (2005 p. 5) too contend that trustworthiness must be central to research, and it is best tested through ongoing discourse among participants. Not only for the current study, I always strive to establish a good relationship with my students. The fact that the students often told me personal matters and sometimes gave me critical feedback shows that the relationship between us was adequately healthy, and the data and my judgment was reasonably reliable.

3.6 Presentation of the findings

This chapter first presented the reasons why I chose a case study in an action research type of approach by briefly reviewing the history of motivation research in language learning. Motivation is so multidimensional that no single research methodology can accommodate its complexity. Choosing an appropriate methodology according to research purposes is therefore important. This study attempted to find the relation between motivation and class activities, which required close investigation of motivational fluctuation and the causes behind it.

Owing to the nature of the case study and action research, this study does not intend to generalise what was found. Instead, it aims at presenting accurately what happened in the classroom with regard to learner motivation and class activities, and to provide information which language teachers in similar situations can make use of.

The following Chapters 4, 5, and 6 describe what happened and how it happened as action research cycles over twenty weeks. Chapter 4 handles the first ten-week period, which is named Term A, and Chapter 5 the latter ten weeks, called Term B. Both chapters are to provide the reader with changes as a whole class in each term. Since this is an action research project, the process of planning, implementation and evaluation created small spirals which were contained in a large spiral whose centre
was the students’ motivation. The small spirals pertained to several discrete issues in our classes which needed interventions. Instead of portraying the whole terms chronologically, I describe interventions with regard to each of the spirals in the form of sections (4.2 to 4.6, and 5.2). What is presented in each section is chronological as it provides the reader with a sense of the way the classroom operated, and how my teaching and the students’ motivation changed over the terms. Chapter 6 describes changes in each individual student over the whole period of their study. In the current project, individual differences in reactions to my action plans for motivating classes were distinctive and worth noting separately from a discussion as a whole class in order to present lived experience of those students.

Whereas Chapters 4 to 6 draw small action cycles to deal with day-to-day problems, Chapter 7 describes what happened in a bigger cycle of action research to evaluate whether or not there was a positive or negative relation between learners’ motivation and class activities. The other aim of this project, exploration of the way to teach self-motivation strategies is also discussed in this chapter.

In order to make clear which week in which term is discussed, each week has either A or B before the week number. For example, WeekA1 means the first week in Term A and WeekB5 the fifth week in Term B. In both terms I taught part-time, on Monday and Thursday. Whenever I refer to the day, I use the abbreviation to indicate which day as follows: for example, MonWeekA2 for Monday in the second week of Term A, ThuWeekB6 for Thursday in the sixth weeks of Term B.
Chapter 4

Term A action research cycles
Chapter 4 Term A action research cycles

This chapter describes the overall research cycles in Term A, which includes five action research cycles. After investigating student motivation with questionnaires (section 4.1), the action plans were implemented in order to improve activities related to learner autonomy (section 4.2), grammar (4.3), reading (4.4), listening (4.5) and writing (4.6). Appendix F shows these activities chronologically. In addition, communication between students and me is discussed in section 4.7, as teacher behaviour and communication styles influence students’ affective variables. Finally, section 4.8 analyses motivational fluctuation in Term A.

4.1 Term A begins: Two issues from the questionnaire

I started this project with two agendas in mind; one was to find motivating class activities for students and the other was to explore a way to teach self-motivating strategies. Before Term A I had a relatively clear idea about how to handle the first purpose, but for the second I was not optimistic. I was aware that self-motivating strategies were deeply related to learner autonomy, which from my experience I believed that most of my students tended to be short of.

In WeekA2 students submitted the first questionnaire and it became clear that my prediction was right. Parts B and C of the questionnaire revealed that the most popular activities were teacher-centred while the least popular activities were student-centred as can be seen from the below table.
Table 4.1 Result of Parts B and C in the first questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Averaged rating</th>
<th>Chosen by how many students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As favourite</td>
<td>As least favourite</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>listening to teacher’s instructions and explanations</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>teacher giving feedback (oral/ written)</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>listening to teacher talk about grammar</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>reading texts aloud in class</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>writing short passages (less than one page)</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>talking in pairs (2 people)</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>using a computer to study English</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>doing grammatical exercises</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>talking in groups (more than 2 people)</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>giving oral presentation by yourself</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>working by yourself</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>working in pairs</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>working in groups</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>working as class and following teacher</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>listening to classmates giving oral presentations</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>studying grammar by yourself</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>reading texts silently in class and do exercises</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>listening to and singing English songs</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>whole-class discussions</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>role plays</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>playing language games</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>listening to tapes and doing exercises</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>classmates giving feedback (oral/ written)</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>working as class without teacher</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
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On the one hand, this did not appear promising from the viewpoint of learner autonomy and self-motivating strategies. On the other hand it was understandable, as some students were weak in grammar and wanted explicit explanations from the teacher. It occurred to me that initial grammar activities would be teacher-centred, and then gradually control and choices over their learning could be shifted from the teacher to the students. Thus, the first questionnaire gave me a clearer idea about how I could nurture learner autonomy among my students.

Part A of the questionnaire and essays which students wrote on MonWeekA1 presented their initial motivational orientation. The entire essays and the results of the questionnaire are in Appendices D and E.

Combined with their responses to Part A of the questionnaire and the essays, the reasons why the students were studying English were:

- For communication
- Future study (at a university in Australia)
- For travel
- For current/future jobs

From what I obtained, it was not difficult to decide to teach all four macro skills as students wanted to learn English for academic, professional and communication purposes. Three subjects were planning to study at a university in Australia, four students wanted to study for communication or travel and five wanted to study English for their current or future jobs. It was necessary for students to develop all four macro skills so that they would not have any particular weak areas.

The same part of the questionnaire showed the students’ attitudes toward learning English, their effort, and their desire to learn English as well. Their responses showed relatively high motivation, and it can be said that:

- Their attitude toward learning English was positive
- They did not mind doing homework
- Two students did not speak English at home
- One student did not study English at home everyday
• One student was not interested in making effort to do difficult tasks
• One student did not pay attention to the teacher’s feedback
• Three students were not keen on spending more time on study
• Four students showed little desire to study English
• All of the students found English language skills useful for communication.
• One student did not think studying English helped to get a good job.

Their positive attitude was not unpredictable as all of them came to school by choice. In comparison, their effort and desire were not as strong as their positive attitude. This might look contradictory, but in a way it made sense to me. Their motivational orientation was mainly extrinsic and instrumental and it was not clear how much students had internalised their reasons for studying English. Students might like learning English because they thought that it would give them better opportunities, but they might not want to put much effort into their study.

Overall, I found their responses relatively positive. At least, they did not show negative reactions to learning English, including doing homework. I thought there was a possibility that their attitude toward doing difficult tasks and teachers’ feedback would improve if they found the tasks and teacher feedback useful and important.

The following sections show how I tried to improve five different areas in my teaching in Term A. The first two issues arose from the initial questionnaire and essays as mentioned above, namely nurturing learner autonomy and grammar. The other three became issues from day-to-day lessons. These issues were efficient ways to do reading activities, how to engage students in listening tasks, and how to teach essay writing.

4.2 Learner autonomy

4.2.1 My initial trial: Encouraging students to study outside class
On MonWeekA2 I delivered a lesson to introduce the idea of autonomous learning. Although students had not yet returned their questionnaires at that stage, I thought it would be useful to talk about my expectations and goal-setting.

First of all, I explained the purpose of the lesson, which was to suggest that students plan their study over the next ten weeks. Planning is necessary for self-motivating strategies and is called the forethought phase in Cleary and Zimmerman’s (2004 p. 543) cyclical feedback loop for becoming self-regulated learners. I explicitly said that students needed to know how good I wanted their English to be by the end of the term and they needed to reflect on and plan their study. Using an overhead projector, I explained what I hoped them to achieve in ten weeks’ time and emphasized that those things were unlikely to be achieved by just sitting in class and that they would need to study actively outside class.

Then I talked about homework. Using homework as a way to encourage students to study outside class is useful to promote autonomy (Harmer, n.d.-b). As compulsory homework students had to keep diaries and show them to me every Thursday. Apart from that, I asked them to decide their personal homework. I said to them, “Do one thing every week. Anything is OK (I gave them choices): reading a magazine, sending email, listening to the radio, watching a video or TV, talking with your friends in English and so on. Keep a record of it in your diary and show it to me every Thursday. How much, how many hours and what to do are up to you” (I gave control to students).

This took up the whole morning. I hoped that students would think about their study for that term and set up their own goals. Unfortunately, I found myself disappointed to see that no students mentioned this lesson or their goals in their diaries on ThuWeekA2. On MonWeekA3 I gave students a handout which informed them of what I wanted them to write in their diaries. These were (a) their study at home, (b) their opinions about class activities, and (c) their every day life. I also asked them again to decide their weekly homework on their own.

On ThuWeekA3 I collected students’ diaries and found that AS2 and AW2 had done what I had asked. AM1 wrote about our class activities, which was not exactly what I had expected, but at least it was about her study. I needed to remind them again in
the following week. Although only two students decided what their personal homework was, these two students did it very well. AS2 reflected on class activities in addition to his weekly study plan at home. AW2 wrote that his problem was writing and he was eager to practise. He also asked a good question: “How many words should I know?” He wanted to set up a goal for his vocabulary building.

In WeekA4 there was only one additional student, AM1, who wrote about her study in her diary. The other students still did not write about it or did not submit their diaries. Therefore, I tried a different approach to make students think of their study on ThuWeek5. As a speaking activity, students talked about their problems in improving their speaking skills and exchanged advice. For example, AM1 lived with people who spoke the same language as hers and did not speak English at home. AW2 suggested that she set up a period during which everybody had to speak in English as a game. Although AM1 and AW3 chose this as a ‘not good’ activity because it was difficult, AS1, AM2, AM3 and AW2 chose this as a ‘good’ activity in their feedback forms.

Following this activity, we had a problem-solving discussion about an imaginary student, Alice, who studied English and had a problem with her lethargic feelings toward her study.

**TASK**

Alice is a 24 years old student. She is from China and studying English as a second language in Australia. Before she came to Australia, she was so excited about studying English in an English speaking country. It has been three weeks since she arrived in Australia. Now she feels a bit bored. Even in class, she does not feel like studying. She wants to improve her English. She is happy about her class. However, she has been lazy for a while.

**Q1.** Do you feel like Alice? If yes, when?

**Q2.** What kind of advice would you give to Alice?

This activity went very well in that all students were engaged and seriously talked about Alice’s problem by comparing her and themselves. AS1, AW1 and AW3 chose this as a ‘good’ activity and nobody thought it ‘not good’. AS1 in particular said in his feedback form this activity was “Fantastic!” While they did not reach any
conclusive advice or suggestions for Alice, they clearly thought about their own study, which I believed showed a possibility of them moving toward more autonomous learning.

On ThuWeekA6, we had a similar discussion to the above using another imaginary student. Students were deeply engaged in the discussion, expressing themselves actively. AS1, AM2, AM3, AW1 and AW3 chose this activity as ‘good’ while AM1 said ‘not good’ because it was difficult. While AM1 found the activity difficult, I observed her enthusiastically talking about the topic with her classmates. I would like to think that this activity was successful in that it had them think and talk about their study. Reflecting on learning is an essential element for autonomous learning. Through this discussion and the one before, they compared the way they studied English with the way the imaginary students did. Students’ engagement in a similar discussion activity can be seen in the accompanying CD (Appendix H).

AW3 asked a question about grammar in her diary in Week6A. I was pleased to see her eager to learn grammar more, which she always regarded difficult. Although this positive change probably took place simply because she felt more comfortable with me and confident in class, there is also a small possibility that the above discussions might have encouraged her to be more active.

Whereas the students proved that they were able to think and talk about their study, which is indispensable for learner autonomy, they also disappointed me by their poor results in the review test in WeekA6. This review test was on the present perfect, which we had covered three days before. The questions were all straightforward, such as gap fillings and unjumbled sentences. If students had revised their textbook at home and remembered the formation, ‘have + past participle’, they could have done it better.

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I wondered why I could not convince them to do revision and study on their own outside class, particularly the weak students.

**4.2.2. Reflection on my initial trial**

Although six weeks might be too short for me to start seeing positive changes among my students, I felt frustrated. Some students reflected upon their learning in their diaries while others did not. Also, weak students, whom I wanted to expend more effort continued to achieve low marks in the review tests. Therefore, I assessed my initial attempts by comparing those who seemed to expend effort constantly and those who did not.

I understood that AS1, AS2, AS3, AM2 and AW2 made a constant effort outside of class because they often mentioned their study in their diaries and described what they did during the interviews.

- My listening level is low, so I want to do more listening activities. My reading is also low…I read the textbook [at home]. I feel more motivated than last week because I have made more friends and I want to talk with them. (AS3 Interview WeekA6)

- When I study grammar at desk, I can study only for 10 minutes. I forget. But when I watch TV or talk with my friends, I can remember more. I talk with my cousin and his friends, and watch ‘Desperate housewives’ every week. Your grammar class is OK because you combine grammar and other activities [e.g. speaking and writing]. (AS2 Interview WeekA6)

- I think plan is important I have plan study at home. I repeat a lesson last week. I have exercises book about 30 minutes. I have write the sentence also I write a letter, I memorize new words. I make sentence. How I can make good sentence. If I know I make sentence well or wrong I talk to friend. He doesn’t understand I make sentence wrong or mistake. I try again. I read a book. When I read a new words I have look dictionary. I have watch TV only news program about 30 minutes. (AW2 Diary WeekA7)

It seems that those students were aware of their weaknesses and tried to deal with them. In other words, these students had well-developed metacognitive knowledge, a
part of metacognitive skills. That is, they understood themselves as learners and
knew that they needed to make effort to overcome their weak areas.

On the other hand, if students do not understand themselves as learners, they do not
know what to do in order to improve their overall language skills. They may not feel
the urge to narrow the gap between their goals and their current levels. This is so in
particular when students’ motivational dispositions are instrumental and extrinsic
because they study English for some external reasons, not enjoying learning for its
own sake. If they do not think that the revision is immensely useful to narrow the gap
between their current levels and desired skill levels, they will not start revising
vocabulary or grammar rules at home, no matter what the teacher may say.

I decided to ask what kind of study students did outside of class in order to elicit how
they actually saw themselves as learners. If they acknowledged that there was a
discrepancy between their goals and their levels at that stage, and understood which
areas to work on so as to achieve their goals, they would probably study those areas
outside of their classroom. And the areas should be ideally congruent with the areas I
considered right and pertinent according to their levels and purposes for studying
English because I was a teacher and my professional knowledge and experience
should be able to tell what students’ priorities were. I also talked with the other
teacher about students’ skill development and in most part we agreed on what areas
they had to brush up on.

In WeekA7 I asked all students (except AS1 because he had already given me this
piece of information in WeekA5) the following question: “What kind of study do you
do outside of class?” Below are their answers.

I go to library every day after class. I stay there until it closes. Even on Sunday
I go there. Saturday is my only day off. I listen to English and try to repeat
after it. (AS1 Interview WeekA5)

Going out with my cousin and friends and watching TV and videos (AS2
Interview WeekA7)

Reading the textbook and hand-outs [for revision], talking to friends, and email
in English (AS3 Interview WeekA7)
Grammar, homework, and diary (AM2 Interview WeekA7)

Listening to the radio and music, watching TV, and reading magazines (AM3 Interview WeekA7)

Reading newspaper, watching movies or videos. Trying to remember new words. I read my vocabulary book on the bus (AW1 Interview WeekA7)

Reading newspaper, magazines and story books. Not much listening. Vocabulary review, talking to my friends, grammar book (AW2 Interview WeekA7)

Reading [bilingual] grammar book, watching TV with my cousin (AW3 Interview WeekA7)

AM3 and AW3 were weak in vocabulary and should have tried to improve it. AW3 herself said in her diary that her vocabulary was not extensive (AW3 diary WeekA2). Nevertheless, they seemed to neglect this and do something less urgent or less strenuous, such as watching TV and listening to music. Another comment which attracted my attention was AW1’s: he read newspapers. AW2 also mentioned reading newspapers, but he read magazines and story books as well, and these were for ESL learners from the library. At AW1’s level, I did not believe he was able to read and understand a newspaper. (My guess proved right in Term B as he could not prepare for a presentation based on a newspaper article and needed to receive extra private tutoring from another teacher.) In order to brush up his reading skills, books designed for ESL learners would have been more encouraging and beneficial.

AM3, AW1 and AW3’s cases may mean that they did not have adequate metacognitive knowledge to evaluate their current levels and choose the appropriate tasks. These interview results made me think critically about my initial attempts. I was wrong in my approach to teaching learner autonomy. I had been aware that the teacher had to explicitly tell students what to do when s/he tried to introduce learner autonomy (McCarthy, 1998). That is why I narrowed down the study area to homework, asked students to think about it and decide what they needed to do at home. Also, I explained how important revision was, and advised them to do it outside class. However, if students had not developed sufficient metacognitive skills to do the above, how would it be possible for them to reflect on their learning properly? I could have given activities which encouraged students into looking at
themselves as learners more closely. Before trying to help students develop learner autonomy, I should have helped them develop metacognitive skills. If I had done so, students might have started working on their weak areas outside of class.

4.2.3. At the end of Term A

While I was starting to understand why my approaches to having students study outside class did not work as much as I had expected, I could not develop and implement any plans to induce a change. As a result, when students took another review test in Week8A, the students whom I wanted to increase their motivational behaviour showed disappointing results.

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As explained in 4.2.2, without well developed metacognitive knowledge and self-regulation, the students would not have understood the importance of revision at home. The review test in Week8A showed that I had to do something to help students develop their metacognitive skills, which were necessary for autonomous learning, but I did not come up with any ideas.

Still, there was hope for developing learner autonomy because most of the students (7 out of 8) managed to write about strengths and weaknesses of their study when we practised essay writing on ThuWeekA8. This is what AW1 wrote:

There are three good things in my study. I can listen to music oneself. I have to watch TV and I speak English language with my house owner.

On the other hand, there are two bad things about my study. Sometime I have get bored and I have lazy. Because I don’t have enough time for my homework.

Solution; I have to work a little bit.

At least he admitted that he got lazy and did not study enough mainly because he worked too much. He always had a part-time job and in Term A he worked six days a week. (Interview WeekA9). Although his solution was not realistic, since he clearly
said that he had to work to support himself financially (Interview WeekA9), he did
not appear to abandon his desire to study English.

AS2 wrote the following:

There are three good things in my study. First, I always watch television every
day. It’s very good for my study to improve my listening. Second, it’s about
speaking in English. I always speak with my uncle in English to improve my
speaking. In additionally, I also use my English when I working in restaurant
as food seller. And the last, it’s about writing. I’d like to chat with my friend in
internet, and I use English. It’s good to improve my writing as well.

On the other hand, there are three bad things about my study. Sometimes, I can
be very lazy to doing my homework, especially when I’m playing computer
games or watching movie. I think I should manage my time in doing
homework and watching television or playing computer games at home. And
also, I’m a forgetful person. Sometimes I can’t remember some words when I
want to use in speaking or writing. So, I should learn how to remember English
words very well. And my last bad thing about my study is still dependent in my
own language, [language name omitted] When I speak with my aunt, I use my
first language, because it’s very comfortable to use my own language. And I
think I should use English language more than my own language in my
speaking.

The other students, except AM3, likewise wrote about their problems in their study
and tried to find some ways to deal with them. I felt positive because in the
beginning of the term most of them did not do so in their diaries when I suggested
that they think about their study. The difference between my failed attempt for their
diary writing in the beginning of the term and this essay writing is that essay writing
took place in the classroom as a sequence in WeeksA7, 8, and 9. While I explained
what students were expected to do and showed models when I asked them to decide
their personal homework and to write it in their diary in WeekA2, I spent far more
time for this sort of guidance in the essay writing lessons. Also, I was available in
class whenever students needed extra help in planning and writing the essay. The fact
that students wrote essays about their own weaknesses and how to deal with them
meant that they were able to analyse their learning correctly in a logical manner if they received support and guidance.

Five of the students would continue studying with us next term. I had to think of better strategies in teaching learner autonomy in Term B. Now that I realised the importance of metacognitive skills as a pre-requisite for autonomous learning, I needed to incorporate metacognitive skill development activities in the lesson. I could show their levels clearly to them so as to tell them where they stood in the beginning of the term. It may be painful for some students who have a mistaken illusion about their capability, but without knowing their levels objectively, they will not be able to plan their study properly. Another thing I could do is to give organised homework, which would be an effective way to help them to establish their study routines. Once students made their own daily or weekly routines to study, the teacher could remove the scaffolding and gradually start giving students choices and control. How long the teacher should give the fixed homework would be dependent upon students. The teacher would need to monitor students closely and carefully because their skills would be developing and changing. By employing these interventions I hoped the students would develop their metacognitive skills in Term B.

4.3 Grammar

As seen in 4.1, the first questionnaires told me that students wanted a teacher-centred grammar lesson. Even though I personally preferred to avoid focusing on grammar too much, I believed that low level students needed to be taught grammar explicitly in the beginning of their study because I think that there is high risk of fossilization if the teachers let students talk freely without a solid foundation of grammar. So, my intention was to teach grammar in a teacher-dominant approach at first and shift the control from me to students gradually. I also wanted students to practise grammar in speaking and writing, not just to memorise grammar rules.

We basically studied grammar following our main textbook (English file intermediate by Oxenden and Latham-Koening, 1999) in our afternoon classes. In addition to this, we had a separate grammar session on Thursday morning. This was completely independent from the textbook and extremely student-centred from the beginning. In the first class, students talked about their problems with grammar and chose grammar rules they wanted to learn for the term. As of the second lesson, two
or three students acted as teachers and explained the grammar rules to their classmates every week. In this lesson, I always sat at the back of the classroom and the students, except the one acting as a teacher, did not see me unless they turned around. I opened my mouth only when our ‘teachers’ made a serious mistake or to add important information to their lessons. I had been conducting this style of grammar lessons for two terms and students had most of the time enjoyed playing a role as a teacher. Therefore, I was certain that all of the students in Term A would be capable of acting as a teacher in turn.

On Thursday morning in WeekA2, AS1 explained five sentence patterns. I thought that it was very technical and only strong students understood his explanations. Still, he received questions from his classmates and answered them. I highly valued their interactions without me. This session was related to the previous section, learner autonomy, because students studied together without help from me. I hoped that students would develop their independence through those lessons. I displayed AS1’s handout on the wall so that everybody could read it whenever they wanted to review the sentence patterns in class.

On that afternoon we did grammar as the second activity in a teacher-centred way, mechanical and tedious (how to use both, either and neither), although I used the students’ names in our example sentences to make the activity relevant to them. In spite of the result of the initial questionnaire, it is clear that students did not like this grammar session where they mainly listened to my explanations. Four students out of nine chose this activity as a ‘not good’ activity because it was ‘difficult’, ‘complicated’, ‘sleepy’, ‘boring’ and ‘easy’. I decided to try more communicative approaches so that students would use the target grammar in their speaking and writing, despite the result of the initial questionnaire.

On Thursday morning in WeekA4, AM2 gave a great lesson about the past continuous. Later, AM2 said in her diary:

    I want to thank you Mikiko, about my presentation that I had practice about past continuous when I have a presentation I was understand it. (Diary WeekA5)
That afternoon I found students’ reactions to one activity interestingly varied in their feedback forms. We studied two grammar features; one was ‘it takes ...+ to-infinitive’ and the other was prepositions of movement and places. While the former was taught through a combination of teacher-centred explanations and communicative activities, students practised how to use the prepositions in a mechanical way (my presentation in class and individual drilling). Students liked the second grammar activity far more than the first. Four students chose the second activity as ‘good’ and the reasons were ‘enjoyable’, ‘exciting’, ‘fun’, ‘important’ and ‘useful’, whereas only one student thought the first activity ‘good’ and two students thought it ‘not good’.

In WeekA5, I again found a difference in students’ reactions to two grammar activities. We studied comparatives as the second activity in the afternoon. Its sub-components were like this:

- **Presentation (class work):** teacher-centred grammar explanation
- **Listening for information (individual work);** the segment contained comparative adjectives
- **Controlled practice (pair work):** speaking using comparatives
- **Controlled practice (individual work):** writing comparative sentences.

This activity was followed by another grammar activity, if-clause. We ran out of time, and what we did was just my explanation in class and individual controlled practice (matching a main clause and an if-clause). AM1 chose the comparative as a good activity while AM3 and AW3 thought otherwise. On the other hand, nobody thought the if-clause session ‘not good’ and four students (AM1, AM3, AW2 and AW3) chose this as a good activity.

Why did students find the if-clause session better than the comparative session? In their initial questionnaires, they indeed said that they liked listening to the teacher talking about grammar. So, their feedback should not have surprised me, but it did because I remembered that in WeekA2 they did not like a teacher-centred grammar session on ‘both’, ‘either’ and ‘neither’ and I decided to employ a more communicative approach. The first grammar session on comparatives was more organised and better structured; I explained the rules clearly; students listened, spoke
and wrote, paying attention to the grammar rules. To me it was ideal, one of the best activities I had ever done. The if-clause session did not have enough time. As a result, I simply explained the rules and students did a mechanical exercise just like the preposition drilling which they did in WeekA5. In spite of all of this, students preferred the if-clause session. I wondered whether that was because they liked teacher-centred mechanical ways of studying or because they enjoyed learning those particular grammar rules.

On Thursday morning in WeekA5 AS1 and AS2 did a wonderful presentation on gerunds. Before the presentation, AS2 expressed concern, as his presentation with another teacher one week before was ‘dismal’ (AS2’s diary WeekA4). But in the end he did a great job with AS1. As usual, I put their handout on the wall.

On both Monday and Thursday in WeekA6 I experimented with reducing my explanations and increasing students’ use of grammar. Students’ reactions were not as good as I expected; three students chose this as a “not good” activity because it was ‘difficult’, ‘sleepy’ and ‘easy’ respectively. Two of them, AS3 and AW3, kept giving negative feedback until the end of the term. On MonWeekA7 the grammar session was teacher-centred and mechanical and on ThuWeekA7 the session was less teacher-centred and communicative. Still, they considered both sessions ‘not good’. Usually the reasons were ‘difficult’ for AW3 and ‘easy’ for AS3. This was indeed frustrating, and at the same time I learned that it was indeed impossible to satisfy everybody.

Even though I gave up trying to satisfy all of the students in terms of teaching grammar, I still wanted to know what they thought about the way I taught grammar and wanted to probe for better ways from the students’ point of view. Therefore in WeekA8 and WeekA9, I interviewed all students about our grammar sessions which we had both in the afternoon and on Thursday morning. I discovered that AW3 actually wanted to do grammar activities.

Q. Do you like grammar activities?

AW3: …It’s difficult.

Q. Yes. I understand you feel it’s difficult. Do you want me to stop grammar practice?
AW3: No. I want to do grammar. It’s difficult. But I want to do it. I want to improve everything. Speaking, listening, reading and writing. (Interview WeekA9)

AW3 kept choosing a grammar session as a ‘not good’ activity, but that did not mean that she did not want to do it. Later in Term B she said that she wanted to do even more grammar activities in class. AW3’s responses during the above interview made me decide to change the questions on the feedback form as of WeekA10. The questions would now ask students to choose the activities which they wanted to do again or did not want to do again instead of choosing ‘good’ and ‘not good’ activities (see Class activity feedback form 2 in Appendix C).

The misunderstanding between AW3 and me was resolved. On the other hand, I could not cater to AS3’s needs for a grammar session. He almost always found the grammar session easy and I could not make grammar activities any more challenging because the other students did not have as strong a grasp of grammar as AS3. I was afraid that easy grammar activities might bore AS3 in class.

As for the Thursday morning grammar session, most of the students came to understand why I wanted them to teach grammar rules and many of them favoured the way I did it.

It’s good. Preparation for presentation is good for me. I talked about used to and I know a lot about used to. (AM3 Interview WeekA8)

Thursday Grammar class is good. I can discover my problems. I can practise speaking. Feedback from my classmates is important. (AW2 Interview WeekA8)

However, not everybody was satisfied with this student-centred session. AS3 expressed his discomfort and dissatisfaction with it during the interview in the same week as above:

I did my presentation about pronouns last week. I’m not sure if my classmates understood my explanations. The explanation about grammar is difficult. I don’t think student presentation on grammar is more effective than the teacher’s presentation. (AS3 Interview WeekA8)
The difference in these preferences seemed to be related to how fast learners wanted to acquire more grammatical knowledge rather than learner autonomy. As mentioned in 4.2, AS3 was an active learner. It appeared that some students believed that grammar was extremely important and wanted to learn a lot of rules fast. Students’ presentations were not as efficient as my presentations and so those who wanted to acquire many grammar rules in a short period of time felt frustrated.

It’s [Thursday’s grammar session] good, but sometimes I don’t understand. Teachers’ explanation is good. (AW3 Interview Week8A)

I understand why you want us to do it. Everybody prepares. It’s good. But you explain grammar better. So, I don’t like other students talking about grammar for a long time. Only short time, it’s OK. After other students explain, I want you to explain again. (AW1 Interview Week8A)

At the end of Term A, how I should teach grammar to my students was still an unresolved issue for me. One thing was clear: I must ask students for their opinions and suggestions because the students’ views and mine can be different, as seen in WeekA5. I would not be able to decide what and how I should teach without the students’ input. Interviews and feedback forms were informative as to what students thought. At the same time, I found that questions and descriptions in the feedback form had to be unambiguous, as the unclear description had caused AW3’s misunderstanding.

4.4 Reading task

In WeekA2 I found it difficult to do a reading activity successfully with my students on account of their wide range of levels. I decided to ask students to read the text beforehand as homework. By so doing, students could read the text at their own pace. Strong students would not have to wait for weak students to finish reading whereas weak students could spend as much time as they wanted to look up new words in dictionaries without too much pressure to finish reading soon. Accordingly, I started giving a reading task to students as homework as of WeekA3.

Giving a reading task as homework saved a lot of class time. In addition, there were positive reactions to the reading task by AS1, AS2 and AW3, and nobody complained about it on ThuWeekA3. In this class strong students could finish
reading a text in fifteen minutes while weak students would need an hour to finish the same text. After students experienced both ways, reading a text in class and at home, I asked them which they liked better. Following are their responses in interviews in WeekA3.

Both are fine. (AS1)
Both are OK by me. (AS2)
Reading at home is better. (AS3)
Reading in class is better. I don’t have time to read at home. (AM2)
Reading at home is better. Reading in class is waste of time. (AM3)
Reading at home is OK, but reading in class has one advantage. If I read aloud in class, you can check my pronunciation. My pronunciation is a problem. I want to improve it. (AW2)
Reading at home is better. I can spend a lot of time for reading. (AW3)

AM2 had to do all the housework at home and she did not have time to study (from casual talk, diary and interview in Week5A). The class time was practically the only time for her to study. Her preference to do reading in class arose from her personal environment, not the efficiency of the activity.

Strong students did not think that deciding either way was important because they were capable of reading a task in a short time in class. On the other hand, weak students wanted to read the text at home beforehand so that they did not have to worry about new words and time limits in class. Once before in class AW1 ignored a pre-task, main task and post-task and kept looking words up in his dictionary because he was overwhelmed by the number of new words when he looked at the reading task. Such a disaster did not occur after they started reading the text at home.

This involved just a single cycle in the action research process, but it helped students spend their time more effectively. In addition, what AW2 said during the interview above was useful and I started asking students to read some sentences aloud for their pronunciation. In the same manner as teaching grammar, the students’ opinions concerning reading activities were helpful to me.
4.5 Engaging students in listening tasks

In the initial questionnaire, students stated that they did not like listening to tapes/CDs in class, but even before they submitted the questionnaire I had found the same from my class observation in WeekA2.

On MonWeekA2 I had students take a listening test because I wanted to see their listening skill levels at that time. Although AS1, AM1 and AW3 seemed to try their best, AW1 fell asleep during the test and AS2 did not concentrate on it. The test itself was fairly difficult, but the difficulty of the test did not seem to be the reason for the resigned attitude of these two students because AS2 was quite strong in listening while AW1 was weak. In their feedback forms interestingly nobody chose this as a ‘not good’ activity and AS1 and AM2 made positive comments: the test was ‘useful’, ‘important’ and ‘informative’. Their scores out of ten on the test are below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4.4 Listening test results in Week2A</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AS1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Upon receiving and reading their questionnaire, I found “Listening to a tape/CD and doing exercises” was the third least popular activity out of twenty-five. Nevertheless, students should listen to tapes and CDs to improve their listening skills (Harmer, n.d.-a) and I did not want to stop using them simply because they were unpopular. The prospect was not daunting since nobody selected this test as a ‘not good’ activity. In my view this shows the difference between Kuramoto’s (2004) subjects and mine as I had predicted (section 2.3). My students were all adults and studying English was their choice. They might have found certain activities difficult or tedious, but they could appreciate the value of those tasks unless they found them absolutely useless and irrelevant. I decided to continue using CDs and tapes, but adjusting their levels for the students in order not to turn them off. They did not think the task was ‘not good’, but they might lose interest in this type of activity if they kept finding the task difficult.

In WeekA3 I gave a listening activity, not a test, in which students listened to a tape and answered questions. The listening segment was easier and a lot shorter than the test. Their responses were mixed: AS1, AW1 and AW3 said it was ‘useful’,
‘enjoyable’ and ‘fun’ whereas AM2 and AW3 said it was ‘difficult’. It seemed that this type of practice was still difficult for at least these two students and the level of listening segments had to be lowered further. I planned to give less challenging listening tasks and gradually increase their difficulty and length.

In WeekA5, students listened to several short dialogues on a CD and answered questions. The setting was a restaurant and the topic was familiar to students. Each segment was very short and combined with speaking practice. AS3, AM1, AM2 and AW3 said that it was ‘good’ and AM3 said it was ‘easy’ and ‘sleepy’. In the next week, students listened to a long monologue read by me for information. I gave directions which they had to follow to find a missing girl. In terms of vocabulary it was challenging, and they had to listen and read a map at the same time. This was challenging as a task even though I read clearly and slowly. Students seemed to enjoy this task and asked me to repeat the reading again and again; they did not give up easily. In their feedback forms, AS3, AM2 and AW3 said it was good and nobody marked this as a ‘not good’ activity.

Feeling positive, I had students listen to a CD and do exercises in the same week and this activity went very well. AS3, AW2 and AW3 found it ‘enjoyable’, ‘informative’ and ‘important’, and nobody chose this as a ‘not good’ activity. On the same day, AS3 said that he wanted to do more listening activities to improve his listening skills. I lent him a tape from the school resource room so that he could listen and practise at home. I was pleased to see that he decided to make more effort to improve his listening skills, which he regarded as his weakness.

Experiencing these successes above made me adventurous. I wanted to see students’ reactions to a test which was similar to but easier than the one they took in Week2A. So, in WeekA7 we had another listening test. AM1, AM2 and AW3 chose this as a ‘good’ activity while AS1 and AM3 thought it ‘not good’ because it was ‘difficult’. AW2 chose this as both ‘good’ and ‘not good’ in his feedback form, giving as reasons that it was ‘important and informative’ and ‘quiet’ respectively. Below are the results of the test out of a total of 36.
Table 4.5 Listening test results in Week 7A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AS1</th>
<th>AS2</th>
<th>AS3</th>
<th>AM1</th>
<th>AM2</th>
<th>AM3</th>
<th>AW1</th>
<th>AW2</th>
<th>AW3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>26/36</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>72%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In spite of AS1 and AM3’s negative feedback, I observed that the students in general had a more positive attitude toward the test than in Week 2A. Nobody fell asleep and they all seemed to be engaged in the task to the end, including AS2 and AW1, who did not seem to concentrate on the test in Week 2A.

Multiple factors can be involved in the change in their attitude. Their listening skills improved and they were more confident. They had taken a listening test before and they did not get as intimidated as the first time. The second test was easier than the first one. I also believe that the students in fact improved their listening skills through practice in class.

Everything described above was conducted in the afternoon sessions. In addition to those, students had a current affair session on Monday morning in which they watched a video called *Behind the News* (*BTN* for short). This is an authentic television program for Australian school children which features important news and explains its background. Students were thus exposed to authentic Australian speech every Monday, which was challenging but no doubt facilitated their development in listening skills. To my question, “What do you think of listening activities in class?” in Week 8A, AM3 answered as follows:

> Listening to CD is better than *BTN* because it’s clear. Some people in *BTN* speak with strong accent and it’s difficult to understand. I didn’t like listening to CD before, but now I like it. Now I understand better. Teachers speak very slowly. I understand but it is not practical. People outside speak fast. (AM3 Interview Week 8A)

Essentially, she was saying that there were three levels in listening practice in class from her point of view. The easiest one is listening to the teacher, the middle one is listening to CDs/tapes and the most difficult is *Behind the News*. Without knowing it, I delivered different levels and types of listening activities, which was inadvertently
and fortunately successful. Here is what other students told me about listening activities in class:

I like to listen to teachers talking. I can listen to CDs or watch videos outside of class. When teachers talk, it’s more real. I like real English. (AS1 Interview WeekA8)

For listening, BTN, CDs and teacher talk are all important. (AS2 Interview WeekA8)

BTN is good for listening. Video is better because I can see pictures. CD is difficult. (AW3 Interview WeekA8)

Their comments made me realise that variety was very important as students were different not only in their levels but in their preferences (Brandt, 2005). I consciously adjusted the levels and length of listening segments, but this might have been insufficient. The teacher may need to think of the types of listening activities as well.

4.6 Writing Essays

Usually essay writing was covered in the academic course, not in the general class. However, in the term before Term A I taught essay writing because it would be useful as preparation for the academic course. Students liked practising essay writing and some continuing students requested me to teach academic writing again in Term A. Therefore, I taught how to write an essay in WeeksA7, 8 and 9. I waited till near the end of the term to teach essay writing because it was a rather demanding task and some of the new students first needed to develop grammar skills and to increase their vocabulary. Interestingly, even those who had no intentions to move to the academic class also enjoyed the sessions. In Week8A I interviewed students and asked what they thought of the essay writing session. Below are their responses:

Writing essays is useful. Now that I decided to practise more writing, this class is good. I want to improve my writing. (AS2 Interview WeekA8)

Writing essays is very nice. (AS3)

Writing essay is good. (AM2)

Writing is good. Now I'm interested in writing. (AM3)

I want to practise writing. (AW2)
I want to do writing practice, but it’s very difficult. Any topics are OK. (AW3)

I did not clearly understand why they enjoyed essay writing so much. One possible reason was that essays looked solid. They were made up of at least three paragraphs, including introduction, body and conclusion. They looked more sophisticated than a diary or a letter. Also, students needed to think and plan hard, which also differentiated essay writing from other types of writing. Presumably, they felt good to be able to do this linguistically and cognitively advanced activity. Another possible reason was that it was tangible. They saw and read what they produced. They perceived their progress.

For these three weeks, I did not have to change my original teaching plans because students were happy about the sessions. I have tried to understand why that happened, but to no avail. Probably the timing was right in that I waited for students to improve their skills; the students and I got to know each other well enough for me to make good decisions about the topics, the procedure, time allocation and so forth. In addition, the admission test to the academic class, which was held on the first Monday every term, was near, and those who were going to take it were highly motivated to learn how to write an essay.

From an action research point of view, there was only one intervention, namely introducing essay writing. I did not need to change my lesson plans. Still, I regard this as a successful cycle because I asked for students’ comments on the activities and was ready to implement any changes in my lessons. Students happened to be satisfied with my lessons and I did not make any changes.

4.7 Communication between students and me

In this section, I would like to describe an interesting aspect of my teaching and my students outside of the above action research cycles. Examining the communication between my students and myself prompted me to think of how I could improve the data gathering in the next term.

Previous research maintains that a good relationship between students and the teacher is important to motivate students (e.g. Dörnyei, 1994), whereas the teacher can also be one of the demotivating factors (Dörnyei, 2001b p. 51). Thus, the teacher influences learner motivation and demotivation a great deal (section 2.5). Although I
did not intend to take the relationship between students and myself into consideration for this project, this aspect came up in the course of data collection.

AW2 thought that being interviewed by the teacher every week was useful for his study. In WeekA8 he said:

I think this [an interview] is good. I can talk with you and you give me advice. I think it’s helpful.

An interview was one of the data gathering tools and I did not expect that students would find it valuable for their study. His remark made me realise how little I had talked with students outside of the classroom. Although all of my subjects in this project studied full-time and spent a lot of time in the classroom, they did not have many opportunities to talk with their teachers individually. Regular interviews conducted for my project allowed students to talk with me about their study and their lives outside the classroom one on one. In WeekA5, for example, AM2 told me that she did not have time to study at home because she had to do housework when she was home. I said to her she could stay in the classroom or Independent Learning Centre to study if she wished.

It was not my intention to pry into their privacy, but if there was any hindrance to studying English in their personal life, I would try to help students overcome it, as the case of AM2 above. Students do not live in a vacuum. Their personal problems, such as in a visa application (see sections 6.1 and 6.6), might affect their motivation. While I could not solve all of their problems, our regular interviews enabled me to examine whether students’ lack of motivation was due to our lessons or to personal problems.

Another data gathering instrument, diary entries, did not work as a communication tool as well as the interviews did. That was probably because I particularly told students to write about their study in their diaries in WeekA2 when I endeavoured to introduce learner autonomy. They might have thought that they had to write about nothing but their study. Without a doubt, the language skills of most of my subjects were not good enough to describe their reflections on their study or their metacognitive skills were not well enough developed to do so. As a result, compared to interviews I did not obtain much information about their feelings towards class
activities and their personal life through their diaries, with exceptions of AS2 and AW2, who wrote about their study and submitted their diaries every week.

I still wanted to use this instrument in the following term, but its purpose had to be expanded. I had not given up on nurturing metacognitive skills, so I did not want to stop using the diary as a self-reflective tool for students. But diaries could have another function as did the interviews, namely a communication tool between students and me. I was going to ask students to write about:

- what they did every day
- our class, anything they found good/bad,
- any questions they wanted to ask me
- whatever else they wanted to write about

This change might possibly enable me to find out what they thought and how they felt about the class, their study and their life in Australia in general. I was hoping to use this tool more effectively.

4.8 Motivational fluctuation in Term A

This section describes overall motivation as a whole class in Term A.

Figure 4.1 shows the average scores for the students’ state motivation obtained through the feedback form (MonWeekA4 was a public holiday). There are three elements in the graph; namely attitude, effort and desire, which are three components of motivation (Gardner et al., 1997 p. 345). Students used an eleven-point Likert scale (0-11) to answer three questions in their feedback form, which are “How much did you like today’s class?”, “Did you study hard today?” and “Did you want to study English more during the lesson?”

As can be seen, their state motivation did not show significant change and more importantly did not decline over the ten weeks. Effort changed the most among the three components but even its range was not considerable.
The low score for desire on Thursday in WeekA1 was caused by the small number of subjects. There were only three subjects on that day and one of them, AM1, almost always gave one for the desire (for more detail of AM1’s motivation see section 6.5). So, I do not think that there was anything distinctive in our lesson on that day.

The low rating for effort on MonWeekA1 is reasonable because most activities on that day were designed to get the students to know each other and relatively easy. On MonWeekA3, we did a recreational game, which was suggested by one of the students. Also, a speaking activity on this day was unpopular among them as they found it boring or complicated, as they stated in their feedback forms. These two factors, the game and unpopular activity, might have decreased students’ effort. On ThuWeekA4, AM2 commented that the lesson was easy in her feedback form. Also, AM1 appeared to handle two grammar activities with ease although she regarded these two activities as important in the feedback. AM1 and AM2 marked effort low on this day and this affected the average score for effort. On MonWeekA8, I changed a speaking activity from an interview with classmates to new types of speaking activity (rating various things and story telling) in group. When I interviewed students and asked what they had thought about the new speaking activity, three of them expressed their preference for the former activity and one said that she wanted to discuss more challenging topics. The interview with classmates had been suggested by a student and we had done this for three weeks. I thought that this
activity had lost its novelty and that students got bored. That was why I introduced a new type of speaking activity, which turned out to be poor judgment.

Taking the analysis above into consideration, easy activities probably discouraged students’ effort. Unpopular activities, such as the speaking activity on MonWeekA3 and MonWeekA8, also appeared to affect effort, rather than attitude or desire.

Probably students valued the activity favourably even when they did not particularly like it. This can be explained from the view point of self-determination theory and expectancy value theory. The students in this project voluntarily chose to study English full-time, meaning that they had acknowledged the benefit of participating in lessons and class activities. They believed that they could improve their skills by attending and engaging in lessons. As a result, their desire to learn English was not affected by one unpopular activity. Also, the question used to measure the students’ attitude to learning the language was “Did you like today’s lesson?” and it asked the students whether they liked the lesson as whole. Their attitude toward learning English was not influenced by single activity which they did not like.

Although the discussion above tempts one to conclude that class activities affected students’ state motivation, students mentioned external factors which affected their motivation in the interviews and diaries. For example, during interviews AS1 and AW2 said that they could not concentrate on their study because they had personal problems (interviews in WeekA8 and WeekA9 respectively; for detail see sections 6.1 and 6.9). That is, they had demotivating factors outside of the classroom.

Students also presented some motivating factors which were outside of class. AM1 said:

I want to study English more than before because now I live in Australia. Some of my friends speak English better than I do. I want to be like them. (Interview WeekA6)

Likewise, when I asked why he studied more than before (Interview WeekA9), AS2 said that he was more focused because he was going to take the IELTS (International English Language Testing System) test.
These comments indicate that external factors, such as living in an English speaking environment and taking an exam, were strongly motivating for them.

Thus, class activities seemed to affect students’ effort while outside factors also had a clear influence on their desire and effort. Attitude toward learning English seemed more stable than the other two elements in Term A.

4.9 Toward the next term

In Term A, the four action cycles revolved around learner autonomy, grammar, reading activities, engaging in listening practice and essay writing. Taking what I had done in Term A into consideration, I needed to plan for Term B.

First of all, I needed to think of the ways to nurture students’ metacognitive skills to lead them to self-motivating strategies and learner autonomy. Second, I wanted to find efficient ways to teach grammar. As for the data collection, the questions in the feedback form had been changed thanks to the input from AW3 (section 4.3), and the purpose of diaries needed to be expanded (section 4.7).

There was no break between two terms in the general English class. I needed to analyse my action research cycles in Term A and plan for Term B as quickly as possible. Looking back, I am not sure if I managed to do this, but Term B started regardless.
Chapter 5

Term B and the affective domain
Chapter 5 Term B and the affective domain

Chapter 5 deals with action research cycles which I created in order to motivate students in Term B, and it also deals with another important issue, students’ feelings. The chapter consists of four main sections: issues in Term B (5.1), interventions as action research plans (5.2), affective domain (5.3), and conclusion (5.4). Section 5.1 is quite long because several aspects in the general English class changed in the beginning of Term B and they need to be described. What were implemented as action plans are found in Appendix F.

5.1 Issues in Term B

Term B turned out to be far more difficult for me to teach than Term A. The reasons for this will be explained later, but first of all, brief information about the participants in this term will be given.

There were nine participants in Term B, five continuing and four new students (six female and three male students). All new students mainly had instrumental and extrinsic motivational dispositions. All of the subjects were from Asian countries. Their ages ranged from nineteen to the early thirties.

Regarding the data gathering instruments, essay writing about the reasons why students studied English was not conducted in Term B. AS4 had already written the essay in WeekA8 when she started. BW1 and BW2’s English was not strong enough to write in English. The other students except BS1 were all continuing students in WeekB1 and BS2 started studying with us in WeekB6. So instead of requesting essay writing I asked BS1 to write why she studied English in her diary and I interviewed BS1, BS2, BW1 and BW2 to ask why they studied English when they started studying with us.

The range of students’ language levels in Term B was very wide, which is one of the reasons why I felt it extremely difficult to teach the general class. AS4, whose language skills were stronger than her classmates, was keen and wanted to do challenging tasks. However, with two beginners, BW1 and BW2, in the same class, I could not cater to her needs most of the time. For BW1 and BW2 the lessons were often so difficult that they looked bored in class. As it was next to impossible to teach these students as one group, the school decided to divide the class into two
groups, the beginners as against the rest of the class, on Wednesday, Thursday and every other Friday as of WeekB2. I taught part-time on Monday and Thursday as in Term A, but my teaching schedule changed as follows; I taught the whole class on Monday all day, BW1 and BW2 on Thursday morning, and the other group on Thursday afternoon.

After the class was divided, teaching became less difficult. Nonetheless, I was uncomfortable about the inconsistency of lesson contents due to lack of core material. There were three teachers for the general class, including myself. Before we started dividing the class into two groups, the other teachers and I discussed how we should teach the class and tentatively agreed that on my part students were to use a textbook, *English file intermediate* (Oxenden & Latham-Koening, 1999), on Monday all day and Thursday afternoon, and the beginners would study with *Cutting edge elementary* (Moor, Cunningham, & Eales, 2005) on Thursday morning. When I consulted about this with students, however, they insisted that they have an independent grammar session as in Term A and they wanted to use *Behind the News* (*BTN*) too. Following their initiative, I decided to have a grammar session on Monday morning and a *BTN* session on Thursday afternoon. This is where the weekly lesson contents lost consistency in that students did not have weekly themes to cover; rather, they had different topics and achievement levels depending on the day of the week. One drawback was too broad a range of new vocabulary for students to memorise easily. *English file intermediate* was supposed to be a core textbook for Term B, and one which students had purchased, and it would not be value for money if they used it only several days a week. In fact, they did not complain about the monetary value of the textbook, but students were slightly bewildered about how we conducted lessons each week (from a casual conversation with AS4, AW3, and BW1 in WeekB4, see 5.3.3).

The textbook issue was actually more complicated, which was another reason why I had difficulty in Term B. The school had chosen only two textbooks as course books for the general class. Two continuing students had already used the textbook for Term B and did not want to use it again. One of them showed disappointment with the school during one of the interview sessions because he felt neglected. This issue will be closely examined in 5.3.3.
The fourth reason for my difficulty was that at the beginning of Term B the atmosphere in class was not as good as in Term A. This was caused by certain students who kept speaking in their first language in class even though teachers told them to speak in English many times. Although the friendship between this language group and the other students got better as the term progressed, several students and the teachers were continuously annoyed by the excessive first language use.

In addition to all the difficulties above, I was under pressure to help students improve their skills fast. The majority of Term A students (AS2, AS3, AS4, AM2, AM3, AW1 and AW3) sat for the admission test for the academic course in WeekB1, and only AS2 and AS3 succeeded in it. Failing in a test is hurtful and I wanted them to be successful the next time they tried the test. In addition to this, I felt stressed because I had tried to help students develop metacognitive skills without significant results. Accordingly I turned to behaviour modification and this approach left one student unhappy. How to deal with students’ feelings was an important agenda for me in Term B, not only because of behaviour modification but other reasons related to the problems described above. Section 5.3 deals with students’ affective domain.

Because of the problems described above, Term B had me think about other issues in addition to the relation between learner motivation and class activities. Throughout the term, I tried to help students learn language skills as efficiently as possible and tried to encourage their active learning. As a result, my attention was not entirely on learner motivation all the time, but it shifted to students’ feelings from time to time. That is why one entire section in this chapter is devoted to the students’ affective domain (5.3).

5.2 Interventions in Term B

The following subsections present three issues where the intervention was implemented. The first action research cycle in this term concerns how to deliver activities to improve three macro skills, speaking, reading and listening (5.2.1). Secondly, grammar teaching (5.2.2) was an on-going issue from Term A. Thirdly, throughout Term B I was always conscious of students’ metacognitive skills because this was what I had overlooked in Term A even though those skills were indispensable for autonomous learning. This action research cycle is discussed in 5.2.3.
5.2.1 Speaking, reading and listening activities

As of WeekB2, I decided to do two activities on Thursday afternoon; one was based on the TV program, *Behind the News (BTN)*, and the other based on a newspaper article. Both were integrated activities. The *BTN* session included reading, listening and discussions while the newspaper article session aimed at mainly reading and discussion.

*BTN* was authentic listening material that students had valued highly in Term A. When they requested me to keep using *BTN*, they also asked me to give them its transcript beforehand. I considered their suggestion significant because it meant that they wanted to prepare for the class and took action to do so. They always read the transcript in advance and the discussion in class was livelier than Term A. In addition, they enriched their vocabulary for talking about social issues. During the interview in WeekB7 AS4 pointed out that learning new vocabulary through the video was beneficial:

> It’s [*BTN*] good. Not only the topic but we can learn new vocabulary. And we can learn how to use new words. (AS4 Interview WeekB7)

As for the newspaper article session, I gave students an article with a vocabulary exercise, comprehension questions and one discussion question as homework. The article was retrieved from a website for English learners at elementary level and it was not too difficult for them. In class, students were required to talk about the discussion question after checking the answers for the comprehension questions. It was essential for students to do homework in order to participate in the discussion. I started this activity because I believed that students needed to read something at their level more at home. This arrangement appeared effective for both speaking and reading. In fact, AS4 and AW3 responded as follows during the interview in WeekB2.

Q. What do you think about discussions on Thursday afternoon?

AS4: It’s good. I liked it.

AW3: I like it. I need it. It’s difficult, but I want to do it. I understood 50% of the reading. But it’s good. (Interview WeekB2)
However, AM2 and AW1 did not finish reading the newspaper article as homework for WeekB2. As a result, they could not join the discussion. At the end of the session, I explained to the whole class how important it was to read the article as homework. Through this, I wanted to show a cause-effect relation as part of behaviour modification, as will be explained in 5.2.3. It appeared that students understood what I wanted to convey to them. In WeekB3 AM2 completed the homework and her attitude and desire in the feedback form became more positive (for detail see section 6.6).

On the other hand, AW1 could never finish reading the homework. In WeekB3 particularly he marked zero for his attitude toward learning English in the feedback form, meaning he did not like the lesson at all. He might have felt hopeless because I emphasised that without doing homework students could not participate in a discussion as much as they wanted and ultimately they would not improve their speaking skills. Even though I recognised AW1’s struggle, I did not want to stop doing this practice. There were two main reasons for this. First, the other students coped with the homework without major problems. Some students certainly found reading the newspaper article challenging, but they made an effort to finish reading it, like AM2 and AW3 above. Second, I strongly believed that all the students including AW1 needed to establish rigorous study patterns and this homework would help them do that. In Term A most of the students did not take the opportunity whenever I let them take control and initiative over their study. Consequently, they studied sporadically without planning, monitoring or regulating their learning. By giving homework regularly I aimed at increasing their effort and scaffolding regular study patterns which required planning and monitoring.

We continued this practice until WeekB9 with some intermissions. As all the topics of newspaper articles were challenging, students at times did not look keen about discussing the topic provided. In WeekB4 they were not getting involved in the discussion, so I quickly summarised the discussion and moved on to another speaking activity which was less strenuous. This means that what students wanted to do and what they could do were two different things. Accordingly, I gave them a break from the reading homework for a week and let them rejuvenate themselves. Also, in WeeksB7 and B8, we had speaking activities without using newspaper articles for a change, although students still needed to read the material as homework.
Students discussed and chose the best candidate for a scholarship in WeekB7 and they decided the seating plan at a party in WeekB8 based on the reading homework.

Close observations and flexibility are important for motivating lessons. I should not push students too hard even with good intentions. Even though students know studying is necessary there are times when they are too tired or they need to have a rest, as a remark by AW3 in WeekB6 suggests:

Thursday class is difficult and I like it. But if I always study difficult things it’s boring. I don’t like it. (Interview WeekB6)

It is undeniable that the students’ reading skills improved greatly thanks to the weekly reading homework. When the students took a practice reading test in WeekB9, I was by and large satisfied with their results. The best part of the reading test was, however, that the students had asked me to give them this test. They had thought about the admission test to the academic course which most of them would sit for after Term B and had wanted to practise. This shows that they reflected on their learning, wanted to assess their skills and took the initiative.

As for listening, the students took a listening test in WeekB2. Because I remembered AS1’s negative reaction to a test in Term A (section 6.1), I was hesitant to give the students more tests, which was a big mistake. As soon as the students finished the second test in WeekB5, AS4, AW3 and BS2 said in class that they wanted to take a test every week and other students did not protest at their suggestion. As a result, we decided to have a listening test every Monday. I had the two beginner students, BW1 and BW2, listen to the same tape as the other students but gave a different task, in which they were to jot down any words they were able to catch. BW2 liked this activity while BW1 appeared to be struggling with the task and I wondered if it was too hard for him. But in WeekB7 BW1 wanted to take the test as well and his score was not too bad. Furthermore, in the next week BW2 asked me to give her the test too. I thought their active attitude significant, particularly under the difficult circumstance they were experiencing. The reason why they wanted to take a test was that they came to understand English more and wanted to study more (interviews WeekB8). Note that experiencing success has been considered a motivating factor in previous studies (Biehler, Snowman, & Bonk, 1997 p. 399; Dörnyei, 2001c; Li, 2004 p. 10).
Taking a listening test in itself is good for intensive listening, but we should make the best use of test taking. The students took the test on Monday morning, I marked it during the lunch break, returned the test to the students and gave them feedback as the first activity in the afternoon. From my own experience as a language learner, I believe that students need to know why they make mistakes in the test. In the case of the students and the listening test discussed here, the possible reasons could be that their vocabulary was not extensive enough, they could not recognise some English sounds, and the speaker on a tape or CD talked too fast. Students must analyse their mistakes and work on their weak areas, for instance vocabulary. Because I gave students feedback on the same day of the test, most of the students still remembered what they found difficult and asked me to play the tape again and tried out some suggestions I gave, and checked the pronunciation they had not understood previously.

While I was giving feedback in WeekB7, I noticed that AM3 and AW1 looked bored. In her feedback form AM3 said in fact that she had felt sleepy during this session. On the other hand, all the other students found the feedback session useful because it gave them information about their problems in listening and how to deal with them.

This episode illustrates the differences in metacognitive skills among students and whether students were mastery orientated or performance orientated. It seemed that AM3 and AW1 thought the test score itself important but not the feedback which could help them improve their listening skills. I explained in class why I gave them feedback, although AM3 and AW1 did not appreciate its value.

After Term B, BS1, BS2, AM3 and AW3 took the admission test to the academic classes and they were all successful. Using BTN, reading a newspaper article and discussing it, taking a listening test every week all helped students improve their range of vocabulary, listening, reading and speaking skills.

5.2.2 Grammar

In Term A, several students highly valued acting as a teacher and doing a presentation on a grammar rule (section 4.3). This was not the case in Term B. AS4 and AW3 taught sentence structure in WeekB3, and BS1 and AW1 taught the past simple in WeekB4. Both presentations were impressive, but after these two
presentations students wanted me to teach the grammar rules which they wanted to understand. Considering that most of the students who had made positive comments on teaching grammar rules themselves in turns, such as AS1, AS2 and AW2, had left the class, it was no surprise to see changes in preferences for the activity. The majority of students in Term B were weak in grammar and wanted to study it in a teacher-centred manner (from interviews AS4 WeekB2, AW1 WeekA8 and AW3 WeekA9). They wanted to acquire many grammar rules as quickly as possible and to this end the teacher’s explanations in their opinion would be more efficient than their presentations.

Although I accepted their request and decided to teach grammar rules myself, I still let students take control of the grammar session to a certain degree by having them choose grammar rules they wanted to study with me. I did not reject their choices even though some of them were too advanced for them, for example the passive voice and the past perfect, because I wanted them to make decisions. In this way, students were still partially in control of this grammar session, and I believed that was important as a pathway to learner autonomy. I was aware that my decision was double edged in that even though students were happy with me teaching what they wanted to learn, some of the grammar rules which we studied in this session were not useful for improving their command of grammar on their level at that stage. In fact, another teacher kindly advised me not to blindly accommodate students’ needs when she found I had taught them the past perfect on MonWeekB9. What the lesson on MonWeekB9 actually achieved was the students’ realisation, “Oh, we don’t need that for a while. It’s too advanced. We have plenty to do before that!” (Casual conversation in class WeekB9)

My attitude to the students’ requests about grammar lessons had an unexpected positive by-product. AM2 and BS2 said to me later that they were grateful for my not ignoring their questions and interests in grammar rules. AM2, for example, wrote in her diary that I looked after her and her classmates. I asked her what she meant by ‘look after’ in the following interview, and she replied:

In class, you are interested [in] students. You answer our questions. You are interested [in] students’ questions. You try to answer. (Interview WeekB4)
What I did with an intention to nurture learner autonomy in connection with metacognitive skills worked on their affective domain. Furthermore, some students considered my explanations about grammar rules to be reinforcement for their learning, which made them happy and encouraged them to study English.

Q. When do you feel good or happy about your study?

AM2: When my questions are answered. Like this morning. I didn’t understand I am confused. You explained. Now I understand. (Interview WeekB3)

AW1: I feel happy when I understand grammar. For me, first is grammar. (Interview WeekB3)

Since I had accepted their request and taught grammar myself, students liked the grammar sessions, as AW1, AW3 and BS1 said in interviews by a third party in WeeksB8 and B9. I was thankful for their comments and believe that the grammar sessions were motivating as they found it good.

As a motivating activity, grammar sessions in Term B were thus successful. However, I wonder if they were also successful in improving students’ grammatical skills. It is not clear which was more effective for helping students to acquire a functional command of English grammar, having them teach grammar rules on their own or teaching them myself. As AW1 said during an interview in WeekB3, he might understand a grammar rule when I explained it in class, which made him happy. However, in speaking or writing he did not use the grammar rules he claimed that he had understood. He might have felt motivated when I taught grammar, but he seemed to be unable to use it later. Learners generally have to repeat tedious grammar practice. If they find grammar activities motivating, would they not mind doing them many times and eventually start using the rules? Surely motivating grammar sessions must be better than unmotivating ones. Or would it be possible to help students acquire grammar rules by giving students even boring but effective grammar activities? It seems that I must look for the answers to those questions in the future.

From the view point of learner autonomy, AW1’s remark is problematic. He felt good or happy about his study when he understood my explanations, which means his positive reinforcement did not involve much of his own effort. This did not show
him a cause-and-effect relation between making effort and progress in language skills, and realising that relation is important for self-motivating strategies and learner autonomy. This issue will be discussed more in 6.8.

5.2.3 Metacognitive skill development

Before Term B started, I had been aware that without the students having adequate metacognitive skills, there was no possibility for me to be able to help students move toward learner autonomy. I had also been aware that it would take time for me to see students’ metacognitive skills develop. Therefore, I had practically no false expectations that my students would soon become strong autonomous learners although I was going to keep trying to create an autonomy-supportive environment. Instead of merely focusing on learner autonomy, I was determined to help students improve their metacognitive skills.

Unfortunately, it turned out that Term B did not allow me to spend much time on metacognitive skill development. Our weekly lesson, which was explained in 5.1, resulted in lack of time for non-language activities, such as study skills and goal setting. Nevertheless, I attempted to squeeze activities to nurture metacognitive skills into our lessons whenever possible. Also, I attempted a behaviour modification approach mainly because I was frustrated over the limited metacognitive skill development among the students and desperately wanted them to make more effort outside of the classroom.

On the first day of Term B, we did a speaking activity whose topic was study skills. Having reflected on a similar activity conducted in WeekA2, I tried to improve the session by reducing my lecturing and increasing students’ contribution to the discussion.

First, I explained my expectations for Term B and told students that those expectations were common goals for them, namely I wanted all of the students to live up to my expectations by the end of Term B. I also asked them to decide their own goals for the term (encouraging goal-setting) in addition to the common ones. After that, I asked students to compare our goals and their levels of four macro skills at that stage and to think about which area they might have to particularly work on (encouraging using metacognitive knowledge). Then I asked them how they could
improve their weak areas. For this question, I hoped to hear them say that they would have to practise those areas more than others, but they did not answer the question, looking at me expectantly instead. So, I told them that they should spend more time and make more effort for those areas. For example, if their listening skills were weaker than the other skills, they should listen to English more than now by watching TV or listening to the radio, tapes and CDs. In addition to what they were expected to do at home like this, I gave them homework. I asked students to keep diaries and show them to me every Thursday. Because I was thinking of using diaries to communicate with students better, I asked them to write about their every day life, including our lessons and any questions they wanted to ask me.

Even though I was not sure if students really understood the purpose of this study skill session, all of them said in their feedback form that they wanted to do this activity again. I thought the session was better than the one in Term A because I reduced my teacher talk time whereas students talked more and made suggestions about the class. AW1, for instance, suggested we change our timetable so that we could study more in the morning, and his suggestion was approved by the school. We used to start at eleven o’clock and finish at five, meaning that students studied mostly in the afternoon when they felt sleepy. Trying to control their learning environment is called resource management, which is part of self-regulated learning (Pintrich, 1999 p. 459). I was pleased with his suggestion and decided to try to elicit more suggestions from students at times after this episode by asking if students were happy with our course during the interviews or casual talks. Some students indeed made some suggestions, but they were not helpful for improving their learning environment. For example, they wanted flashy student ID cards, or long holiday periods, which could not be considered effective for their study.

I continuously reminded students of the importance of revision, which had been an issue for me in Term A. On MonWeekB4, I asked them why they thought I gave them a vocabulary review test regularly. AM3 responded that I wanted them to remember important words. I agreed with her and explicitly told the students to revise new words. They did very well in the next vocabulary review test. Whether this means that they listened to me and understood the importance of revision or they did so in order to please their teacher was not clear because we did not have a review test after this episode, mainly due to my poor time management.
The students’ diary entry was always a problem in Term B. They never liked diary writing, even though most of them, namely AM3, AW1, AW3, BS1, and BS2, said during interviews that they needed to practise writing. Among the subjects only AW3 submitted her diary every week whereas the others wrote their diaries very intermittently, although I reminded them to submit diaries every Monday and Thursday. The students were aware of the necessity of practising writing, but they did not do it, which clearly showed that they did not regulate their learning to practise and improve their writing skills.

Although I did not fully give up helping students develop metacognitive skills through class activities, such as discussions, in order to lead them to learner autonomy, I decided to attempt another approach to help them to be autonomous. Behaviour modification is a planned change in the way of thinking or behaviour which occurs as a result of a set of reinforcements, and it is regarded as a type of interventions for self-regulated learning (Boekaerts & Corno, 2005 p. 213). There are four stages in behaviour modification (Mather & Goldstein, 2001):

1. Identify the problem.
2. Design a way to change the behaviour.
3. Identify an effective reinforcer.
4. Apply the reinforcer consistently to shape or change behaviour.

The problem was the insufficient effort which students had made. I decided to give a reading task and have a discussion based on it every Thursday afternoon (see section 5.2.1). The reinforcer in this context was being able to participate in a discussion, and not being able to participate in it was punishment (to weaken the behaviour, lack of effort to read the homework). This practice continued until WeekB8 and most of the students always completed the homework and the discussion was usually lively. Even though the reading task was challenging, they managed their time and effort to complete it, which means that they regulated their learning and made more effort than before. One problem was that I did not have time to gradually reduce the homework (= prompt) and to give students an opportunity to fully develop the skills on their own. During a reflective interview conducted after Term B, AW3 said that after she had moved to Certificate III, she could not manage her time to complete her homework because she had more homework in the academic class. Thus, this
approach was only partially successful in helping students to become autonomous because students used their resource management skills and made more effort only due to the reading homework I gave. Furthermore, another problem related to affective domain came up during the behaviour modification approach; one student could not handle the homework and his motivation suffered because of this (see 6.8). Still, studying and trying out behaviour modification taught me something valuable for improvement of my teaching. In Week3 I read that the most fundamental principle of behaviour modification was that the person had to acknowledge a cause-effect relationship between the behaviour and a better outcome (Vockell, n.d.). I had not thought about this earlier and had given a lot of positive feedback to students, particularly weak students, even when they made little effort. I needed to change my attitude because it was in fact detrimental. The following interview with AW3 in Week4 made this point clearer to me.

Q. When do you feel unhappy about your study?

AW3: When I don’t understand people. When I don’t know how to answer. Sometimes I know the answer but I can’t explain. Then I think “Oh Mikiko said I’m getting better but she lied to me.” (Interview Week4)

This was a wonderful discovery for me. After I started teaching in Australia, I believed that the teacher was meant to give positive feedback to students, which was totally different from what the teacher did in my school culture in Japan, and started praising students deliberately whenever I found anything positive. This AW3’s remark taught me that I should not give unnecessary praise to students because students could not see a cause (effort)-effect (my praise) relation. This incident made me clearly realise how influential teachers’ past experience is on their practice (Borg, 2003; Crandall, 2000), and prompted me to think more about my teaching, with consideration of my past experience including the fact that I have learned English as a non-native speaker in an EFL setting (E. Ellis, 2002; L. Ellis, 2004)

AW3 taught me another important thing through her diary in Week4.

I don’t know what happen to my English.

I should study hard because I want my English very well. Sometimes I hear other students speak English very well. I am jealous. How I can be like them?
You know study is borried [boring] but I need do it because I want to be a [tour] guide.

She was frustrated because she did not sense her progress, which prompted me to help her perceive that her language skills had indeed improved. So, in WeekB5 I showed her the first writing she had done in Term A and asked her to find mistakes. Because she spotted her mistakes in the writing accurately I told her that being able to find her own mistakes demonstrated her progress. She acknowledged it and thanked me. Monitoring is part of metacognitive skills, and if students do not know how to do it the teacher must show it to them. Asking students to correct their own mistakes in their earlier writing is an easy but effective way to tell them “Your language skills have improved.” Then, students will not be unsure of their progress and get stressed over it.

On MonWeekB8 we had a discussion which was similar to ones in Term A where students compared their own English study to an imaginary character’s as part of a reading task. In the discussion students argued that getting a high mark on an examination did not mean that the student really learned, and learning and good marks were different. Their remarks revealed that they were not performance orientated but mastery orientated, and the latter was said to be an important factor in keeping motivated (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1995). They also acknowledged how important time management and planning were by criticising the character’s lack of self-regulation skills in the reading task. The discussion demonstrated that they had capability to keep motivated and to develop self-regulation skills.

On ThuWeek8B we had another discussion in which I asked students to tell me what prevented them from studying English and how they got over it. The distractions from their study that they mentioned are:

- jobs (most of the students)
- friends (AW1)
- TV (AM3)
- laziness (BS2)
- lack of support outside the class; that is, when they study at home, they don’t have anyone to ask questions (AS4, BS1)
- bad home environment [some of their family members do not speak English] (AW3)
- homesickness (AW1)

Regrettably, no one came up with ideas to get over these factors. For the lack of support given by AS4 and BS1, I suggested they write their questions in their diaries, and then I could answer the questions. Finding the answer on their own would be ideal, but in reality even the idea of asking me the question in their diaries or in class did not occur to them. Advising them to write down their questions so that they would not forget and ask me later was more realistic.

This discussion in WeekB8 showed that students were aware of hindrances to their study, but they did not know how to overcome them. For what AS4 and BS1 mentioned, I was able to give advice. For laziness and TV, I encouraged students to remember why they had come to Australia and to try to discipline themselves. However, how to deal with the other factors was not straightforward. It was dependent upon each individual since they were under different circumstances. For instance, it did not seem appropriate for me to make suggestions about how many days of the week they should go to work. Although the discussions gave students an opportunity to analyse their problems in their study, we could not reach concrete solutions for all of their problems.

After all ten weeks of Term B, I had to admit that my attempts for metacognitive skill development and behaviour modification approach were not overly successful. I could not find an effective way to help students develop metacognitive skills. I could not gradually fade the prompt, the reading homework, but instead kept pushing students by continuing to give it to them.

One thing I still ponder is to what extent the language teacher can help students create realistic learner beliefs and understand themselves as learners. In the beginning of the term I set up our goals hoping that students would compare them with their skill levels at that time and gain a realistic expectancy of success. During the term I interviewed students regarding their preferences for the activities and the reasons (having students think of task-value and letting them make choices to a certain degree), their problems (having them reflect on their study) and gave advice
accordingly. Before starting each lesson, I wrote the lesson objectives on the board, which should have given students clear goals for the lesson (enhancing their goal orientation). In addition, students took small tests regularly so that they could see their achievement, compare their levels at that stage and my expectations, and examine whether their learning strategies were working well or not (enhancing goal orientation and encouraging reflection on their learning). I reminded students of what they were supposed to do, such as diary writing and revision of vocabulary, and tried to show how much they had improved. I also tried behaviour modification.

All of the above that I did in order to nurture metacognitive skills did not work well because some students had unrealistic learner beliefs. Our students were all adults and it was difficult to change their views (cf. Wong, 2001). AW1, for example, hardly studied outside of class and became unhappy with the course because he did not improve his language skills (my observation in Week5B, a third party interview 8B; for detail see section 6.8). The teacher may have to sit down with the student and talk so that the both parties agree on learner beliefs. What is important at this point is not the metacognitive or cognitive, but the affective domain, especially attitude toward the teacher. Students would not listen to the teacher trying to alter their views and beliefs if they distrust him/her. Students’ emotions play an important role when they must change how they value a particular aspect in their learning. After Term B I was still not confident of how to deal with students’ feelings appropriately, especially when they were not succeeding and they needed to adjust their perspectives on their learning and sometimes their life, because changing long-term goals may change their plans for their future. What I learned through this action research cycle was that metacognitive skill development was deeply intertwined with the affective domain, as is discussed in the next section.

5.3 The reflection on Term B: Affective domain

As mentioned in the introduction (section 5.1) there were many problems in the students’ affective domain in Term B. I planned and implemented some interventions to improve this aspect, but what I did was not systematic but haphazard. Therefore, the affective domain is treated as outside the action research cycles.

In spite of the fact that I saw several causes of the students’ negative feelings, I ended up unable to do anything effective. One of the two main reasons for this was
the limitation of my decision making capabilities as a teacher (sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.3) as some causes of the students’ unhappiness were from outside of the classroom. The other reason was my lack of confidence in communication between the students and myself (see section 5.3.5).

5.3.1 Feelings toward the school

The first problem in the affective domain was that several students had negative feelings toward the school. This must have started immediately after the admission test to the academic English course in WeekB1, as the interviews later in the term revealed (WeekB8 interviews and the third party interviews). AS4, AM2, AM3, AW1, AW3 and BS1 took the test but unsuccessfully. Most of them were discouraged, confused and unhappy, and some students incorrectly attributed their failure to an external factor, basically unfair treatment from the school. They were not convinced that their skills were not yet strong enough for Certificate III even after the director explained their test results (from AM3 interview WeekB2, AM2 interview WeekB2 and casual conversation with AS4 WeekB8).

Interestingly, there was no decrease in their state motivation even immediately after the test (see Chapter 6 for fluctuation of state motivation of individual students). It can be said that the students’ dissatisfaction was towards the school, not towards the class, and therefore it did not affect their state motivation, which was related to their day-to-day lessons as opposed to the school. Previous research (Gardner, 2005; Kormos and Dörnyei, 2004) showed that learner motivation was affected by their feelings toward their course. In Kormos and Dörnyei’s study (2004), students had a positive attitude toward the course, and as a result of it their motivation did not decline even when they had activities they did not like. Our situation was different in that students had a negative attitude toward the school and it did not affect their state motivation. At any rate, the fact that their negativity toward the school had no influence on their state motivation is why I did not notice sooner that some students wrongly attributed why they could not pass the test. Unfortunately, their negative feelings were an undercurrent in their mind and occasionally emerged on the surface, or the students did not want to discuss them with me because they were aware of limitations of my decision making.
Another reason why students were dissatisfied with the school was excessively diverse levels of students in one class, and this was a big problem for teachers as well. When all students studied together on Mondays, strong students often felt “It’s too easy for us and too difficult for them [i.e. the weak students].” (casual conversation with AS4, AW3, BW1 and BW2 WeekB4). AM2 also told me why she was not entirely happy with our lessons just before she finished studying with us:

Sometimes teachers are slow. I want to learn more. I only learn slow. I feel unhappy. This term in particular. I can learn more but teachers are slow. I understand my classmates are slow. But sometimes I can do more. (Interview WeekB5)

As mentioned in the beginning of this section, this was beyond the teacher’s control and it could not be solved completely because our school was too small to set up two general classes. Separating the class into two groups on Wednesday, Thursday and every other Friday was the best the school could do.

5.3.2 Unfriendly atmosphere in class

The second problem concerning the students’ feelings was a feud between two groups of students in class in the beginning of the term. It started to emerge as early as WeekB1.

I class, I have many friends from [a certain country]. They always speak in their language. Their classmate doesn’t understand. Sometimes I hate them because they always speak in their language with each other. (AW3 Diary WeekB1)

Another student complained of the same issue in WeekB2 in her diary. I understood their irritation. Those students, that is, AM2, AM3, AW1 and BS1, talked excessively to each other in their language when they were supposed to practise English in groups or pairs, and while the teacher was explaining something to class, although other teachers and I often told them to stop it. The teachers discussed this and decided on some measures; for example the students had to raise their hands whenever they wanted to speak in their language, otherwise they were not allowed to, and so forth. The teachers became very strict on first language use in class, but those students kept using their language in class until the end of the term. Fortunately, however, I saw an improvement in the friendship between the two groups of students
in WeekB5. AS4, AW3 and BS1 began to get along well in class and during the break, and I also found that AS4, AW3 and AM2 had gone out together on weekend (casual conversation WeekB6).

5.3.3 Textbook issue

The third problem I experienced was concerned about the textbook. As described in 5.1, two continuing students, AM3 and AW1, were to use the same textbook again in Term B.

I’m not happy. It’s boring. I did the book. It’s not new. It’s boring. My feeling up, down. (AW1 Interview WeekB2)

AM3 and AW1 had already used *English file intermediate*, originally assigned as a core textbook for Term B, as they had been studying at our institute for more than two terms. When these two students had started studying with us (AW1 had studied in a beginner’s class before he joined us), they were not at the level of the textbook. Because our school was small and there was only one general English class, they were in the same class with stronger students. That they stayed in the same class for more than two terms does not mean that they made no progress. Their language skills did improve, but not enough to move to an academic class, Certificate III, which they were hoping to do. I regarded their complaints as reasonable but assigning a different textbook was beyond my decision making ability as a teacher.

I therefore decided to use supplementary material from a website instead of the textbook as the main material for Monday afternoon. Another teacher still used the textbook; therefore the new students AS4, AW3 and BS1 had an opportunity to use the book which they had purchased.

Once we started practising this, AW1 stopped complaining about the textbook, but the weekly lesson became less structured than it should have been. I was using the website resources and the workbook, hardly using the textbook itself. Students were confused about the inconsistency in lessons over the week for a while (casual conversation with AS4, AW3, and BW1 WeekB4) and needed some time until they got used to the new way the teachers conducted lessons.
5.3.4 Final feedback from students

Although the atmosphere in class improved and the textbook issue seemed settled as the term progressed, it was doubtful that students were satisfied with their situation in general. When third party interviews were conducted in WeekB8 and WeekB9, AS4, AW1 and BS1 still expressed their unhappiness about their learning environment (for details see sections 6.4, 6.8 and 6.11 respectively). Also, when we wrote an essay about a good English lesson jointly as a class in Week9B (for the whole essay see Appendix E and for the writing process see the accompanying CD), students produced several sentences which could be interpreted as criticism towards their course.

Regarding this essay writing practice in WeekB9, I was the one who benefited most from this session since the students’ writing was full of information about what they wanted for their study. The task was “Describe a good English lesson for you. Use your experience to support your opinions.” As important elements for a good English lesson they listed good teachers, exciting activities and supportive atmosphere. They wanted a good teacher and described the characteristics of a good teacher as being able to teach clearly enough to make students understand quickly using concise explanations and examples.

Although this was at the end of the term and it was not possible to implement plans to improve my teaching as responses to their opinions, I wanted to know whether or not students regarded my behaviours as those of a good teacher. I wanted to know what kind of picture they drew of a good teacher because my journey to becoming a good teacher would continue after this project.

On ThuWeekB10, I candidly asked students to give me advice and suggestions so that I could become a good teacher. I was confident that our relationship was good enough for me to ask this and I strongly believed that students would give me honest answers even if they might hurt.

When I asked BW1 and BW2 what I should do to become a good teacher they said that there was one thing I could change in my teaching, the level of homework. Sometimes homework was too difficult for them, and I fully accepted this. The homework which they found difficult was for the Monday class when all students
studied together. Although I lowered the achievement level on Monday, what we did in class was still challenging for these two students. I gave homework which I thought would help them to prepare for the class in advance, but in fact they did not find it helpful because it was too difficult to complete at home by themselves. This was another incident which made me realise my view could be totally different from students’ and how important asking students for their opinions about their lessons was.

On that afternoon, I gave the students a discussion topic; “Has Mikiko motivated you to study English? If yes, what and how has she done? Describe some examples to support your opinions. If no, what should Mikiko do to motivate you? Do you have any suggestions and advice to help Mikiko to become a good teacher?” Students looked amused when they read the topic. They soon started to tell me what they thought. My discoveries in this session are below.

a. AS4, AW1, AW3 and BS2 did not like playing games.

b. AW3 said that I explained a lot about grammar in the beginning of Term A but the explanations about grammar decreased and she felt more comfortable.

c. AS4, AM3, AW3, BS1 and BS2 said doing homework every week was good.

d. AS4, AW3, BS1 and BS2 liked taking small tests in class, especially listening tests on Monday, because they were able to assess their levels.

e. BS2 thought a friendly atmosphere which I created helpful. The atmosphere in class seemed extremely important for him.

f. AS4, AW3 and BS2 said that the teacher’s attitude towards students’ learning influenced students’ feelings. When the teacher neglected students’ questions and interests, they felt bad. On the other hand, when the teacher answered their questions in class, they felt pleased. And they assured me that I had done this.

g. AS4, AW1, AW3 and BS2 wanted their teacher to explain things clearly. Teachers’ skills to use examples effectively were important for them. BS2 said that there were two important Es; explanations and examples.
h. BS2 suggested that I set up ‘serious time’ and ‘fun time’ in class, meaning that students had to listen to the teacher’s explanations very seriously, and then they could have relaxed communicative activities as fun time in one session.

i. AW3 said she wanted more written feedback from teachers. AS4 agreed with her. They said that they could not assess their own levels and progress accurately. Teachers should help students to assess their skills and give advice how to improve weak areas.

To sum up, students considered a good teacher to be one who had expert power, referent power and coercive power among teacher power (Teven and Herring, 2002; see section 2.5). Throughout the term I had tried hard to accommodate their needs by consciously using two kinds of teacher power, expert and referent power, and fortunately and thankfully students agreed with my choice of teacher power. I reluctantly had to use coercive power in order to attempt behaviour modification. I was not keen on using this power much because I knew that the previous research proved that teachers’ controlling behaviour had a negative relation to learner motivation (Noel, 2003; Teven and Herring, 2002). However, the use of coercive power was received positively by my students, as can be seen in the point (c) above although long term benefits were not measured in this study. Referent power understandably worked on their affective domain, but why did coercive power positively affect their feelings? This will be discussed in the following section.

5.3.5 Reflection on students’ feelings

In Term B I used coercive power by giving students the challenging reading homework regularly (see also sections 5.2.1 and 5.2.3) even though I had known that use of coercive power was received by students negatively. The reasons why I chose to use it were:

- to prepare students for the next lesson,
- to provide students with opportunities to make more effort (e.g. reading itself, looking up the dictionary, and organising their vocabulary book),
- to help students develop metacognitive skills, such as time management, study and organizational skills.
As we saw in section 4.4, reading at home for class had various advantages over reading in class. I was aware of the importance of consistency of homework and that the purpose of the homework had to be understood by students. Reading homework was given to students almost every week constantly and I explained why they needed it. Therefore, students must have understood the value, that is, its importance and usefulness. Also they were likely to feel a sense of attainment because they were able to discuss a question provided by completing and understanding the content of the homework. When students find a task interesting, important and useful, they engage in the task more (Wigfield and Guthrie, 1995) and experiencing success is motivating in the language classroom (William and Burden, 1997). For these reasons my students presumably thought that homework was good even though they were forced to do it by the teacher. Moreover, some students admitted that they got lazy without knowing how to beat their laziness (discussion in WeekB8, AW3 Interview WeekB3). Homework given by me prevented them from being lazy. Thus homework helped most of the students study at home. They wanted it and appreciated it. That is why my students’ comments on the homework did not agree with the previous research (Boekaerts, 2001; Noels, 2003; Stribling, 2003; Teven & Herring, 2002). A similar case can be found in Yang’s (2005) study of students who were all adults and studying ESL in the U.S. They welcomed homework and ‘to be pushed’ in spite of their busy schedules.

As for expert power, it can be speculated that it works on students’ feelings if (1) the teacher shows enthusiasm to pass on the knowledge which students want to acquire, and (2) the teacher takes students’ learning seriously and successfully conveys his/her seriousness to students. Knowledge here is not only about English but also the teacher’s assessment on students’ language skills and suggestions on how to improve on them, as students said that they could not measure their levels properly as in item (i) in 5.3.4 above, which meant they lacked certain metacognitive knowledge about their language skills.

Language learning is complex. It is not only cognitive and metacognitive but affective as well. Understanding how students feel and what they want is essential so as to make lessons motivating. Students’ perspectives are often different from those of the teacher’s (Bada & Okan, 2000; Hanh, 2005 p. 159; McDonough, 2002 p. 406; Nunan, 1989). I had had a fixed idea that students disliked taking tests until it turned
out that students wanted to take one in Week 5B (section 5.2.1). Students saw
interviews in a different light from how I did, not as a research tool, but claiming that
interviews were good opportunities for them to talk about their study with the teacher
(section 4.7). Without communicating with students I would not have learned their
points of view.

During Term B, I felt how important and difficult communication between students
and myself was. The teacher sometimes needs to talk with students and persuade
them to do or dissuade them from doing certain things. A trustworthy relationship
between students and the teacher helps the teacher to create motivating activities, to
help students’ metacognitive development and eventually learner autonomy. One of
the three ways to foster learner autonomy is persuasive communication (Thanasoulas,
2000), where the teacher presents information and arguments to change students’
evaluation of a situation, task, themselves and so on. As I mentioned in the
metacognitive skill development section (section 5.2.3), I was not fully confident of
dealing with students’ unrealistic perceptions about their learning.

Students gave me a lot of feedback, which was a blessing. To say the least, I
managed to build a trustworthy relationship with them to this extent. In the future, I
must proceed further to be able to conduct persuasive communication with students
within less than ten weeks. My exploration will continue and I am hoping to find
ways to manage it successfully.

5.4 Motivational fluctuation in Term B

This section examines the relation between class activities and state motivation in
Term B. By the end of Term A, class activities seemed to affect students’ effort
while external factors seemed to have a strong influence on their attitude and desire.
Term B, in fact, confused me more than Term A.
As in Term A, state motivation in Term B did not show a clear decline according to the feedback forms. In spite of the different activities on Monday and Thursday, state motivation as a whole class was not affected by them. On Monday, achievement levels were lower, activities were easier, and strong students had to help weak students in some ways, all of which nevertheless seemed to have no impact on state motivation.

When it comes to individual students, however, some students showed great motivational fluctuation (for individual differences see Chapter 6). It can be said that class activities had an influence on state motivation of some students but it was not the case with the other students according to the feedback form.

My observations too led me to an ambivalent answer to the question, “What kind of activities is motivating?” Choosing effective activities was a challenge. Asking students for their preferences was one way, but as a practising teacher, I wanted to choose activities in which I believed students would be actively engaged by myself as well. However, one activity which I believed would work well fell flat (my observation WeekMonB8). This activity, a panel interview with classmates suggested by AS1, was very popular in Term A, and I thought it would be great as a get-to-know-each-other activity since we had new students as of WeeksB5 and B6, and it was new to several continuing students (AS4, BS1, BW1 and BW2). On the
contrary, students were not keen on the activity in that they mostly looked at each other silently instead of asking questions, and as a result I needed to cut it short. Just like the fixed idea about students taking a listening test described in 5.2.1, I inadvertently held the idea that students would enjoy the activity due to the experience in the previous term, but it turned out to be wrong in Term B.

Even when students told me what kind of activity they wanted and I delivered it, not all students were satisfied. Students were indeed different in their preferences for activities and interviews revealed more information about how students felt about class activities. In WeekB9 we did writing practice. I did this practice because AS4, AM3, AW1 and BS1 said the writing class which they had had with another teacher was confusing or too difficult and wanted me to teach a basic procedure of essay writing. I obtained permission from the other teacher to teach the fundamentals of essay writing and taught them step by step as class work. We did brainstorming, planning, wrote an essay, and edited it jointly (see the accompanying CD). Naturally, those students who had asked me to do it were happy with the lesson, but one student thought it ineffective. He was confident of his grasp of essay writing and wanted to do more advanced practice. During the interview, he told me that he wanted to write his own essay by himself, instead of practising together in class. Interestingly and confusingly, his state motivation in his feedback form on that day was higher than usual, but he was not particularly satisfied with the activity.

In Term B as well as Term A, students referred to motivating and demotivating factors outside the classroom. The demotivating factors were a visa application and a part-time job, and a motivating factor was experiencing success in communicating with people (interviews Weeks2B, 3B, 7B and a casual conversation Week7B), all of which had been already mentioned by the students in Term A.

Thus, it was likely that class activities insignificantly affected state motivation as a class in Term B. What students wrote in their essay in WeekB9 could explain why class activities were not strongly influential on their state motivation. They wrote that a good English lesson required a good teacher, good activities and a good class atmosphere. For them, class activities were as important as the teacher and the atmosphere. They might have had holistic views on a motivating English class and this was along the same lines as AS2’s comments WeekA9 (section 6.2). Students
seemed to evaluate their class as a package, and class activities merely constituted one of those elements.
Chapter 6

Individual students
Chapter 6 Individual students

Chapter 4 gave a broad overview of the way in which our lessons were conducted in order to motivate students describing several action research cycles which focused on specific issues in class by using a range of data during Term A. Chapter 5 described action research cycles in Term B which were implemented to motivate students, and how I tried to help students develop metacognitive skills. Another important issue in Term B, which was students’ feelings and how I dealt with them, was also discussed.

In this chapter, I re-examine the data through individual students in both terms. The purpose of it is to show how motivation of each individual student changed over the course along with the changes in my teaching. All of the subjects are discussed because their number is not large and it provides as much information as possible. First the stories of students who started in Term A are described, and then students who started in Term B.

This chapter is far longer than any other chapters in this thesis. Although the project was conducted over two terms, there is no convenient way to divide this chapter into two. One reason for it is that five students out of fourteen studied across the two terms. Secondly, students were so idiosyncratic that it is not possible to categorise students into two groups. In any case, the story of each student can be read independently and therefore there should not be any difficulties or complications for understanding the lived experience of each student.

The stories begin with strong students, move to middle students and finish with weak students. This order is chosen because previous studies state that students’ achievement levels are related to fluctuations of motivation (Gardner, 2004; 2005). That is, strong students tend to keep motivated whereas weak students tend to lose motivation over the course of time. The data from my students did not conform to that reported in previous studies as can be seen below.

The line graph in each student’s section shows their fluctuations in state motivation according to the feedback form which they filled out after my lessons twice a week, on Monday and Thursday. The results of two questionnaires are shown in a table, where the changes in students’ trait motivation can be seen.
6.1 AS1’s story

AS1 was a young male Asian student. He had studied in the general class two terms before Term A. He took and passed the admission test to an academic class, and then completed Certificate III successfully. He was supposed to move up to Certificate IV, but he decided to come back to the general English class. The reason was that he had not been able to do what he wanted in Certificate III, which had a fixed curriculum and plenty of reading and writing homework. He was aware that his weaknesses were oral skills and he wanted to focus on them while he was studying in the general class.

He was obviously far more advanced than other students in the class, and I was worried that he might be bored. However, he told me that he did not think the class was too easy for him and that other students were far weaker than him (interview WeekA2). In WeekA1 students wrote an essay about the reasons why they studied (see Appendix E).

He was well focused on what he wanted to do with English. He participated in speaking activities more actively than before Term A. That is probably because he knew that he had to speak a lot in order to improve his speaking skills as he wrote in his essay. AS1 paid attention to his mastery of oral skills rather than comparing them with those of other students. His attitude agrees with Ames (1992), which states that students who have mastery goals will be more likely to maintain positive learning attitudes.

Since he was eager to improve his oral skills quickly, he occasionally expressed frustration over his progress:

Today I feel a slump. Of course it is about my study. Even though I have been studying English 4 months I cannot feel any improvement by myself. But I am going to change my mind to come out of a slump. To put another way, I am going to studying English by enjoying. (Diary WeekA4)

This sort of frustration is common among intermediate students like AS1 (Disick, 1972; Mills, Pajares, & Herron, 2004). At their level, they do not have major difficulties in every day life in Australia. Their English is functional enough to conduct day-to-day activities, such as shopping and making an appointment with a
doctor. However, misunderstanding occurs rather often because of wrong word choices, misuse of tenses and so forth, which I assume AS1 experienced with frustration. Naturally, he wanted to do more speaking activities in class. In WeekA4, he suggested we should do a panel interview in class and I agreed. This activity was popular among students, and consequently we continued it for four weeks until several students appeared to be tired of it.

AS1 started sensing the differences between his level and that of the other students, as can be seen from a comment he made in WeekA5:

I find grammar sessions too easy and boring. We should do more challenging tasks even though some students won’t understand. They have to study. You spend too much time on basic grammar.

I go to library every day after class. I stay there until it closes. Even on Sunday I go there. Saturday is my only day off. I listen to English and try to repeat after it. (Interview WeekA5)

The reasons behind his dissatisfaction were two-fold. It goes without saying that his language level was far higher than the other students. The other reason was that he was an extremely independent learner and he felt annoyed by the other students not making an effort to understand basic grammar rules for themselves.

I endeavoured to use him as a model of an active, independent learner in a discussion, as leading students to learner autonomy was one of the issues in Term A. During the discussion about study skills in WeekA6, I asked him how he studied grammar. He advised his classmates to use bilingual grammar books. He thought it was easier to understand grammar rules when he read them in his own language. Sharing study skills with other students was useful for both AS1 and the other students. While he was able to express himself verbally, which he always wanted to do, the other students received advice about how to study grammar rules by themselves.

Meanwhile, I was experimenting with my grammar sessions by reducing my explanations and increasing communicative activities. He noticed the changes and commented as below:

Grammar sessions are better than before. (Interview WeekA6)
It’s good. Today’s one is good. (Interview WeekA8)

On the both days in WeekA6 and A8, grammar sessions were a mixture of teacher-centred instructions and student-centred communicative activities. I was in the middle of trial-and-error with regard to how to teach grammar and his positive comments were rewarding.

In WeekA7, his desire, one of the components of motivation, dropped drastically, as can be seen in the line graph below.

![Figure 6.1 Fluctuation of state motivation of AS1](image)

In WeekA7 students took a listening test for the second time in Term A. Although his score was the second best in class, he was extremely dissatisfied with the result (72%: see Table 4.4 in section 4.5). When I tried to collect his answer sheet, he insisted that a general class should not have an exam. I explained to him that it was a test, not an examination, and taking a test occasionally helped students see their levels and progress. Even so, he was very hesitant to submit his answer sheet. After class he expressed strong negativity about the test. This was interesting because the test itself was far easier than the first one which students had taken in WeekA2, and when he took that one he commented in the feedback form that the test was good because it was important. On the other hand, in WeekA7 he said to me, “I’m disappointed with myself. I don’t have exam skills”. He told me that he understood the passages and questions but he could not use exam skills properly, such as taking
notes and reading questions before listening to the tape, and that was why he could not perform well. His score was not bad at all and I did not understand why he was so discouraged. Whatever the reasons behind his dismay might be, for the last question in the feedback form, ‘Did you want to study English more during the lesson?’ he marked two for his desire to learn English in the eleven-point Likert scale (0 means “not at all” and 10 means “I wanted to study more”) It was obvious that the activity affected one of three components of state motivation, desire, very negatively.

On ThuWeekA6 and MonWeekA8, he scored only five for all three components. He gave me a clear explanation in WeekA8 as follows:

My mind isn’t here today. I went to DIMIA (Department of Immigration Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs) this morning. I’m worried about my visa. Also, I’m not sure about my future plans. My friend said that Cairns is good for people from my country. Do you know James Cook University? I’m thinking of going there. I want to study for TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication) or TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language).

(Interview WeekA8)

On the other hand, the reasons behind his relatively low motivation in WeekA6 were unknown. The main focus on ThuWeekA6 was how to form an interrogative sentence. While some students struggled with this activity, AS1’s grammar was very strong and it is understandable that he did not enjoy it, made little effort and did not want to study on that day. But he did not choose this activity as ‘not good’. To the contrary, he made a positive comment on my grammar lesson, as noted earlier (Interview WeekA6).

Thus, it is difficult to decide to what extent his state motivation was affected by activities. He clearly stated himself that, “Actually, there is no connection between my own study and class activities” (Interview WeekA9). However, his state motivation was definitely influenced by at least one activity, the listening test in WeekA7, according to the feedback form and my observation. Moreover, he responded to the changes I made in activities, gave me feedback and made suggestions. Below is what he said during the interview in WeekA9 when I asked him to compare my lessons in Term A with those of two terms before:
It’s better now. You didn’t teach essay writing before. Also, this term you seem to know the purpose of lesson. You write our target on the whiteboard. You have to be flexible but being flexible all the time isn’t good. You should know what we have to learn and you should have a fixed structure. (Interview WeekA9)

What he thought good about my teaching agrees with results of previous research. I made lesson more interesting and accommodated their needs by doing essay writing activity (Dörnyei and Csizer, 1998; Ryan and Deci, 2000). I tried to increase the learners’ goal orientation by writing lesson objectives on the board before starting lessons (Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Harris, 1991; Huitt, 2001). Thus he found my lessons better than before, but that might not have been influential enough to affect his motivation. Activities and lesson content were perhaps partially motivating or demotivating and may sometimes have affected his state motivation, but not always.

As for his trait motivation, in his second questionnaire AS1 showed great decline in all the components and orientations compared with his initial questionnaire. In Part A of the questionnaires, the three components of motivation, attitude, effort and desire, are measured by a five-Likert scale, one as ‘I strongly disagree’ and five as ‘I strongly agree’, as well as integrative and instrumental motives. An arrow shows the changes from WeekA2 to WeekA10. Unchanged scores, such as the first item in ‘attitude’, do not show an arrow.

Table 6.1 AS1 Results of questionnaires Part A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>component</th>
<th>statement (Those marked * are negative and thus the scale 5 to 1 corresponds to the scale 1 to 5 used for positive statements.)</th>
<th>change from WeekA2 to A10:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attitude</td>
<td>I really enjoy learning English.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I hate English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Learning English is a waste of time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effort</td>
<td>I like doing homework.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I speak English at home.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I study English at home every day.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t try to understand more difficult English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t pay attention to feedback from my teacher.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
desire
*I really have no desire to learn English. 4 ← 1
I want to spend more time learning English. 3

integrative orientation
I study English to talk with more and different people. 4 ← 5

instrumental orientation
Learning English is really useful. 4
I study English to get a good job. 3 ← 5

In Part B of the second questionnaire he said:

- I enjoy studying English more than WeekA1,
- I study English more than WeekA1 but I still don’t study enough,
- I want to study English more than WeekA1 because it is useful.

As can be seen, his responses to Part A and Part B clearly contradicted each other.

From interviews and class observations, I did not think he had lost his motivation. He participated in activities more eagerly than before Term A and he agreed with my observation during the interview.

Q. You are a very independent and active learner. When did you start being independent?

A. This term [Term A]. I wasn’t independent when I was in this class before.
And I couldn’t do what I wanted to do when I was in Cert III. I was too busy doing the assignments. (Interview WeekA7)

Q. You said you weren’t independent or active before moving to Cert III. Now you are very independent. What happened when you were in Cert III?

A. I didn’t learn to be independent in Cert III. Actually, I was very uncomfortable in Cert III because there were many excellent, smart students [I interpreted ‘excellent’ and ‘smart’ as strong at oral skills]. So, I wanted to improve my speaking but I didn’t have my own time in Cert III. So, I ran away from it. I came back to General. (Interview WeekA9)

His remarks clearly show his strong desire to study English, and he stated during the interview in WeekA5 that he went to the campus library to study there almost every day. I sometimes bumped into him in the library after school and over the weekend, so I knew he studied there. Therefore, at least he made continuous effort and kept strong desire to study English, which are two components of motivation. As
explained above, being an intermediate student, he was likely to feel frustrated over his seemingly slow progress and his frustration might have affected the self-reporting questionnaire, whereas he did not seem demotivated to me at all.

6.2 AS2’s story

AS2 is a young male Asian student. He started studying with us in WeekA1, took the admission test and moved to Certificate IV after WeekA10.

The first impression AS2 made on the general English teachers was not brilliant. The other teachers and I thought that he was a lazy student, although as the term progressed I changed my view of him. His behaviour changed especially in later weeks and he gave an external reason for this, as discussed later in this section.

He took the admission test on MonWeekA1 and he was on the border between the academic and general course. He tried Certificate III for one afternoon and decided that he was not ready to study academic English yet. His oral skills were strong, while he needed to work on his writing skills to move up to Certificate III with confidence.

The essay which he wrote in WeekA1 under the topic “Why do you study English?” showed that his motivational orientation was instrumental and extrinsic (for his essay see Appendix E).

He kept a diary and submitted it every week. When I advised students to decide on their own homework and keep record of it in their diaries, AS2 was one of the two students that started it immediately.

We had argued in class about the only child and if you have brother/sister. I think it’s a debate. And I think AS1’s group is more better than us. He is doing well with AW3 and AM2. Maybe I need practice again about argue and debate.

My weekly homework,

- Talking with my cousin and his girlfriend and his friends in English because they can’t speak Indonesian.

- Watching video at [AS2’s cousin’s] flat maybe about 1.5-2 hours in English without text. (Diary WeekA3)
AS2 wrote not only about his personal homework but also described what he had done in class. I was pleased to see that he was able to reflect on his learning, but at the same time I wondered if he was capable of regulating it. Obviously he did not mind doing listening and speaking activities outside of class, whereas his weakness was writing, and he could have done more writing than what he did every day in his diary. However, when I asked him what activities he wanted to do more of in class, he chose speaking activities:

I want more speaking practice. At home I speak a lot in English because speaking is important for me. (Interview WeekA5)

Somehow he believed speaking was important, but not writing. On ThuWeekA6 I also found that he had an individual view on studying grammar. On that afternoon we had a discussion whose aim was to have students think about their own learning. Below was the task:

James is from Taiwan and he studies English in Darwin.

He is interested in speaking. He especially likes talking with his friends in English. On the other hand, he does not like studying grammar. His grammar is not good, so he should study it. But he does not want to do it.

Could you give him advice?

During the discussion in groups, I heard AS2 saying that grammar was necessary only for writing, not for speaking. This intrigued me because his grammar was not so bad, and he did a great presentation on gerunds with AS1 on ThuWeekA5. I wondered how he had learned grammar and I interviewed him about it the next day.

Q. How did you study English grammar?

AS2: I don’t know…. When I was at school in my country, my academic record was really bad. When I study grammar at desk, I can study only for 10 minutes. I forget. But when I watch TV or talk with my friends, I can remember more.

Q. So, you absorb grammar rules like a sponge.

AS2: I think so.
Q. How do you feel in the grammar class on Thursday morning and grammar sessions in the afternoon? Do you feel sleepy or bored?

AS2: No, because you combine grammar and other exercises. So it’s OK.

Q. What about writing? I know you practise a lot of speaking outside class. Do you want to practise writing as well, because you are going to go to university in Australia?

AS2: No. I don’t want to practise writing. I know speaking and writing is important, but I don’t know… (Interview WeekA6)

This excerpt shows that he learned grammar through watching TV and communication with people. Students are different in their learning styles. His responses taught me that mixing various types of activities was important to accommodate different learner styles and preferences.

Although AS2 was not keen on practising writing, we did essay writing practice in WeekA7, A8 and A9 in response to a request from other students. Interestingly, AS2 did not show any dislike for this activity.

Q. What do you think about writing practice on Thursday?

AS2: Writing essays is useful. Now that I decided to practise more writing, this class is good. I want to improve my writing. (Interview WeekA8)

I wondered whether anything significant had happened to AS2 or not. Two weeks before this interview, he had not been interested in practising writing. On ThuWeekA9, we did another writing practice. He completed the task and did an extra writing task at home voluntarily as well. I interviewed him in WeekA9:

Q. You look different. You look more focused and concentrated. Why?

AS2: Because I’m going to take IELTS (International English Language Testing System). What score do you think I can get?

Q. Your listening is great. Your speaking is OK. You need to practise writing more. I’m not sure about your reading skills. Have you tried IELTS reading tasks?

AS2: No.

Q. Shall I give you some reading practice for the test?
AS2: Yes. [I gave him some reading practice the next day]

Q. Do you think our writing lesson on Thursday is useful for you?

AS2: Yes very useful.

Q. Now, you can think about your study and work on your problem [I meant his writing skills]. Did you do that when you were in your country?

AS2: No. I was very lazy in my country. I was always sleepy. When I came to Darwin, my English was very low. I don’t know why I changed.

Q. Does your class help you?

AS2: I always like to come to class. It’s always exciting.

Q. Do you like any particular activities?

AS2: No. Not only activities. Everything. My classmates, teachers. If teachers are boring, all activities are boring. If teachers are exciting, the same activities are exciting.

What AS2 said here is that he saw the class as a whole but not class activities as a separate factor to motivate him. Throughout Term A, he never expressed dissatisfaction with the lessons. As for the feedback form, from WeekA3 onward he chose all activities as ‘good’ activities. It seemed that he was totally happy with the class.

![Figure 6.2 Fluctuation of state motivation of AS2](image-url)
As the line graph shows, his state motivation was relatively high during the term. He kept saying and writing in his diary that the class was ‘lovely’. He got along with his classmates so well that the class must have been comfortable for him. Also, he said that combining my explanation about grammar and speaking or writing activities, in which the grammar rules were used, was good because he did not like studying grammar at a desk. A pleasant and supportive atmosphere is an important factor for learner motivation (Brewster and Fager, 2000; Stribling, 2003). Providing a variety of activities is also regarded as a motivating teacher’s action (Huitt 2001). How AS2 perceived my class agrees with previous research findings. Therefore, class activities may not have motivated AS2, but they definitely did not demotivate him.

Below are the results of AS2’s first and second questionnaire.

Table 6.2 AS2 Results of questionnaires Part A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>component</th>
<th>statement</th>
<th>change from WeekA2 to A10:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Those marked * are negative and thus the scale 5 to 1 corresponds to the scale 1 to 5 used for positive statements.)</td>
<td>1  2  3  4  5 *(5  4  3  2  1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attitude</td>
<td>I really enjoy learning English.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I hate English.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Learning English is a waste of time.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effort</td>
<td>I like doing homework.</td>
<td>3→4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I speak English at home.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I study English at home every day.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t try to understand more difficult English.</td>
<td>2→1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t pay attention to feedback from my teacher.</td>
<td>3→ 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desire</td>
<td>I want to spend more time learning English.</td>
<td>4→5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I really have no desire to learn English.</td>
<td>2→1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>integrative orientation</td>
<td>I study English to talk with more and different people.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instrumental orientation</td>
<td>Learning English is really useful.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I study English to get a good job.</td>
<td>4→5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Part B, AS2 wrote:

- I enjoy studying English more than WeekA1 because every week I get better,
- I study English more than Week 1 because now I’m improving my English a lot,

- I want to study English more because I have to study a lot.

As an extra comment, he wrote “General English was lovely class. I’ll never forget this class”.

His responses to both Part A and B showed that he kept highly motivated throughout Term A, and this agrees with my observations and interviews as well. There were probably two main reasons for this. On the one hand, he was contented with the lessons during the term. On the other, his decision to take IELTS helped him internalise his extrinsic orientation and as a result he started to make more effort to improve his writing skills.

6.3 AS3’s story

AS3 is a young male Asian student. He started in WeekA5, took the admission test and moved to Certificate IV in WeekB1. He finished in WeekB4.

Because AS3 started in the middle of Term A, I asked him why he studied English during an interview session instead of essay writing, which had been conducted in WeekA1. First of all, he thought that studying English would be beneficial for his future career in addition to his undergraduate study, international relations. Second, he wanted to understand other cultures.

He was strong in grammar and reading, whereas his oral skills were not as good, which he was aware of:

My listening level is low, so I want to do more listening activities. My reading is also low. I feel more motivated than last week because I have made more friends and I want to talk with them. (Interview WeekA6)

I did not think he needed to spare a lot of time for reading skills in particular, so I advised him to merely read passages in the textbook at home for preparation and revision. For his listening, I suggested that he listen to tapes outside class every day because he should work on these skills far more than any other skills. He could use a tape player in the classroom before or after class. He was happy with this arrangement and the next day he started implementing it.
He had a positive attitude toward learning English, and most of all toward living in an English speaking environment. He often expressed his enjoyment of his life in Australia in his diary:

I went fishing with my friends. I spent a very enjoyable time. I think I talk to a lot of people and that is a good way to improve my conversation skills. (Diary WeekA6)

I think living in [an on-campus student residence] is very pleasing because I can meet various country people. Maybe, making friends is most meaningful for me. (Diary WeekA7)

He also made constant effort informally and formally. He mingled with other students living in the same accommodation and studied in the library by himself.

I studied all day today. I prepare for tomorrow’s lesson and review today’s lesson. I think these two things are very important. (Diary WeekA8)

He understood what to do in order to improve his language skills. The following excerpt shows that he had well developed metacognitive skills:

Q. What kind of study do you do outside of class?

AS3: I read the textbook, and hand-outs for revision. I talk to friends in English and email in English. (Interview WeekA7)

He seemed to make the best use of the material we used in class, while other students often lost their hand-outs or never looked at the same material for revision once we finished it. He wanted to improve his reading and listening skills, and he worked on them outside class.

Writing sentences using the grammar rules is better than speaking because I can see my mistakes. (Interview WeekA8)

He responded to me as above when I asked him for his opinions about the ways I taught grammar rules. It can be said that he knew how to monitor his learning and what to do in order to efficiently acquire grammar rules. Furthermore, he showed that he was capable of using self-regulation. He perceived that his listening skills were not strong and started practising listening more outside class in WeekA6. Then in WeekA9 he saw a movie and understood most of the story, which surely gave him
confidence. Accordingly, he decided to set up another goal for his study, understanding the movie without subtitles.

I went to see a movie with my classmates. The title is Ten Canoes. It was very hard to understand for me yet. But I think I understood most of the story. I want to understand the movie without subtitles up to details. I think this is one of my goals to study English. (Diary WeekA9)

His comments in the interviews, diary and my observation suggested that, he always had a positive attitude toward learning English, made constant effort and showed strong desire to learn English. His feedback form supported this. His state motivation was high and stable, as the line graph below shows.

![Figure 6.3 Fluctuation of state motivation of AS3](image)

Whether class activities sustained his high state motivation or not is, however, uncertain. On his feedback form, he chose several activities as ‘not good’; most were activities on grammar and his reason was usually ‘easy’. He also stated that grammar activities were too easy for him during the interview in WeekA7. While he was in the general class, we did six grammar activities and he characterised five of them as ‘not good’ and the reason was ‘easy’ for four of the five activities. He did not prefer student presentations on grammar on Thursday morning because he found the approach inefficient. On the other hand, he enjoyed a speaking activity in which students interviewed their classmates (as suggested by AS1), and he found listening
activities useful and important. Hence, overall, he did not seem to be particularly happy or unhappy with the class.

The most plausible reason behind his high state motivation was the fact that he was in an English speaking country. He enjoyed meeting and talking with people from other countries in order to understand other cultures and expand his views, even though he mentioned this as a secondary motive when I interviewed him in WeekA5. Being in Australia gave him great pleasure and stimulus. Class activities seem to have been far less important for him than communicating with people in English.

AS3 studied with us only for six weeks, and his trait motivation showed little change in his responses to the two questionnaires.

Table 6.3 Results of questionnaires Part A AS3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>component</th>
<th>statement</th>
<th>change from WeekA5 to A10: 1 2 3 4 5 *(5 4 3 2 1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>attitude</td>
<td>I really enjoy learning English.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I hate English.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Learning English is a waste of time.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effort</td>
<td>I like doing homework.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I speak English at home.</td>
<td>4→5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I study English at home every day.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t try to understand more difficult English.</td>
<td>2→1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t pay attention to feedback from my teacher.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desire</td>
<td>I want to spend more time learning English.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I really have no desire to learn English.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>integrative orientation</td>
<td>I study English to talk with more and different people.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instrumental orientation</td>
<td>Learning English is really useful.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I study English to get a good job.</td>
<td>4→5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even so, in Part B he responded:

- I enjoy studying English more than WeekA5 because I feel my English is improving.
- I study English more than WeekA5 because I enjoy studying English.
• I want to study English more than WeekA5 because I want to know more about another culture.

Although his responses in Part A and B did not agree, the changes in Part A were so marginal that it can be said that his high motivation was sustained for six weeks. However, what sustained his motivation was probably not the classes he attended. As he mentioned in his diary, being in an English speaking environment stimulated his aspiration to improve his language skills. He also said during an interview after he completed his study (Interview WeekB4), “…best of all, I’m so happy about being in Australia. I enjoy the most that I can meet and talk with many people from different countries”.

AS3 said that he had not been active or independent when he was studying English in his country (Interview WeekA8). Whereas he did not have to speak English outside of class in his country, in Australia he had to use English for every day life, which provided him the relevance and value of learning English. Usefulness is motivating (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002; Pintrich, 2003 p 672; Wigfield and Guthrie, 1995). In addition, the pleasure he appreciated in talking with people in English can be a reason underlining his active and independent learning. Thus, usefulness and pleasure kept him motivated. His motive was not truly intrinsic because he regarded the outcome of studying English as a pleasure, rather than studying itself. However, it was integrated regulation, in Ryan and Deci’s (2000) term, which is very close to intrinsic motivation and shares many qualities with it. Active and independent learning is one of the characteristics of intrinsically motivated learners and AS3’s story supports this.

6.4 AS4’s story

AS4 is an older female Asian student. She started in WeekA8, continued to Term B and finished in WeekB10. She was strongly motivated and was conscious about the purpose for her visit to Australia, which was to acquire better English skills.

Although she commenced her study in WeekA8, she wrote an essay about why she studied English. From the essay (see Appendix E) and an ensuing interview, her motivational orientations proved to be instrumental and extrinsic.
AS4 was always serious about her study and her seriousness can be seen in her diary entry below:

My main objective is to studying English. Every day I went to school
Mikiko, sometimes I felt embarrassed if I made the same mistake. I hope you understand because I am forgetful. I could not record well what it has done.

Dear Mikiko,

On Monday and Thursday, if we have time, I propose we are practice speaking. In this moment, you can evaluate our speaking skills and our grammar because when I talk to many people I am always worry about the grammar I used. I am not feel confident to talk with many people. (Diary Week B1)

Because she was dedicated to her study, she sometimes could not tolerate the behaviour of less serious students. As mentioned in section 5.3.2, the atmosphere in class in Term B was not as good as that in Term A. This unfriendly ambience was caused by some students using their first language inappropriately in class, and students who wanted to improve their language skills rapidly, such as AS4, could not put up with it.

I have 10 classmates. They come from 5 different countries. My class are dominated by people from one country. Sometimes I dislike those people because they always made annoyed in the class. They do not fully pay attention to the lesson. Another thing is they always talk in their language in the class… (Diary Week B1)

AS4 was extremely serious about improving her language skills, while not every other student regarded studying English as the top priority in their life in Australia. AS4 shared this seriousness with most of her classmates, so she got along well with these students. However, three students did not appear ardent enough in AS4’s eye as they sometimes did not do homework and were off-task in class. AS4 expressed her frustration over it in the beginning of Term B in her diary as above, during the interviews and casual conversations with me.

I don’t like those students speaking in their own language in class. They do it all the time. It’s difficult to concentrate on English when I hear a different
language. They also eat all the time in class. They are not listening. They don’t pay attention. (Casual conversation WeekB2)

Some students were not interested. They didn’t talk [in a discussion]. All the teachers tell them to speak in English but they still talk in their language. Sometimes I feel strange because only [certain student] and I don’t understand their language in class [on Thursday]. When [the same student] isn’t in class, it’s very uncomfortable because I don’t understand what they are talking about. (Interview WeekB2)

By WeekB5, the atmosphere in class fortunately improved (see 5.3.2) and accordingly AS4 stopped complaining about students from the one country.

While she was irritated in class to some extent, she was well focused on what she needed to do throughout Term B. Even though our class had very different levels of students, most of the time she was not unhappy about it and she knew what she had to work on. I asked her how she felt in class in WeekB2 as I understood that she was eager to improve her language skills as soon as possible and worried about her feelings because of the wide range of levels among students. Her response was positive, as follows:

It’s OK. I still need some basic grammar. I can speak but I know I don’t use correct grammar always. Sometimes I think people laugh at me behind. So, it’s OK. (Interview WeekB2)

Her reinforcement for her study was directly connected to her effort, as can be seen in the following excerpt from the interview;

Q. When do you feel good or happy about your study?

AS4: I do my homework, you look and there are only a few mistakes. Then, I feel good.

Q. When do you feel bad about your study?

AS4: When I make a mistake or I forget words. I feel I must study. I go outside and walk around. I feel refreshed and I can start studying again. In class, I look up my dictionary to remember words. (Interview WeekB3)
AS4 clearly attributed her success in language learning to making effort. Although stressing the importance of making effort is one of the teachers’ essential jobs in order to motivate students (Pintrich, 2003), she had known how important expending effort was without me telling her, which helped her study hard even outside of class.

Furthermore, she had a strong desire to improve her skills. It appeared that she wanted to improve her accuracy even though she was the strongest student in class, and she did not mind making effort to achieve that. This can be interpreted as meaning that she was not performance orientated.

Please correct our speaking. We just talk, talk, talk, but maybe our English is wrong. Please correct our speaking, grammar. I want to learn more expressions, too. (Interview WeekB7)

Her attitude towards learning English was always positive. She clearly saw the benefits of learning English when she started studying with us and she did not show any negativity toward learning the language throughout her study. During a third party interview in WeekB9, she said that she found studying English, which is her fourth language, easier than studying her third language. In addition, she enjoyed the class and said to me during the discussion in WeekB10, “There is nothing you should change. It’s perfect!”

Naturally, all these factors in her state motivation, attitude, effort and desire, were marked relatively high in Term A and B, except Thursday in WeekB1.
On ThuWeekB1, two of the components, attitude and effort, were the lowest. This was most likely to be on account of two easy activities, as both beginners and more advanced students were being taught together and I had not yet come up with a good plan to conduct a lesson. Being the strongest student, AS4 found the lesson too easy, and it is not surprising to see that her state motivation declined.

ThuWeekB1 was the only time I can see the influence of class activities on AS4’s state motivation clearly. Her state motivation was stable in Term B except ThuWeekB1 in spite of the big differences in activities between Monday lessons and Thursday lessons. It can be said that class activities did not have an effect on her state motivation.

Her trait motivation also remained at a high level, as can be seen in Table 6.4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>component</th>
<th>statement (Those marked * are negative and thus the scale 5 to 1 corresponds to the scale 1 to 5 used for positive statements.)</th>
<th>change from WeekA9 to B10: *(5 4 3 2 1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>attitude</td>
<td>I really enjoy learning English.</td>
<td>4→5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I hate English.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Learning English is a waste of time.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effort</td>
<td>I like doing homework.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In Part B, she said:

- I enjoy English study more than WeekA9
- I study English harder than WeekA9
- I want to study English more than WeekA9.

She did not give any reasons for the answers in Part B and I did not have time to interview her after she completed the questionnaire. According to her responses, her trait motivation was sustained at a high level or slightly increased and what she said in the interviews and her diary and what I observed in class supported that. She made constant effort, showed strong desire to improve her language skills, and maintained a positive attitude toward learning English.

Section 5.3.1 noted that AS4 had negative feelings toward the school because of a misunderstanding over the admission test. This did seem to affect either her state or trait motivation. This does not concur with Gardner’s socio-educational model where attitude to learning situation is supposed to affect motivation. She was dissatisfied with the school chiefly due to a misunderstanding concerning the admission test. She thought she had been told that she would stay in the general class in Term A and would move to Certificate III in Term B automatically. She did not realise that she would have to sit for the admission test. When she did not succeed in the test, the school could not make the situation clear to her. She was confused even more by the fact that the school did not run a Certificate III class because nobody achieved the entrance level, except AS2 and AS3, who were good enough to be admitted to
Certificate IV. She mistakenly understood that the school was not going to open Certificate III regardless of the results of the admission test.

She seemed to distinguish our lessons from the school and that is probably why her state motivation was not affected after the admission test and throughout Term B. She thought of her class and the school independently, and therefore she did not reveal how disappointed she was about the school till a third party interview in WeekB9. She told the interviewer, who did not belong to the school, that she appreciated what the teachers did and homework given to her, but she felt that the lessons were not entirely suitable for her.

After the third party interview, in WeekB10, AS4 actually talked to me about her feelings towards the school. During this casual conversation, I managed to change her views about the school in some respect because they were simply incorrect. During our conversation, AS4 attributed lack of progress of one of her classmates to too diverse levels among students in one class. She said that the student had not improved although he had been coming to school for a long time because of the unsuitable level of the class for him. I explained that that particular student had been in fact in the beginners’ class at first and moved to the general English class when he reached the entrance level of the class.

She also suggested that the general English class should have been taught by only one teacher, me, as there would be consistency through the term. I disagreed with her because there are differing levels of compatibility between students and the teacher. She happened to like my approaches but not everybody liked them. If I taught the general class by myself, lessons could be torture for students who did not like my teaching style. Being taught by several different teachers can avoid this kind of risk. After we talked, she understood the benefits of having different teachers.

The open hearted conversation between AS4 and me was beneficial for me because it taught me that misunderstanding could be solved and that persuasive discussion was possible through a casual conversation. I also learned that I should talk with students outside of the class in addition to the regular interview. There is a prerequisite for this, namely a friendly and trustworthy relationship between students and the teacher. AS4 fortunately trusted me as a teacher and listened to me. Therefore, she was
willing to adjust her views after our talk. As discussed in section 5.2.3, I was not fully confident of my relationship with the students. The conversation with AS4 was a rare successful case in communication between students and me, and it took place too late in the term. Even so, later at a staff meeting, I asked the director to have a regular meeting with general English students to talk about various issues that students were concerned about and she agreed with my suggestion. This improvement at the school was realised thanks to AS4.

The casual conversation with AS4 in WeekB10 gave me another piece of important information. She told me what other students had talked about during their third party interviews, but she did not talk about what she herself had said. The way she told me was secretive, as if I had not known the content of the interviews. She did not think that the information obtained through the third party interviews would be passed on to me. This suggests that what she told the interviewer was reliable as she did not worry about the influence of her responses in the interview on me. But this does not imply that the information she gave me during the interviews with me and in her diary was dishonest because the contents during the third party interview and our usual interview sessions were different only in that she had not told me about her dissatisfaction with the course, which was the main thing she told the third party.

AS4’s story is significant because her state and trait motivation was kept high in spite of her disappointment with the course. She was able to think of her class and the course separately and appreciated the usefulness and importance of the class.

**6.5 AM1’s story**

AM1 was a young female European student. She started in WeekA1 and finished in WeekA7 with a one-and-half-week break.

AM1 had a family in Australia and that was why she came to this country. Visiting her parents was a primary reason and studying English was incidental to it. Her parents suggested and she agreed to come to school every day for six weeks and three days, with a break in WeekA3.

In WeekA1, she wrote an essay on why she studied English (see Appendix E) and it revealed that her initial motivational orientations were integrative, instrumental and extrinsic. Although she did not come to Australia to study English, in class she
showed strong motivational behaviour to learn English by enthusiastically engaging in all class activities, and my observations were confirmed by her comments in her diary and an interview:

We did many exercises about tenses, present perfect and past simple. After that we talked about our life. Then, everybody got a note which had a name of a country, some places in that country and its flag, a picture of places of another country and another country’s flag. By asking questions I had to find a person who had a picture of ‘my’ country, the places and the flag on my card. Finally we answered the question, ‘Why are you studying English?’ by writing. It was a great day of studying English as we had to interact with each other a lot. (Diary WeekA1)

I’m happy in class. It’s funny. Your explanation is clear. Our lesson is a long-hour study, so I sometimes get tired. But there are many kinds of activities. I find it good. Games are good. I want more speaking. I definitely want to study English more when I go back to my country. (Interview WeekA6)

It is interesting that she showed strong desire to continue to study English even after going back to her home country, whereas her feedback form showed a low desire to study English on many days, as can be seen below. That is probably because her strong desire to study English expressed during the interviews was a long term one whereas she did not feel a strong desire on a daily basis. It should be noted too that she came to Australia to see her family members, not to study English.
Her feedback did not display a clear relation between her state motivation and class activities. In WeekA4, her effort dropped drastically. The main focus on that day was grammar; ‘it takes + person + time + to-infinitive’. AM1 was strong in grammar and in her feedback form she commented on this activity as ‘easy’. I speculated that she did not have to expend much effort for the lesson, and consequently her effort was marked low. However, she did not mark effort low on other days when we focused on grammar and she commented that it was easy. We did not do anything different on ThuWeekA4, and I was not able to find any causes of the plunge in her effort.

The table below shows her responses to the questionnaires in WeekA1 and WeekA6, where a few small changes can be seen.

### Table 6.5 AM1 Results of questionnaires Part A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>component</th>
<th>statement</th>
<th>change from WeekA1 to A6:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Those marked * are negative and thus the scale 5 to 1 corresponds to the scale 1 to 5 used for positive statements.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5 *(5 4 3 2 1)</td>
</tr>
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<td>attitude</td>
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<td>4→5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I hate English.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Learning English is a waste of time.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effort</td>
<td>I like doing homework.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I speak English at home.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desire</td>
<td>I study English at home every day.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t try to understand more difficult English.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t pay attention to feedback from my teacher.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desire orientation</td>
<td>I want to spend more time learning English.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I really have no desire to learn English.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| integrative            | I study English to talk with more and different people. | 4 |
| orientation            |                                                   |   |
| instrumental           | Learning English is really useful. | 5 |
| orientation            | I study English to get a good job. | 4 |

In Part B, she says:

- I enjoy English study more than WeekA1.
- I study English harder than WeekA1.
- I want to study English more than WeekA1.

As she did not give any reasons, I interviewed her. The following was her response.

I want to study English more than before because now I live in Australia. Some of my friends speaks English better than I do. I want to be like them. About class activities, I don’t know. All activities are interesting. Everything is good.

Time passes very quickly. It’s exciting. (Interview WeekA6)

According to this interview, her trait motivation seemed to increase slightly, and that agreed with my observation. For seven weeks she often showed her appreciation for the lesson. However, classes were not clearly a motivating factor for her. Just like AS3, AM1 seemed to receive a positive stimulus which urged her to study English more from her surroundings than from the classroom. As her comments in the above interview, she felt the need to study English since she was living in an English speaking country and people around her spoke English. She described herself as competitive and her friends seemed to affect her competitive disposition in a positive manner. What she learned in her class was directly related to her every day life and she found it useful. Usefulness is one of the task values which motivate students (Eccles and Wigfield, 2002; Pintrich, 2003; Wigfield and Guthrie, 1995). Therefore, it can be concluded that AM1’s trait motivation was sustained by her English speaking environment, which urged her to study English more.
6.6. AM2’s story

AM2 is a young female Asian student. She had started studying with us before Term A and finished in Week B5.

AM2 chose Australia for her study because her relatives lived here. She stayed with them, which was not ideal for her study as they talked in their first language at home. Also, as an agreement between her and her relatives, AM2 had to do all the housework and did not have much time to study at home. Her motivational orientations were instrumental and extrinsic when she wrote her essay in Week A1 (see Appendix E).

In fact, the reason why she studied English was not always the same as described in this initial essay. She later showed an interest in studying at a university in Australia and eventually living here.

I want to study English because I want to study cookery. Australia needs cooks.
For permanent residency I want to study cookery. I think it’s easy for me.
(Interview Week B3)

This is a good example to show that learners’ motivational orientations are not stable, and monitoring them continuously is important for the teacher to accommodate their needs (Oxford and Shearin, 1994). At the same time, I speculate that when learners do not know clearly why they study English or frequently change their ultimate goals, it can be a hindrance in terms of goal setting and planning, and ultimately a hindrance for learning.

At first I found AM2 rather dependent, as she asked me for homework almost every week. She thought that grammar was her weakest area and wanted to do extra practice, but did not know what to do and where to start. However, in my attempt to encourage students to be responsible for their learning, I noticed that AM2 started to appreciate the benefit of studying English actively.

I want to thank you Mikiko, about my presentation that I had practice about past continuous when I have a presentation I was understand it. (Diary Week A5)

This is about our Thursday grammar session (section 4.3). AM2 did a presentation on the past continuous. In her successful presentation, she explained how to format the
past continuous, when to use it, responded to other students’ questions and gave a gap-fill exercise to the class. For preparation, AM2 had to do self-study about the past continuous and she found it helpful for her to study actively in order to understand the grammar rule. She also found an effective way for her to internalize grammar rules in class.

I think making sentences in class is good for me. Immediately after I study grammar with you, I understand. But I don’t remember later. If I write sentences after I study grammar, I can remember. I can understand better. (Interview WeekA8)

On the other hand, her remarks about what she needed to do to improve her language skills greatly changed.

I need to learn grammar and writing the most and I’m poor in reading and listening. (Diary WeekA4)

I think grammar, vocab, speaking are important. (Interview WeekA5)

…my problem was listening when Mikiko opened TV, and everyone to listen. I can not understand it. I thought the most of my problem was listening and vocabulary, second was speaking as well. (Diary WeekA7)

I thought my problem was question form. For example, when use Are you --?” “Do you --?” “Did you ---?” “Can you --?” and negative question. Please tell me about pattern of question form. (Diary WeekA9)

What she actually did outside of class was:

Grammar, homework, diary writing. (Interview WeekA7)

These unstable remarks were probably related to her motivational orientations, which changed frequently as described above. Because she was not sure why she studied English herself, she might not have been able to focus on appropriate skills to achieve her long term goals, and spontaneously felt the need to work on specific skills due to her feelings being affected by day-to-day lessons.

In WeekB1 AM2 took the admission test to the academic course along with other students and the result was unsuccessful. In her diary in the same week, she expressed her desire to study grammar more, that is, she thought she needed to focus
on grammar to improve her overall language skills. However, in WeekB2, she changed her mind:

[My problem is] Listening. I want to improve my listening. (Interview in WeekB2)

In fact, I had thought that her weakest area was indeed listening. Accordingly, I decided to take advantage of this opportunity and gave her some guidance to practise listening outside of class. I encouraged her to borrow listening tapes from our resource room and the library, and advised her to do listening practice during the self-study session, which students had for one hour after class. I monitored whether she was following my recommendation during the self-study session in WeekB3. As she was not practising listening, I reminded her of what she was supposed to do, but she did not start it.

Related to AM1’s behaviours like this, Huitt refers to studies by Miller, Greene, Montalvo, Ravindran and Nichols (1996 in Huitt, 1999) and by Leondari, Syngollitou, & Kiosseoglou (1998 in Huitt, 1999) and states:

…students who had learning goals, desires to obtain future consequences, and wanted to please the teacher persisted longer in academic work. Students who were able to produce well-elaborated, specific, vivid pictures of possible future selves persisted more and had higher levels of achievement than those who did not (Huitt, 1999).

AM2 did not have a clear learning goal, or did not have a clear picture of her future self. That is probably why she could not persist trying to improve specific skills, but instead made haphazard efforts.

Her other components of motivation, attitude and desire, were relatively positive and strong according to the interviews and diary entries.

I understand you better than other teachers. I want to talk to you more.  
(Interview WeekA1)

Your explanation is easy to understand. (Interview WeekA8)
On Monday, my feel was happy about in class because I was understand in every target of Mikiko, for example, grammar, speaking, listening. (Diary WeekA8)

Thank you that you look after me and my class. Less teacher will look after students like you. I had study with many teacher but you difference other teacher. I will intend to study... I am grateful that I see a good teacher here. (Diary WeekB3)

Despite her positive attitude and strong desire, she hardly expended adequate and constant effort from my point of view. Although at one stage she had a problem with a visa application as AS1 had (section 6.1), and she got stressed over it (Interview WeekB2), this problem was temporary. What prevented her from making effort was her passiveness toward learning in addition to her not having a clear learning goal, as explained above. She seemed to understand how important it was to study actively, but she did not move toward autonomous learning further.

Q. When do you feel good or happy about your study?

AM2: When my questions are answered. Like this morning. I didn’t understand “I am confused.” You explained. Now I understand.

Q. When do you feel bad about your study?


Q. What do you do to change your mood? Do you go for a walk or something?

AM2: No. I wait. I wait it gone. (Interview WeekB3)

Her responses above showed how passive she was. She was capable of making effort if it was compulsory. When I started behaviour modification, she initially could not finish the reading homework, but she began regulating her time and effort, and as of the second week of my trial of behaviour modification she completed homework and joined a discussion. However, she did not take much responsibility for her study, such as setting-up goals, planning and monitoring her learning.

One example of her passivity is that she did not learn to consult a dictionary when she encountered a new word. On MonWeekB2 I taught how to use a dictionary
properly and introduced the idea of making a personal vocabulary book as the second activity in the morning. I did this activity so that students could be independent because they often asked me for definitions of new words in class instead of looking those words up in their dictionary as preparation for class. Immediately after class, AM2 asked me, “Mikiko, what does ‘as’ mean?” I tried to elicit what she remembered from the class but to no avail.

Her unstable long term goals probably affected her perceptions of class activities because she did not evaluate activities in relation to her goals, which made a contrast with AS4’s story (section 6.4). AM2 did not appear to appreciate the usefulness of activities, rather her desire to learn English was influenced by how easy or difficult she felt they were.

AM2’s great fluctuation in state motivation counters Gardner et al.’s (2001) result which showed stability in state motivation of university students who studied French. Her effort on her feedback forms greatly fluctuated and her desire corresponded to it, as can be seen below.

![Figure 6.6 Fluctuation of state motivation of AM2](image)

When AM2 found a lesson easy, her effort dropped and desire went up. When she found a lesson challenging, her effort increased and desire went down. What she found easy was not always a lower level activity; her judgment was subjective. For example, when she prepared for a lesson, the lesson was not difficult for her, and
accordingly her effort was not marked high. When AM2 did not do homework for Thursday discussions in WeekB2, her effort was marked as high as eight, and desire was lower than usual, marked as six. On the next Thursday, she had prepared for the class and her effort went down to three and her desire was marked as nine. Her comments on the activity changed too, from ‘difficult’, ‘important’, ‘informative’, ‘useful’ in WeekB2 to ‘enjoyable’, ‘exciting’, ‘important’, ‘informative’, ‘useful’ in WeekB3.

Her responses to Part A of the two questionnaires showed marginal changes in her trait motivation, as can be seen below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>component</th>
<th>statement</th>
<th>change from WeekA1 to B5:</th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
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<td>4←5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I hate English.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I speak English at home.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I study English at home every day.</td>
<td>1→2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t try to understand more difficult English.</td>
<td>3→1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I really have no desire to learn English.</td>
<td>2←1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>integrative</td>
<td>I study English to talk with more and different people.</td>
<td>3←5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>instrumental</td>
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<td>orientation</td>
<td>I study English to get a good job.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In part B, she says:

- I enjoy English study more than WeekA1 because I like English when I learn more.
- I study English more than WeekA1 because I understand English more.
I want to study English more because I interesting [I am interested in] English and I can speak English more than WeekA1.

Taking her responses to Part A and Part B, interviews, diary and class observations, I did not think that AM2’s overall trait motivation increased or decreased significantly.

On the one hand, AM2 discovered that preparation for the grammar presentation for Thursday morning in Term A helped her to understand grammar rules, and that she internalised grammar rules if she practised writing sentences using rules immediately after she studied them in class. She also thanked me for helping her understand several grammar rules. Experiencing success in class is one of the motivational factors (e.g. Li, 2004) and she clearly stated in Part B that she understood English more than before. On the other hand, although her responses in Part A told me that she studied at home more and she tried to understand difficult English more, the cause of this greater effort was most likely to be the reading homework which I used for behaviour modification, not her own decision.

AM2’s story is interesting in that her state motivation was greatly influenced by class activities whereas her trait motivation showed little change. Also her story suggests how important it is for English learners to have a clear long term goal so that they can evaluate class activities properly in relation to their ultimate goals.

6.7 AM3’s story

AM3 is an older female Asian student. She started two terms before Term A, had a three-week break before and in Term A. She resumed her study in WeekA2 and moved to Certificate III after Term B.

At first, AM3’s language skills were very low, but she had exceptional communication skills; for example, she did not hesitate to talk with people in English, was not afraid of making mistakes and wanted to try out new vocabulary. She also lived with an English speaker and naturally spoke English at home. Her oral skills improved accordingly, while her writing did not show much improvement.

Owing to the break she took, she did not write the initial essay about why she studied English in WeekA1. However, a similar essay which she had written in the previous term (see Appendix E) and a follow-up interview with her told me that she studied
English to be able to get a job in Australia and that her short term goal was to move up to Certificate III as she believed that completing an academic English course would help her find a job. Her long term goal was, in fact, unrealistic, because her other personal commitments would not allow her to work. In addition to ambiguity of her ultimate goal, which she had in common with AM2, AM3 was in circumstances where she could not concentrate on studying English, as she wrote in her diary below.

Last night I couldn’t sleep because I serious about [particular personal incident]. I thought a lot. (Diary WeekA4)

Her busy personal life aside, I could not determine exactly what AM3 wanted to do throughout the terms. She kept saying that she was interested in writing, but whenever she had to write something as homework, she did not complete the task for herself and asked someone to help her. When we practised writing in class, she always called me for help without trying herself. I often saw her off-task in class, talking about something different from what she was supposed to talk about in a group or pair, or flipping through a magazine or brochure during listening activities.

Still, she kept saying entirely positive things in interviews and her diary.

I want to improve my writing. I want to go to Cert III quick. … Nowadays, I’m interested in writing very much. One day I’m show you writing essay (Diary WeekA5)

I should reading news and my book. (Diary WeekA6)

I have to practise every day from television when I watch the news after dinner. (Diary WeekA7)

I want to talk about more difficult topics such as academic ones. … Writing is good. Now I’m interested in writing. (Interview WeekA8)

Q. Do you have any problems in class? 

AM3: Everything is good. (Interview WeekA9)

What she told me above might have been true. She might have enjoyed my lessons, but I was not too certain. It seemed that she tried to give me answers that she believed that I wanted to hear.
On the other hand, she sometimes showed self-reflection, which is one of the characteristics of the autonomous learner. For example, like AM2, she discovered the advantage of the student presentation of Thursday grammar class, which was better grasp of the grammar rule by preparing for presentations:

It’s good. Preparation for presentation is good for me. I talked about *used to* and I know a lot about *used to*. (Interview WeekA8)

She also appreciated doing a reading task at home instead of in class.

Reading at home is better. Reading in class is waste of time. (Interview WeekA8)

Furthermore, it was AM3 who pointed out the various levels of listening tasks in class, which I had not noticed (see section 4.5 for detail).

Listening to CD is better than *BTN* because it’s clear. Some people in *BTN* speak with strong accent and it’s difficult to understand. I didn’t like listening to CD before, but now I like it. Now I understand better. Teachers speak very slowly. I understand but it is not practical. People outside of class speak fast. (Interview WeekA8)

As above, AM3 confused me during Term A by showing a mixture of motivated and unmotivated behaviour. In Term B, in addition to the confusion, she caused some problems in class.

In WeekB1, she took the admission test, but could not reach the level of Certificate III. However, she did not understand the explanation which the director and I gave to her and mistook her failure for the unfair treatment of students from her country.

Q. Do you have any problems or anything?  

AM3: In class, no. But why don’t we have Certificate III? Everybody can do Cert III. We should do it. Everybody can write. (Interview in WeekB2)

During this interview she kept telling me how capable she was and insisted that the school had to run Certificate III. Although the director had explained her test result and the reason for not running Certificate III in WeekB1, she apparently did not accept the reason.
By WeekB5, I was starting to think that AM3 had a desire to learn English in her own way, which was difficult for me to understand. She had her own agendas and was so absorbed with them that she could not pay attention to other elements in learning English. First of all, she wanted to improve her pronunciation because an English speaking person whom she was living with sometimes did not understand her (casual conversation WeekB5). Second, she wanted to practise essay writing because she knew that students in the academic course were to write a lot of essays.

The remarks of the English speaker who was living with her seemed to be of great influence on her motivation. In class, she often wanted to practise the words he had not understood. More than once, she did not listen to what I or other students were talking about and all of sudden shouted, “Oh! Can you pronounce this word for me, please!” She was trying to recall which words she had mispronounced at home while she was supposed to be engaging in an activity, and wanted me to teach her the right way to say them.

Her positive reinforcer was also outside the classroom:

Before, people didn’t understand me. But now when I go to a post office, bank, and the immigration department they understand me. When I order food, people understand me. (Interview WeekB4)

Hence she experienced success outside of her classroom, but it was only about her oral skills. She did improve her oral skills, but she could have done even better if she had made conscious and constant effort. Her reinforcement was not connected with much of her effort because in the situation she mentioned in the interview, all she needed was fixed phrases and practising saying them before the actual interaction.

AM3 might have been sure of her long term goal, which was getting a good job in Australia, but its realisation would be too far away in the future because of her other commitment. She had strong desire to learn English, but it was a desire to improve nothing but two specific areas, pronunciation and essay writing. She was overconfident of her skills on account of successes experienced outside of her classroom. Those successes were, however, obtained without much expenditure of effort, therefore, they did not show a cause-effect relationship and encourage her to make effort.
She had little prospect of starting working in the near future and no realisation of a relation between effort and progress. These two elements might have been the reason why her effort in her state motivation fluctuated drastically, as in the case of AM2 (section 6.6), as can be seen in the line graph below.

![Line graph showing fluctuation of state motivation of AM3](image)

**Figure 6.7 Fluctuation of state motivation of AM3**

AM3’s desire was not as unstable as AM2’s, probably because AM3’s desire to learn English was very specific (pronunciation and writing skills) while AM2’s was vague. The lowest score for desire, six, was marked on ThuWeekA4 and ThuWeekB3. The former was just before one important personal event and it is understandable that she was distracted at that time. The latter was the first lesson of my trial of behaviour modification. She had not done homework, so the lesson must have been difficult, and she could not participate in the discussion as much as she wanted. Effort appears to have fluctuated for the same reason as AM2. When AM3 found activities difficult, effort went up and when easy it went down.

Thus class activities seemed to affect her desire and effort to a certain degree. AM3’s story as well as AM2’s may imply that students’ state motivation is affected when they do not have a clear idea about their goals and value of effort.

Even so, her responses to the two questionnaires showed a marginal increase in her trait motivation.
Table 6.7 Results of questionnaires Part A AM3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>component</th>
<th>statement</th>
<th>change from WeekA3 to B10:</th>
</tr>
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<td>4</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>integrative</td>
<td>I study English to talk with more and different people.</td>
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<td>orientation</td>
<td>I study English to get a good job.</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In Part B AM3 said:

- I enjoy studying English more than WeekA3
- I study English more than WeekA3
- I want to study English more than WeekA3.

She did not explain any reasons why she said these. According to Part A, “I like doing homework” and “I study English at home every day” showed marginal decline. It was understandable that she learned to like doing homework less considering the amount and the higher level of weekly homework in Term B, whereas the amount of study she did at home could not have decreased for the same reason.

My class observations did not find AM3 more motivated than before, but as mentioned above, she had her own agendas and I had difficulties understanding her behaviour. It was obvious, however, that classes were not influential on her trait motivation. She was capable of reflecting on her learning and acknowledged her improvement in speaking, which took place outside the classroom. It appeared that
the important things for AM3 were not in the classroom, namely she did not see the value of the activities. Accordingly, there was little relation between her motivation and class activities.

6.8 AW1’s story

AW1 is an older male Asian student. He started studying with us one year before Term A and continued in the general class after Term B.

When AW1 commenced his study, his skills were low and he studied in a beginner class. Two terms before Term A, he started studying in the general class. Ever since he started his study in Australia, his motivational orientation had been instrumental and extrinsic. One of the reasons why he studied English was to study art at a university in Australia and he was hoping to enter the academic course in the near future. In the beginning of Term A he acknowledged his own progress and found the lesson interesting:

Now I understand [English more than before]. Before I didn’t, so class was boring. Now not boring. (Interview WeekA1)

On the other hand, he sometimes compared himself with other students and was worried about his slow progress. It was true that he was a slow learner, which he noticed because one of his classmates whose level had been far below AW1’s overtook him within ten weeks. It should not be surprising that his self-efficacy was threatened by this incident. AW1 paid attention where his position was among his classmates rather than his own learning; that is he was performance orientated. An undercurrent of his negative self-efficacy emerged on the surface from time to time, more frequently later in Term A and during Term B:

Now, I’m not happy. I have many words [to remember]. And I angry when I can’t spell. Now I’m low in class. I know. People speak and write, but I can’t. (Interview WeekB3)

There was in fact a serious reason for his slow progress. AW1 did not see the connection between progress and effort, and hardly studied outside class. For example, he did homework only intermittently and he never read the textbook or looked up new words in his dictionary beforehand. In WeekA5, his writing had so many mistakes that I could not understand the content at all. It was far worse than his
usual writing. When I pointed this out he told me without hesitation that he had used translation software (casual conversation WeekA5). He did not realise that using software blindly was not helpful for his study. In addition, in WeekA6, he told me that taking a lot of review tests in class would help him remember new words. The idea that revision outside class was essential did not occur to him (conversation in class WeekA6).

Furthermore, he did not understand himself as a learner; he lacked metacognitive knowledge. What he studied at home did not match his level and needs.

Q. What kind of study do you do at home?

AW1: I read newspaper, watch movies or videos. I try to remember new words. I use my vocabulary book on the bus. (Interview WeekA8)

He could have learned more if he had read the textbook before and after class for his vocabulary, grammatical knowledge, and reading skills, instead of using newspapers, movies or videos. In the same vein, he refused to keep a diary, although he told me that he wanted to practise writing (Interview WeekA1).

Writing diary is boring. I know you want me to write about my study, but I want to choose my own topic. (Interview WeekA8)

Even after I told him he could write whatever he wanted to write about, he submitted his writing sporadically, and when he submitted it he had written a couple of sentences during the self-study session on Thursday afternoon, just before submitting it.

In WeekA9 students wrote about their study as a writing task in class. Through this activity, I had them all reflect on their study because most of them did not write about it in their diaries. AW1 wrote as follows:

There are three good things in my study. I can listen to music oneself. I have to watch TV, and I speak English language with my houseowner.

On the other hand, there are two bad things about my study. Sometimes I have get bored and I have lazy. Because I don’t have enough time for my homework.

Solution: I have to work a little bit. (Writing task WeekA9)
While he expressed the positive aspects in his study, such as confidence in listening, this essay showed that his workload in a part-time job was another cause of his slow progress. He had always had a part-time job and worked up to the maximum allowed for international students.

I feel bad because I can’t remember new words. I try to remember 20 words every day, but I can’t. I know I work [his job, not study] too hard. I’m too busy. You know I study for more than one year. Other students come later and move to an academic class. It’s like they are running and I’m walking. Like [a student who studied in the general class in the previous term]. But I know he didn’t work. He studied. I can’t study. I’m too busy. I don’t have time. I have time, but I’m tired. When I finish working and have a shower, it’s one o’clock. I want to study but I can’t. I’m sleepy. I don’t have money. I have to work.

Now, work is first and study is second. (Interview WeekA9)

He was in a vicious cycle where he needed to work to support himself financially, he did not have time and energy to study, he did not make enough progress to move from the general class to an academic class, he had to pay more tuition, and he had to work more. Also, what he did not understand was that even if he moved to an academic class, he could not complete the course successfully if he kept on working like this because students in the academic class had to complete a number of assignments in addition to weekly essay writing.

His frustration was reflected in his state motivation. Up until WeekA9, his state motivation had been relatively stable, except ThuWeekA4 when we had a new speaking activity which he liked. Throughout Term B, however, his state motivation kept fluctuating.
As mentioned in sections 5.2.1, 5.2.3 and 5.3.3, AW1 did not enjoy studying in Term B. Although he made a constructive suggestion about the timetable (see section 5.2.3), other things he wanted to change in the school were close to complaints rather than suggestions. For example, he wanted a new microwave oven in the student lounge and a flashy student card. Even though these did not have a direct connection with his study, they seemed very important to him as he talked solely about them for thirty minutes during one interview (Interview WeekB2).

The behaviour modification approach I attempted affected his motivation and his feelings negatively. As can be seen in the Figure 6.8, he marked 0 in an 11 point-Likert scale for “Did you like today’s lesson?” on ThuWeekB3, which was the second week of the activity which incorporated behaviour modification. He also avoided me and refused to be interviewed (my observation in WeekB5). He was also absent from my class twice to do homework for another teacher’s class (WeekB5) and for preparation for the admission test (WeekB8). From these incidents, it was clear that he was uncomfortable and saw little value in my lessons. A third party interview revealed that he also had doubted the value of the general English class as a whole (third party interview WeekB8). Thus, many factors affected his state motivation and the class activity was definitely one of them.

Figure 6.8 Fluctuation of state motivation of AW1
His responses to the two questionnaires showed a slight decrease in his attitude toward learning English and especially in his effort.

Table 6.8 AW1 Results of questionnaires Part A AW1

<table>
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In part B, however, he clearly expressed his negative attitude to learning English whereas he stated that his effort and desire to study English had increased:

- I don’t enjoy studying English more than WeekA1 because [it’s] boring.
- I study English more than WeekA1 because I want to speak English very well.
- I want to study English more than WeekA1 because English is important for me.

As an extra comment he said, “Everything is OK.”

As described above, multitudinous factors worked negatively on his emotions. His slow progress, lack of time and energy to study, dissatisfaction with the course, material and my lessons had an impact on him.
One big question for me at the end of Term B was why only AW1 could not benefit from the behaviour modification approach I tried, while the other students thought the reading homework followed by a discussion was good for their study (speaking activity WeekB10, section 5.3.4). Needless to say, he did not have much time and energy to study on account of his part-time job. However, there were other factors which prevented him from engaging in the reading homework. In fact, he had less outside work at the beginning of Term B. Nevertheless, with this extra time at hand he started painting pictures instead of studying. This painting was not for his interest or hobby but for sale, which took up his time and energy.

Now it’s better. I work at only one restaurant. I don’t work on Monday, Thursday and Friday. Three days, no work. So I have my time. But I feel lazy. I don’t study. I want to rest. Now I’m painting. I want to sell my painting to galleries. (Interview WeekB2)

This excerpt shows that the time constraint was not a pivotal reason why he did not do the reading homework. Even when he had extra time he did not make effort to improve his English skills, and there are three possible causes: (1) AW1 could not see the cause-effect relation in language learning, (2) he did not have adequate metacognitive skills, and (3) he was performance orientated.

In order to make behaviour modification work well, the teacher has to have students see a cause-effect relationship (Vockell, n.d.). Although I emphasised a cause and effect in the process of the behaviour modification approach, that is, if students did the homework, they could participate in the discussion and eventually they could improve their English, AW1 did not seem to understand the connection between making effort and progress. This was true of his reinforcement for his study. When I asked him when he felt good or happy about his study, he answered it was when he understood grammar rules by listening to my explanations in class. His effort was hardly involved in the reinforcement.

Moreover, AW1 was too optimistic about his study, which might have been caused by the fact that he could not see the importance of making effort. This is contradictory to his frustration over slow progress mentioned earlier in this section, but his overconfidence sometimes surprised me. During the interview in WeekB2 he said he wanted to write his autobiography in English for publication even though his
writing skills were at an elementary level. This overconfidence without a reasonable basis is related to the second cause, lack of metacognitive skills.

In section 6.6, I also described lack of metacognitive skills among AM2’s behaviours, but how AM2 and AW1 were short of the skills seemed different. While AM2 was not sure about her long term goal, AW1 had a clear long term goal, studying at a university. What he could not do was assess his skills accurately in relation to his long-term goal. He kept failing to complete the reading homework. If his job situation did not change and he could not spare his time for study in the future either, the only choice for him was to lower his long term goal. However, he did not lower his goal or start making effort. In WeekB8 he still said the reason he studied English was to go to university in Australia (third party interview WeekB8) and yet he did not complete the reading homework. He got stressed over the performance of the other students, who managed to read and understand the material, without realising that he too could have finished reading the material and joined the discussion if only he had made the effort.

The stress he had was derived not only from his lack of metacognitive skills but also from his orientation toward performance. When I put the results of a review test on the wall in WeekB1 to stimulate students’ performance relativeness and to show “performance-extrinsic-related reasons” to study English (Gonzales, Dowson, Brickman, & McInerney, 2006 p. 9), he looked concerned and asked me when I was going to give another review test. When I did not say when, and instead said that he should not study for the review test since the test was for me to see if students revised vocabulary or grammar rules at home, my answer annoyed him. Also, he was not interested in the feedback I gave after a listening test, while most of the students said in the feedback form and during the interview that the feedback session was useful for improving their listening (my observation and Interview WeekB7, see 5.2.1). For AW1 the test score was more important than how to improve listening skills. He paid attention to the result, not the process of learning, and did not see the value of expending effort on the learning process.

Without the three factors described above, I believe that AW1 could have modified his behaviour and started doing the homework. However, he just could not comprehend why I tried to change his behaviour so that he would study outside of
the classroom. Instead, he became negative due to the reading homework and speaking activities which he could not handle. Thus, the speaking activity on Thursday afternoon was one of the demotivating factors for AW1.

6.9 AW2’s story

AW2 was an older male Asian student. He had studied in the general class two terms before Term A, had a break, restarted in WeekA2 and finished in WeekA9.

AW2’s workplace sent him to our school, so the reason why he studied English was obviously for his job. He would ultimately be engaged in translation for his workplace, which represents an instrumental and extrinsic motivational orientation. He was not in class in WeekA1 and did not write an essay about his motivational orientations, but pilot interviews conducted before Term A had informed me of his motivational orientation, which was confirmed through an interview when he started in WeekA2.

AW2 showed strong motivation from the beginning of Term A. He asked me for extra homework to improve his grammar skills and he was actively involved in all class activities. He clearly stated that he was motivated.

I started General English. It’s a lot of fun because Mikiko teaches us very clearly. This is my opinion. I feel like studying English very hard. I want extra homework. (Diary WeekA2)

Writing is a problem. I am very motivated. I want to study. I want to practise writing at home. (Interview WeekA2)

He proved that he was indeed motivated in WeekA3 by being one of only two students responding to my request to write about their personal weekly homework in their diaries (see section 4.2.1). His description was in detail and he asked a very sensible question.

My problem is writing. Writing is very hard because I use verb, noun and preposition the sentence mistake. But I try to understand. If I don’t know many mistakes, Mikiko, could you please give solution? I think writing something very good for exercise.

I have a list level for study English.
1. Reading only just reading

2. Speaking just speak don’t follow grammar

3. Listening CD player or outside

4. Writing follow topic

I know writing is very hard but I have some topic. I’m very fun try writing. I choose topic very difficult. I think and practise writing very concentration or priority. But I agree with writing for homework because I don’t have enough time in the class.

When I speak to Australia people they talk slow I understand. Another speak very fast I don’t understand.

How many words do you know in your study English? This question very difficult. I don’t know how many word I remember because I don’t have list.

I agree lesson because we have list everyday. For example, vocab review, speaking, writing, listening and grammar. I like to conversation and role play because we are active in the class. I don’t prefer writing in the class because concentration not focus. Writing at home more concentration. (Diary WeekA3)

Asking how many words he should know means that he thought about the level he wanted to achieve in terms of vocabulary and realised that he did not know how many he should know, so he asked me. I answered this question in class in WeekA4, and gave him praise publicly for his attempt to set his goals. I wanted to remind the other students about setting their personal goals and let them know that AW2 and AS2 had done it.

I knew that AW2 needed scaffolding in terms of homework at first because he asked me for extra homework, not knowing what to do by himself. He knew that he was not strong in grammar and writing. In his plans above, he was going to practise writing in his diary, but for grammar he wanted me to choose the material for him. Gradually he started to become independent. During interviews, for example, he asked me questions which had occurred to him while studying at home or in class:

I want to study English. At home, I read books, try to remember vocab. I find questions every week. So I ask Mikiko. (Interview WeekA5)
Furthermore, he managed to adjust and regulate his study by monitoring it, which is a metacognitive strategy (Pintrich, 1999). He tried to write a passage on specific topics, such as ‘my friends’, but could not do it well. After a while, he decided to focus on his diary for writing practice.

I think concentrate to write diary good I don’t have experience also I don’t have topic. (Diary WeekA7)

He understood how important planning was for English study:

I think plan is important I have plan study at home. I study repeat a lesson last week. I have exercises book about 30 minutes. I have write the sentence also I write a letter, I memorize new words. I make sentence I read a book. When I read a new words I have look dictionary. I have watch TV only news program about 30 minutes. (Diary WeekA7)

AW2’s behaviour as a learner changed over ten weeks. He showed an active attitude not only toward his study at home but also the class by making suggestions for the lesson. After we had a speaking activity in which three students sitting at front were interviewed by the rest of the class, he said that he and his classmates needed more activities like this one because the activity was interactive and more ‘real’ (casual conversation WeekA5). In WeekA8, he said that the advantage of reading texts in class as opposed to reading them at home was that the teacher could ask students to read them aloud and check the pronunciation.

Not surprisingly, two components of his state motivation, attitude and effort, gradually went up and the other component, desire, remained high during his study. When all of the components dropped drastically on ThuWeekA8, AW2 explained why in his diary:

I’m going home this weekend. I have to study but my mind is in my country. I don’t concentrate study. (Diary WeekA9)

That was understandable and is similar to AS1’s comment in WeekA8 (section 6.1). External factors such as a visa application and family had a great influence on the students’ state motivation. Other than that, AW2 stayed motivated throughout Term A.
Whether or not his strong state motivation was owing solely to class activities was not clear, however. He definitely liked the class as he often used the word “fun” during the interviews to describe the class. In addition, he positively perceived the changes I made to create more motivating lessons:

You changed activities. It’s good. I think your class is good. (casual conversation Week A7)

This particular remark is valuable because he voluntarily and casually said it to me after class; that is, he initiated this conversation without my prompts. Later, AW2 elaborated his previous remark:

I think you pay more attention. You talk to students and talk about study. You give me advice for my study. That’s good. You give feedback. I don’t know if my English is getting better. You say it’s getting better. So, I feel good. I study again. You showed how many percent I improved [through tests in class]. It’s good. (Interview Week A9)

Then I asked for his opinions about the class.

I like grammar because you explain very clearly. I understand more. And then, I want to study more. You speak slow. I understand. When I don’t understand, I don’t study. I like discussion about study. We talked about study. And you teach writing. That’s good. My problem is writing. You explain how to write.
You write our activities on the whiteboard. I understand the target. It’s good. I can concentrate. In class no activity is bad. I can’t give you any advice.

(Interview WeekA9)

His comments above agreed with what he said during an interview by a third party. He said:

It’s [Mikiko’s lesson] fun. When she teaches she’s very happy in class. From July to September the activities changed. It’s different. Over the three months she paid attention to me. She gives feedback. She interviews people.

Every week she gives us a small test. I like grammar, speaking, BTN, and writing essays. (Third party interview WeekA9)

At least class activities did not demotivate AW2, as can be seen in his positive comments. However, what he perceived positively was not only activities. He highly valued the weekly interviews which I conducted to collect data. He also regarded my behaviour in class, such as speaking slowly and being cheerful, as a motivating factor. Therefore, just as in the case of AS2 (section 6.2), the whole class might have enhanced his state motivation.

His trait motivation in some respects changed markedly over the seven weeks.

Table 6.9 Results of questionnaires Part A AW2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>component</th>
<th>statement</th>
<th>change from WeekA2 to A9:</th>
<th>1 2 3 4 5 *(5 4 3 2 1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>attitude</td>
<td>I really enjoy learning English.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3→4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effort</td>
<td>I like doing homework.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3→4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I speak English at home.</td>
<td></td>
<td>4→5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I study English at home every day.</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t try to understand more difficult English.</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t pay attention to feedback from my teacher.</td>
<td></td>
<td>5→1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desire</td>
<td>I want to spend more time learning English.</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I really have no desire to learn English.</td>
<td></td>
<td>5→1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orientation</td>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Score</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrative</td>
<td>I study English to talk with more and different people.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumental</td>
<td>Learning English is really useful.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I study English to get a good job.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Part B of the final questionnaire, AW2 said:

- I enjoy studying English more than WeekA2 because it was difficult at first to understand but I made effort and my English is getting better.
- I don’t study English harder than WeekA2 because it’s easier to for me to understand.
- I want to study English more than WeekA2 but it depends on my plan.

For the second question in Part B, AW2 seemed to interpret ‘study hard’ as a struggle. Aside from this misinterpretation, his trait motivation increased in the two other components, which was not surprising at all, considering his positive comments and upward trend of his state motivation up to WeekA8.

One of the important features in his changes was that receiving feedback from the teacher and sensing his progress greatly influenced his motivation. In the first questionnaire, he showed little interest in the teacher’s feedback. However, feedback I gave during the interview and in his diary must have been useful, as his following comments suggest:

I’ve been improving. I was originally slow and found it hard to understand, but Mikiko adjusts her language according to the student. (Third party interview WeekA9)

[I don’t like] Listening, because people talk too fast and I found it hard to understand. But two weeks ago Mikiko said I must do it, so I tried it and found I could do it. (Third party interview WeekA9)

I don’t know if my English is getting better. You say it’s getting better. So, I feel good. I study again. (Interview WeekA9)

In the same way as his state motivation, his trait motivation seemed to be affected by many factors in the classroom, one of which was the class activities, as he said that he enjoyed grammar, speaking, video and writing activities. Through some of these activities he experienced success and it motivated him more. Other factors which
AW2 mentioned were my showing enthusiasm for teaching and my promoting his goal orientation by writing objectives on the board before the lesson. Although these were not directly related to class activities, they were dependent upon the teacher. Writing the main focuses for the lesson is just trivial teacher behaviour, but it may greatly affect learners’ goal orientation which in turn affects motivation. Gaining this insight was extremely fruitful for my teaching.

6.10 AW3’s story

AW3 was a young female Asian student. She started in WeekA2 and moved to Certificate III after WeekB10. When she started, her overall skill level was elementary. Her speaking and lexical resource, in particular, were so weak that she rarely spoke in class or during the break. She had relatives in Australia and was staying with their family, which was not ideal for her study as they spoke in her first language at home most of the time.

Her motivational orientation was mainly instrumental and extrinsic, as her initial essay written in WeekA1 showed (see Appendix E). Over the course, her dream of becoming an English teacher changed to becoming a tour guide (Interview WeekB4), but the instrumental and extrinsic nature of her orientation remained the same.

At the beginning of Term A, AW3 looked uncomfortable in class. The impressions I had through class observations were supported by the content of an interview and her diary.

[The class is] difficult. Another student helps me. I want to increase my vocab. (Interview WeekA2)

The first class. I am ashamed if I can not speak English. So I must understand English. But now I am not worried about it because I have a good teacher. Her name is Mikiko. I never tried to speak English with her, but later I will try with her.

I am sorry, Mikiko. I never answer your questions because I have small vocabulary. But you don’t worry. I will study hard now. I hope you help me. Please! (Diary WeekA2)
The atmosphere in the classroom was friendly and supportive in Term A, and AW3 was starting to look comfortable and confident. At the same time, she became active in her learning.

I think very good if you give me homework because I have too much time for learning English well. Homework is very important for me because I can continue to learn if I have homework. I can learn English by myself. (Diary Week A3)

In Week A4, she again asked me for extra homework on grammar. She knew that her grammar was weak and was eager to acquire grammar rules as soon as possible. In addition to expressing interest in studying more grammar at home, she also asked me questions about grammar in her diary.

I like the class. My classmates are friendly. The teachers give me encouragement. And they speak slowly. Extra homework is good. Grammar is difficult. My cousin helps me [with homework]. (Interview Week A5)

Mikiko, I have question to you. When I must take simple past or past continuous. I know simple past mean past time. But I am conscious about where I must take ‘was’, ‘have’, ‘been’.

Next, I have thinking if I wrote past time but I mean today. Could you teach me with this diary? I’m sorry Mikiko. I am student very lazy to learn. I can study hard but I didn’t understand about English grammar. It’s very difficult to me. I am so sorry, Mikiko. (Diary Week A6)

As mentioned in section 4.3, AW3 found all grammar activities difficult in Term A. She did not understand the concept of tenses and could not differentiate nouns from verbs. However, she did not give up making effort to understand grammar by asking me for extra grammar practice and doing it. In that regard, it can be said that AW3 kept motivated to make continuous effort to understand grammar rules and work on her weak area. On the other hand, she did not do revision for vocabulary at home. Even though she said that she wanted to increase her vocabulary during the interview in Week A2, her score in the vocabulary review test was usually low. She might have prioritised studying grammar rather than increasing vocabulary.

Q. What kind of study do you do at home?

(Interview WeekA7)

During the interview in WeekA8, she showed her interest in practising writing. She had not practised essay writing and her attitude showed that she was not afraid of taking up a challenging task. Also, this might have been an indicator that she came to understand grammar better than before and that gave her confidence.

I want to do writing practice, but it’s very difficult. Any topics are OK. Writing itself is difficult regardless the topic. It’s new experience for me. (Interview WeekA8)

It can be speculated that AW3 was aware of her progress in learning grammar and her desire to study English increased enough to endeavour something new and challenging. In fact, she expressed her interest in studying in an academic class, Certificate III, for the first time during the interview in WeekA9.

I want to go to Cert III. But I don’t know. I want to improve my English. (WeekA9)

Sensing her own progress might have made her ambitious. It was certain that she felt more comfortable and confident in class because she started helping another student (my observation WeekA9). Considering that other students helped her in the beginning of Term A, it was a big change in her behaviour. She also opened up to me, sharing her past experience in her country and gossip she had heard with me (Casual conversation WeekA9). Her confidence was tangible in her diary as well.

I can already speak English although a little. I often practise my English with my cousin. I learn English because I intend to go abroad if I have time. I wish to go to Melbourne to see my cousin there. I will go by plane. I will not go with my aunt because she has no time yet. I hope in the plane I will see tourists and I can try to practise my English although I can speak English a little. But I will to practise it.

I should enjoy meeting my cousin. I will go around Melbourne. (Diary Week A9)

As a result of her progress and confidence, she decided to take the admission test to the academic course in WeekB1. Although it was unsuccessful, she did not appear
disappointed. To the contrary, her desire to study English seemed to become greater than before as she got more actively involved in class activities. She also showed her enthusiasm in the interview below.

AW3: I want to practise speaking. I wanted to talk before, but I didn’t understand. Now I understand more, so I can talk more. I want to answer all your questions. Sometimes, I understand your questions and I know the answers. But I don’t know how to say it in English. I want to do more reading too.

Q. The reading homework I gave you this morning is quite difficult. Please do it and tell me what you think. If it is too difficult, I’ll give you an easier one.

AW3: No, that’s good. Difficult reading is good. I want to move to the academic course. I want to read difficult homework. And BTN is good. I like BTN. Can I borrow the video? I want to repeat watching it. (Interview WeekB1)

Since she was eager to improve her language skills she found some of her classmates who were not as serious about studying English as her annoying, as AS4 did in section 6.4.

I class, I have many friends from one country. They always speak in their language. Their classmate doesn’t understand. Sometimes I hate them because they always speak in their language with each other. My teachers tell me in class don’t speak another language except English. (Diary WeekB1)

As the term went on, she got closer to two of the students from that country, AM2 and BS1; they studied together, and the atmosphere in the classroom improved (see section 5.3.2).

AW3 continued to be ardent until the end of Term B and her enthusiasm could be found in the interviews and diary.

I wish I understand English, therefore, I came to learn it from the school.

Now I can speak English a little. I often speak English with my friends because they can speak English. I will go abroad if I can speak English. (Diary WeekB2)
Q. Did I give you too much homework?

AW3: No. Homework is good. I need it. I studied until 1:00 yesterday and my aunt said to me, “Go to bed!” But it’s OK. If you give me only a little bit of homework, I’ll be lazy. Thursday class is difficult and I like it. (Interview WeekB6)

I need practice tests. But I need other types of listening practice too. They [practice tests, BTN and CDs] are all important. (Interview WeekB8)

Throughout her study, her state motivation was kept very high, as can be seen in the graph below.

![Graph showing fluctuation of state motivation of AW3](image)

Figure 6.10 Fluctuation of state motivation of AW3

AW3’s state motivation slightly decreased in Term A, but stabilised in Term B in spite of our less than ideal class situation (described in 5.1 and 5.3.2). The reasons why her state motivation did not decrease could be her clear short-term goal, moving up to Certificate III, and several class activities. She became interested in studying an academic class at the end of Term A (Interview WeekA9). Listening tests on Monday and the activities on Thursday afternoon directly pertained to the admission test to the academic course and the curriculum of Certificate III. These two must have worked as interwoven motivational factors for her. It can be said that one of AW3’s motivating factors was class activities.

Her trait motivation showed virtually no change and remained very high.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>component</th>
<th>statement</th>
<th>change from WeekA2 to B10:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*(Those marked * are negative and thus the scale 5 to 1 corresponds to the scale 1 to 5 used for positive statements.)</td>
<td>*(5 4 3 2 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attitude</td>
<td>I really enjoy learning English.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I hate English.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Learning English is a waste of time.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effort</td>
<td>I like doing homework.</td>
<td>4→5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I speak English at home.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I study English at home every day.</td>
<td>4→5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t try to understand more difficult English.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t pay attention to feedback from my teacher.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desire</td>
<td>I want to spend more time learning English.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I really have no desire to learn English.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>integrative</td>
<td>I study English to talk with more and different people.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orientation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instrumental</td>
<td>Learning English is really useful.</td>
<td>4→5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orientation</td>
<td>I study English to get a good job.</td>
<td>4→5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Part B, AW3 said:

- I enjoy English study more than WeekA1 because I have good teachers, especially, Mikiko
- I study English more than WeekA1 because I want to improve my English skills
- I want to study English more than WeekA1 because I want to practise and speak English very well.

Her extra comment was, “If students speak each other in their own language too loud, I hate it. I want teachers to teach clearly and give feedback and comments like Mikiko”.

There were three possible reasons why her trait motivation was sustained: clear short term goals, class activities related to the goals, and feedback from the teacher to show her progress and directions for her study.
When she commenced her study, she was not interested in Certificate III. She was preoccupied with day-to-day lessons owing to her lack of grammar knowledge, vocabulary and confidence. As her skills improved, she got interested in an academic class (Interview WeekA9). Entering an academic class was closer and more likely to happen than becoming an English teacher/tour guide, which was her long term goal. In addition, several class activities, such as listening tests on Monday, BTN, reading and discussing newspaper articles on Thursday afternoon, were connected with the content of Certificate III and the admission test. So, these two elements, moving up to Certificate III and activities which were related to Certificate III and the admission test, together seemed to motivate her.

Moreover, she sensed her progress when I showed her writing which she had written in WeekA1 and asked her to correct mistakes. She was able to correct her mistakes and understood that her skills at that time were better than the time she had written the first writing task (see section 5.2.3). In addition to this episode, as she commented in Part B in the second questionnaire, she valued the feedback and comments from the teacher. She knew that her language skills were getting better through correcting her first writing for herself and she understood what she needed to do to improve her skills through feedback and comments from the teacher. Seeing her progress and guidance toward her goals positively affected her motivation.

Thus, a clear short-term goal, class activities related to the goal, a sense of progress and guidance provided in the form of teacher feedback kept AW3 highly motivated.

6.11 BS1’s story

BS1 is a female Asian student. She started in WeekB1 and moved up to Certificate III after Term B. The most distinctive feature of BS1 was her marginal progress. Although she had been a strong student and appeared motivated in starting the course, she did not improve her skills as much as the majority of her classmates. BS1 herself agreed with me when I pointed out that her listening skills were deteriorating (casual conversation WeekB8). This section, BS1’s story, explains the reasons why her language skills did not improve much as well as describing chronological changes in her motivation.
As soon as she started studying with us, on Monday in WeekB1, BS1 took the admission test to the academic course, but could not reach the level of Certificate III. She was told to study in the general class for ten weeks and to take the test again. She did not look disappointed or discouraged, but my observation was inaccurate because later she questioned the reliability of the test (third party interview WeekB8).

In my opinion, her ever-changing long-term goals (see later in this section) and her dissatisfaction with the course probably hindered her progress. BS1 gave me various reasons why she was studying English, and I could not determine the real reason. Because she was the only student who had not told me her motivational orientation at the point of WeekB1, I did not ask her to write an essay but instead asked her to write why she studied English in her diary. She wrote that her ultimate goal was to obtain a band score of 6.0 in IELTS (International English Language Testing System).

I try to speak is so much because I know if I try to speak is improve skill of English. Sometimes when teacher says I don’t understand. But I try to listen. Yesterday, Mikiko told about goals. Now I have goal. My goal is I want to exam IELTS pass 6. (Diary WeekB1)

This sounded rather strange to me because students in our institution usually took IELTS for some external purposes, such as their future study or job requirement. Merely taking the test itself was unusual as an ultimate goal. When I asked her about the purpose of taking IELTS in a follow-up interview, she said that she wanted to see her level in an international English test (Interview WeekB2). Although I found this response peculiar, there could be many reasons for English study, and I took it at face value.

Her tone during the interview and in her diary was positive, so I assumed that she was highly motivated and happy in the class at that stage. Therefore, I was surprised to read her comments on the course in her first language, which I do not speak. She made these comments in addition to answering the questions in the initial questionnaire, which was returned to me in WeekB3. Her unhappiness was palpable in them:
Generally, I love all activities but I sometimes do not understand what teachers want us to do, why we do these and what the outcomes are or what we learn from these.

For example: Writing – I am aware that my writing skill is awfully weak, and what or how I could improve. Which ‘tenses’ I should use for this particular writing task. Even though, I know which “tense” to use, I do not completely understand that tense anyway.

This is also happening with me for the speaking as well.

Sometimes, I am confused; I do not know where to start practising but I do know that I should not only wait for teachers to help improving my English. I also have to practise myself as well.

I occasionally feel that I do not learn anything new by studying at this school, in fact, it is what I have already learned from my country. Please note that this happens on some days not everyday. (questionnaire returned in WeekB3 translated into English by a friend of mine)

I was almost certain that she had not expected me to understand what she had written in her first language. As described earlier, two other students acted in a similar manner (sections 6.4 and 6.10) and because they probably did not think that the information they had given would reach me, their remarks must have been very honest. The difference between BS1 and the other two students is that I had not expected this sort of negativity.

I wanted to change my lessons so that BS1 would become less unhappy, but I could not work out how to deal with her dissatisfaction. In reading her comments, I was puzzled as I could not agree with what she said even though I tried to be objective and fair. For example, it was hard for me to appreciate that she did not understand what I wanted her to do in class. I always wrote the lesson objective on the whiteboard before class in order to make sure students understood what activities they would do and explained why they would do these activities. Also, in WeekB1 and B2 students practised using the past tense in speaking and writing after my explanation. During the lessons, she seemed to understand the use of the past tense although her production was not impeccable. She was a relatively strong student in the general class, but what we did in class was not always too easy for her, especially
on Thursday afternoon. Hence, I could not clearly link her dissatisfaction to my lessons and could not find out how to improve them so as to satisfy her.

It turned out that BS1 was unhappy with not only our lessons but also the course as a whole. She expressed her dissatisfaction during a third party interview in WeekB8. She told the interviewer that she did not understand why she was not successful in the admission test which she had taken in WeekB1. Moreover, she did not believe that studying in the general class helped her improve her skills:

Seven weeks ago I have exam for certificate III, everybody failed, I don’t understand why….Couldn’t understand why student couldn’t make exam.

Now I study general English, but the exam is academic. I don’t know how I can improve my English. I want to prepare for the exam for certificate III.

I don’t understand about general English. Somebody in my class study general English for about two years. (third party interview WeekB8)

On the other hand, in the same interview she stated that some activities were actually good:

Interviewer: What do you like to study in class?

BS1: Grammar and listening and practise pronunciation. And Mikiko do [gives] homework all the time, I think it’s good. (third party interview WeekB8)

Thus, she expressed dissatisfaction and frustration toward the course although she might be satisfied with some activities. That made it difficult for me to find ways to motivate her.

BS1 confused me more because she did not always do what she needed to do even though she acknowledged the necessity of making effort to improve her English (Interview WeekB2). She refused to do tasks which she did not like. When I pointed out that she had not done homework, she simply giggled and ignored the admonition (casual conversation in class WeekB2). She sometimes did not come to school on Tuesday because she did not like the lessons (casual conversation WeekB9). BS1 shared some behaviours with AW1, namely refusing to do some tasks which they did not like, and skipping class (for AW1’s behaviours see section 6.8). What AW1 and
BS1 had in common were negative feelings toward the course and this might have underlain their behaviour.

In Term B, the general course was taught by three different teachers. This made analysing her negativity and finding the ways to improve her attitude towards the course difficult. For example, BS1 did not seem to appreciate the lessons from another teacher on Tuesday as explained in the previous paragraph, and that might have caused her negativity. However, I did not gather evidence for this speculation, namely how she regarded the other teachers’ lessons. At any rate, she was unhappy about the course on the whole and Gardner’s socio-educational model (e.g. 2005) suggests that learner attitude to the course affects motivation. In BS1’s case, her unhappiness towards the course seemed to affect her motivation and lead her to marginal progress.

In addition to her negativity toward the course, another possible reason why her language skills did not improve much was that she did not internalise her long-term goal. BS1 told me that her goal was to take IELTS and get an overall score of 6.0. I asked her if her goal was still the same in WeekB7 because at a party held by my supervisor and his wife in WeekB6 she said that she wanted to immigrate to Australia. Also she wrote the following in her diary:

After class, I went to work. Today wasn’t busy and I asked my friend about cookery because he studies cookery. Now I am interested in cookery. My friend told me if I finish Cert III, I can study cookery. (Diary WeekB7)

I understood why she got interested in the cookery course. At that time rumour had it that studying cookery was helpful for immigrating to Australia. All cookery courses in our university were in TAFE (The Technical and Further Education), and completing Certificate III successfully allowed students to study several TAFE courses, such as cookery courses, without taking external English examinations, IELTS in this case. If her long-term goal for English study changed to migrating to Australia, she would not need an overall score of 6.0 in IELTS as she had said previously. However, when I asked her if she was still interested in taking IELTS she responded as follows:

I still want to take IELTS and pass 6. But it isn’t for the cookery course. I don’t think my English is good after Certificate III. Certificate III is only for this
university. I may go to another university or another country. IELTS score is acknowledged in other countries. (Interview WeekB7)

In the following week, BS1 explained the reason why she studied English during the third party interview as follows:

Important in my country, to find a good job, for travel, connect with other people.

Even in my country, foreigners ask me, I can’t understand. I want to find a job in a trading company. (third party interview WeekB8)

She seemed not to know what she really wanted to do in the future with English. She wanted to work either at a restaurant or trading company, and it was better to study English in order to get either of these jobs. At the same time, she was thinking of migrating to Australia too, and it goes without saying that she had to study English to live in this English speaking country. If she had enjoyed studying English without regard to her ultimate goal, having a vague and unstable long term goal would not have been a major problem. But her motivational disposition was instrumental and extrinsic. Goal-setting is important for learner motivation, especially when their motivational orientation is instrumental and extrinsic. As we have seen in AW3’s case (section 6.10), experiencing success and useful feedback or guidance in the process of achieving a goal is motivating. To learners with instrumental and extrinsic motives, learning itself does not give much pleasure. They need to feel a sense of achievement during the long process of language learning in order to keep motivated. Reaching a long-term goal is the final achievement. Until they reach their ultimate goals, they need to experience small successes by achieving short-term goals. BS1 did not have a clear long-term goal, which made it difficult for her to be motivated. Consequently, she did not make constant effort and her learning suffered.

Vague long-term goals caused great fluctuation in the state motivation of AM2 and AM3. Accordingly, BS1’s state motivation might also be expected to fluctuate drastically. On the contrary, her state motivation was relatively high and stable as in figure 6.11.
Figure 6.11 Fluctuation of state motivation of BS1

The possible cause of this stability is that BS1 was a far stronger student than AM2 and AM3. The level of class activities did not faze her, and consequently her state motivation did not show much fluctuation.

According to her responses to the questionnaires, her attitude to learning English became more negative.

Table 6.11 Results of questionnaires Part A BS1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>component</th>
<th>statement (Those marked * are negative and thus the scale 5 to 1 corresponds to the scale 1 to 5 used for positive statements.)</th>
<th>change from WeekB3 to B10: 1 2 3 4 5 *(5 4 3 2 1)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>attitude</td>
<td>I really enjoy learning English.</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I hate English.</td>
<td>5 ←3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Learning English is a waste of time.</td>
<td>2←1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effort</td>
<td>I like doing homework.</td>
<td>3→4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I speak English at home.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I study English at home every day.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t try to understand more difficult English.</td>
<td>3←1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t pay attention to feedback from my teacher.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desire</td>
<td>I want to spend more time learning English.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I really have no desire to learn English. (BS1 did not rate this in the first questionnaire)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
integrative orientation
I study English to talk with more and different people. 5

instrumental orientation
Learning English is really useful. 5
I study English to get a good job. 5

In Part B, BS1 said:

- I don’t enjoy studying English more than WeekB1 because sometimes I’m bore [bored].
- I study English more than WeekB1 because I want to improve my English.
- I want to study English more than WeekB1 because I want to improve my English.

Her less positive attitude to learning English is understandable as she did not see the value of the general English class as a whole, even though she thought some activities good. Also, boredom is one of the demotivating factors (Kent, 1997).

BS1’s story shows how important goal-setting is for learners with instrumental and extrinsic motives. It also supports the idea that attitude to the learning situation influences learner motivation as in Gardener’s socio-educational model. BS1’s story counters AS4’s story (section 6.4) in that both subjects had negative feelings to the course but their influence on motivation greatly varied. The reason behind this is probably the different nature of their long-term goals.

6.12 BS2’s story

BS2 was a young Asian male. He started in WeekB5 and moved to Certificate III after Term B.

As BS2 started, I interviewed him to ask why he studied English instead of asking him to write an essay on the matter. He wanted to go to university in Australia because being educated at the tertiary level in an English speaking country would help him get a good job back in his country. His motivational disposition was instrumental and extrinsic.

Through an interview in WeekB6, I found that BS2 had a clear idea about his study. His long-term goal was solid. He was aware of his weakness, grammar, and he believed in a friendly atmosphere in the classroom:
Q. What do you think of the class?

BS2: All the teachers are friendly, especially you are friendly. When you teach, I feel relaxed.

Q. Do you want to do any activities in particular?

BS2: Grammar.

Q. Why?

BS2: Because it is important for academic writing. I want to study at a university, so I need to do academic writing. (Interview WeekB6)

My friendliness did not only help him to relax but also encouraged BS2 to be honest with me. He did not hesitate to give me critical feedback and to make suggestions. For example, in WeekB7, he said as follows:

Q. When do you feel bad about your study?

BS2: When we do group work. I say something many times but some people in my group don’t understand me.

Q. What do you think of a discussion based on a newspaper article?

BS2: It’s good but I want to read the article in class, not as homework.

Q. Why do you say that?

BS2: Because I forget what I read. (Interview WeekB7)

As he pointed out, grouping was difficult in Term B because there were only three language groups in class and the range of student levels was huge. I learned to be far more careful about making groups after his feedback. His second comment made me give students a five-minute reading period before we started checking the answers to the homework so that they could revise the content. What he told me during this interview helped me to create better lessons.

He must have been comfortable about communicating with me because he started to write about personal aspects of his life in his diary (WeekB7). BS2 and I talked about a problem which he had in Australia and I made some suggestions to make his life a little easier (Interview WeekB7).
In WeekB8, we had a discussion about taking an examination. BS2, as well as AS4, AW3 and BS1, said that exam scores were not good indicators of learning. He acknowledged some advantages of exams as an assessment tool, such as time efficiency, and also stipulated that the candidate should have opportunities to demonstrate their skills in supplementary tools, namely project work and presentations. The discussion told me that BS2 did not fully agree with traditional methods of assessment and that he was mastery-orientated.

When a third party interviewed him in WeekB9, what he told her was by and large the same as what he usually told me: his long-term goal of studying English, the priority of studying grammar for him, and the importance of the friendly atmosphere in class. He regarded friendliness as extremely important because it worked the best for him in terms of learning. The interview also revealed that BS2 included our negotiation process during interviews and casual conversations to decide our class activities as part of the ‘friendly atmosphere’.

By saying ‘friendly atmosphere’, BS2 actually indicated two important factors for motivating classes. First, it was important to create a friendly, relaxed and pleasant atmosphere in class so that students would not feel nervous or anxious. Previous studies have reiterated how essential this is (Dörnyei, 2001a; Dörnyei & Csizér, 1998; Rogers, 1992). Second, ‘friendly atmosphere’ in BS2’s remarks also meant teachers’ attentiveness toward students, namely how seriously they took students’ needs, preferences and opinions into consideration. This pertains to the affective domain discussed in section 5.3.4. BS2 was in favour of participating in a decision-making process for class activities because he felt his opinions were valued. By the same token, he insisted that students would get demotivated if teachers did not listen to students willingly (casual conversation WeekB9).

BS2 did not mean that students always had to come first. During the discussion on how I could become a better teacher in WeekB10, he suggested that there should be ‘serious time’ and ‘fun time’ in one lesson. In his opinion, students needed to listen to the teacher seriously during ‘serious time’, and they could have relaxed communicative activities during ‘fun time’. He preferred a class which was a mixture of teacher-centred and learner-centred activities, and that was what I had aspired to provide in my class.
As Figure 6.12 shows, his state motivation was stable, which made sense because the important factors in class for him were atmosphere and teachers’ attitude to students, both of which did not change radically from one day to another. Thus, class activities did not have great impact on his state motivation.

Figure 6.12 Fluctuation of state motivation of BS2

As for BS2’s trait motivation, one component, effort, showed slight increase as can be seen in the table 6.12.

Table 6.12 Results of questionnaires Part A BS2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>component</th>
<th>statement</th>
<th>change from WeekB5 to B10:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Those marked * are negative and thus the scale 5 to 1 corresponds to the scale 1 to 5 used for positive statements.)</td>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attitude</td>
<td>I really enjoy learning English.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I hate English.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Learning English is a waste of time.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>effort</td>
<td>I like doing homework.</td>
<td>3→4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I speak English at home.</td>
<td>4→5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I study English at home every day.</td>
<td>3→4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t try to understand more difficult English.</td>
<td>3→1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I don’t pay attention to feedback from my teacher.</td>
<td>3→1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desire</td>
<td>I want to spend more time learning English.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*I really have no desire to learn English.</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>integrative orientation</td>
<td>I study English to talk with more and different people.</td>
<td>3 ← 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instrumental orientation</td>
<td>Learning English is really useful.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I study English to get a good job.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Part B BS2 said:

- I enjoy studying English more than WeekB5 because everything is fun.
- I study English more than WeekB5 because every week the subject different and I must study hard for my good English.
- I want to study English more than WeekB5 because it’s important and useful.

As an extra comment he wrote, “My class is fun and I enjoyed every day”.

The decrease in integrative orientation seems reasonable because there were only three language groups in class and living with his relatives did not provide him with many opportunities to meet people from a different language background from his.

BS2 paid more attention to the teacher’s feedback than before. This change in the score and his remarks about teachers’ attitude during the interview supported the importance of a good relationship between students and the teacher.

The reading homework he had to do every week required him to make more effort than before. While I was not completely certain about rigorous homework and being coercive, it had a positive influence on BS2. His motivational behaviour was enhanced in only five weeks and he had positive feelings about behaviour modification (section 5.3.4).

It must be noted, however, that good communication and a trustworthy relationship between BS2 and me in addition to his understanding of a cause-effect relation and adequately developed metacognitive skills helped behaviour modification work well for BS2. Behaviour modification is controlling, and controlling teacher behaviour is often said to be detrimental to learner motivation (Boekaerts, 2001; Noels, 2003; Stribling, 2003). BS2’s story shows complexity of motivation and importance of local application of findings and implications from previous studies. In particular, his
story taught me that even controlling teacher behaviour could be motivating if the situation was appropriate.

6.13 BW1 and BW2’s story

BW1 was an older Asian male student and BW2 was a younger Asian female student. They started in WeekB1 and continued studying in the general class after Term B.

This section describes both BW1 and BW2’s changes together over the term from my point of view. Because their language skills were not strong enough to fill in the questionnaire, feedback form, and keep diaries, their data was collected only through interviews and my observation. Interviewing them was not always functional as I did not understand their first nor second languages well enough. As a result, this section is bound to be incomplete as data, although it still provides information to support the findings of previous research.

BW1 and BW2 had two things in common: both of them came to Australia because they had families here, and their initial English levels were extremely low. BW2, in particular, was able to say only her name and nationality.

For them, staying with their families was more important than studying English, and naturally they did not show much enthusiasm for learning the language at first. Moreover, their English skills were at such a low level that they did not fully understand the lesson on Monday when the whole class was taught together. It is not difficult to imagine how demotivating the situation was for them. For the Monday class I gave them homework beforehand so that they could prepare to participate in the activities, but they hardly did homework and often looked bored in class. Later they told me that they had found the homework too difficult (Interview WeekB10) even though I believed that they were capable of completing it and I had contacted their family members to help them with the homework.

Fortunately, they started to enjoy the Thursday morning class with me. In WeekB4 during a casual conversation, BW1 and BW2 said that they liked my lesson because it was easy to understand. They thought my explanations clear and examples I used funny, and as a result, easy to remember.
In Weeks B7 and B8, as described in section 5.2.1, BW1 and BW2 voluntarily took a listening test. The reason why they decided to take the test was that they wanted to study more. By that juncture, their language skills had much improved compared to their initial levels. BW1 said that the more he understood, the more he wanted to study. Their remarks supported that experiencing success was motivating (Biehler, Snowman, and Bonk, 1997 p. 399; Dörnyei, 2001; Li, 2004 p.10).

In Week B10, I asked BW1 and BW2 to tell me good things and bad things about my lessons. Neither of them liked the homework because it was difficult. This homework issue was the only thing they mentioned as a bad aspect of my teaching. Instead, they gave me several good aspects. They were:

- **BW1**
  - paying attention to everyone
  - easy to understand
  - teaching slowly
  - repeating many times, that is, teaching the same things again and again

- **BW2**
  - speaking slowly, easy to understand
  - teaching spellings
  - an appropriate level of lesson objectives, not too high, not too low.

They referred to my teaching approaches and class activities. The suitable level for the students was the key element in both. It is sometimes said that the teacher should talk naturally in the language classroom and that some students prefer their teacher to talk fast, but their feedback counters this. As they were living in an English speaking country, they were almost always surrounded by authentic material. However, their language skills were not good enough to benefit from it. Consequently, the language teacher should provide the learning environment where they can learn the skills comfortably at an appropriate level. In that sense, their positive learning attitude was indirectly connected with the activities on Thursday morning, when they were taught separately from other students.
6.13 Summary

This chapter has described motivational fluctuations of all the subjects individually during their study.

The state motivation of some students was clearly influenced by class activities whereas other students showed stable state motivation no matter what activities they experienced in class. The students appeared to consider class activities important for their study, but their negative effects stood out more distinctively than the positive ones. This is in line with Oxford’s (1998) study which found that some class activities caused discomfort among students and conflict between their teachers and them.

The next chapter will deal with findings additional to those in Chapters 4 to 6, and it also considers the two terms as one big action research cycle.
Chapter 7

Discussion
Chapter 7 Discussion

This chapter discusses additional findings which do not fit well in chapters 4 and 5, and describes how the suggestions presented in Sections 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 to motivate students and to teach them self-motivating strategies worked in my classroom.

The first section of this chapter looks at the relation between state motivation and trait motivation. The second section looks at how motivation of my students fluctuated in the frames of the socio-educational model and the other four theories. In the third, it is discussed whether or not the students developed self-motivating strategies suggested by Dörnyei (2003), Lee (2001) and Pintrich (1999).

7.1 State motivation and trait motivation

Before Term A I had expected that the positive reactions of students to class activities would accumulate and eventually influence trait motivation positively. My assumption was the opposite of Tremblay et al.’s (1995) study which proved that trait motivation affected state motivation.

The data collected in the current study did not show clear correlation between state and trait motivation because none of the students had low trait motivation when they started studying with us, and therefore it is not possible to make a comparison between students with high trait motivation and those who had low trait motivation. Moreover, the students whose state motivation was lower than the other students, AW1 and BS2, had scored their initial trait motivation as high as the others (sections 6.8, 6.12). Hence, it can not be concluded that trait motivation influenced state motivation either.

7.2 The socio-educational model and the other four theories

In this section, first a strong motivating factor for my students, instrumentality, is examined from a view point of the socio-educational model and the other four theories, namely self-determination theory, attribution theory, expectancy-value theory and goal theory. Second, this section considers whether or not the suggestions for creating motivating lessons drawn from the four theories worked for my students.
7.2.1 The importance of instrumentality

The results of the current study presented several differences from those of previous studies, one of which is the role of instrumentality. This subsection discusses the importance of instrumentality for motivation among my students.

Gardner’s socio-educational model shows that learner motivation is affected by three factors: integrativeness, attitude toward the learning situation and instrumentality (see section 2.1). I did not particularly attempt to increase my students’ integrativeness in teaching both terms because they were living in the target language country and were sufficiently exposed to the target culture and language outside class and I did not see a great necessity to introduce Australian culture so as to promote students’ integrativeness in class. The only activity which overtly familiarised students to Australian culture and society was the Behind the News (BTN) session, which the students generally found useful and informative.

It was clear that students’ feeling toward their learning situation had a great impact on students’ attitude especially in Term B (section 5.3). Interestingly, however, their state motivation did not show any decline around the time several issues arose. As explained in section 5.3.1, the students appeared to distinguish their attitude to the course from their attitude to their lessons. Also, their negative feelings toward the general class might have been negated by their positive evaluation of the lessons.

Instrumentality is said to potentially influence learner motivation in the language classroom (Gardner, 2005) whereas integrativeness and attitudes toward the learning situation have a strong influence according to the socio-educational model (section 2.1). However, instrumentality appeared to play a crucial role in this study. As my students mainly learned English to achieve their extrinsic goals, instrumentality had a rather strong impact on their motivation as they increased their motivational behaviour when they fully internalised extrinsic orientations. For example, AS2 started making more effort once he decided to take IELTS (International English Language Testing System) in Term A (section 6.2). AW3’s motivational behaviour increased as she started to see passing the admission test to the academic course as her short term goal (section 6.10). In Term B, the majority of the students asked me to give them listening tests and a reading test because they found the tests useful in order to pass the admission test to the academic course (section 5.2.1). These
increases in their motivational behaviour and more active attitude towards class activities can be explained from the viewpoint of self-determination theory, goal theory and expectancy-value theory because the students’ motivational orientations were extrinsic.

None of my students regarded learning English itself as their main motive. They chose to come to Australia to study English, which means that their extrinsic motivation was not the external regulation or interjected regulation of Ryan and Deci’s study (2000). That is, they saw the values and usefulness attached to coming to Australia and studying at school. Usefulness was important and increased the students’ motivational behaviour, which expectancy value theory supports (section 2.2.4). In judging the value of lessons, students needed to consider their long term and short term goals. For example, the majority of students in Term B wanted to pass the admission test to the academic course, which was their short-term goal. When they asked me to give them more listening practice tests, they valued the usefulness of taking the practice test in relation to the admission test. When students have extrinsic motives, it is important to have such clear goals in order to evaluate their lessons. Once they recognise how related a particular activity is to their goals, they can see its value and engage in the activity as can be seen in stories of AS2 and AW3. In Term B, students asked me to give them a transcript of the BTN, one of the popular activities, and always read it before the lesson (section 5.2.1). Perceiving usefulness is motivating. Hence, instrumentality in this study had a direct influence on learner motivation.

7.2.2 Motivating lessons and the four cognitive psychology theories

Section 2.2 introduced four theories which are related to language learning motivation. The suggestions which these four theories offered in order to create the motivating classroom were:

- Create an environment supportive of autonomy and provide informative feedback
- Promote students’ self-efficacy and focus on effort to be successful
- Encourage students’ orientation towards mastery goals
- Provide important, useful and enjoyable class activities
The last suggestion was tested by trying to provide motivational activities by means of the data collected throughout the terms and its result has already been discussed in sections 4.8, 5.4 and 6.13. The following subsections (7.2.2.1 to 7.2.2.3) discuss whether or not the other three suggestions worked for my students as motivating strategies.

7.2.2.1 An environment supportive of autonomy and informative feedback

An environment supportive of autonomy in itself did not motivate students. In Term A, for example, I gave students opportunities to decide their personalised weekly homework, but only AS2 and AW2 regularly did it (section 4.2.1), and in Term B students decided not to do grammar presentations by acting as a teacher in turns and in lieu they asked me to explain grammar to them. Some students found this teacher-centred grammar session good (section 5.2.2), which can be interpreted as indicating that they found the teacher-centred lesson more motivating than student-centred. Furthermore, the majority of students did not set up their personal short term goals (section 4.2.1), which also relates to section 7.3.2.3, on goal orientation. One possible reason why my autonomy-supportive behaviour did not motivate them lies in their extrinsic motivational orientations. As in Noels’ study (2003), an autonomy-supportive environment is more deeply connected to intrinsic motivation than extrinsic motivation. Although other studies (e.g. Downing, 2000; Littlejohn, 2001) suggest promoting an autonomy-supportive atmosphere in the classroom to motivate students, not specifically intrinsically, in my classroom, where all of the students had largely extrinsic motives, autonomy support did not have a significant influence on their motivation.

On the other hand, students kept giving me their feedback on class tasks and were actively involved in the decision-making process. By ‘actively’ I mean students voluntarily told me what they felt about activities in class time and during the break time apart from the weekly interview sessions and the feedback forms they filled out after each lesson. Some students were outspoken and did not hesitate to give me critical or constructive feedback for future lessons.

Thus, talking with students, particularly holding individual interviews, enabled students to take part in the decision-making. Moreover, it was an opportunity for me to give students informative feedback, although it was originally meant to be one of
my data gathering tools. Students appreciated the interview sessions where they talked with their teacher individually about not only their feelings about class activities, but also their problems in studying English and living in Australia (sections 4.7 and 5.3.5). As a result, I was able to give them personalised and informative feedback and made suggestions, which students greatly appreciated. Informative feedback was obviously effective for motivating students, as could be seen from AW2’s remark during the usual interviews and the third party interview in WeekA9 (section 6.9) and AS4 and AW3’s remarks in class in WeekB10. AS4 and AW3 wanted more not only oral feedback during the interview but written feedback so that they could study more efficiently (section 5.3.4). However, giving positive feedback unnecessarily was detrimental. AW3 made me realise how harmful it was to praise students when I just wanted to encourage them (see section 5.2.3).

7.2.2.2. Promoting students’ self-efficacy and focusing on effort

Regrettably, I did not succeed in promoting students’ self-efficacy and convincing all of my students how important motivational behaviour was, even though I repeatedly encouraged them to study outside of their classroom. Consequently, I am unable to decide whether or not promoting self-efficacy and focusing on effort were motivating for students.

Students develop their self-efficacy by experiencing successes or failures in language learning and by understanding why they succeeded or failed. If they attribute their successes and failures to external causes, they will be unlikely to be able to accurately gauge their expectancy of success next time they face the same or similar challenge. By the same token, if they do not reason that their successes or failures are caused by their effort or lack of it, they will not focus on effort to acquire language skills either.

As we have seen in section 5.3.1, some students thought they failed in the admission test at the beginning of Term B due to an external cause. Because I did not know AS4 and BS1’s reasoning until later in the term, I failed in helping them understand why they could not move up to Certificate III. Moreover, I could not do anything in particular with AM3 and AW1’s overconfidence in their English skills in general. Changing perspectives of adult learners is difficult and I was not confident enough of the trust between them and me to attempt to do so (section 5.2.3).
In the hope of convincing the students of the importance of effort, I had them take review tests on vocabulary and grammar rules quite regularly in Term A and a little intermittently in Term B. Their scores were generally quite low and they did not start making more effort to get better results. In particular, weak students did not seem to realise how important revision at home was (4.2.1). Their score on the review test did not improve, in other words, they did not experience successes, which did not show them a cause-effect relationship, that is, that making effort would bring better test results. Likewise, the majority of students skipped submitting their diaries in Term B even though they insisted that they had to practise writing and I reminded them of keeping and submitting diaries every week (section 5.2.3).

The students had been aware that they needed to make effort, but they procrastinated. In Term B, behaviour modification forced most of them to read at home and as a result they experienced successes in discussions about current affairs by expending more effort, which showed them clearly the cause-effect relationship (section 5.2.3). Behaviour modification helped them to appreciate the importance of effort, but the prompts (assigned reading homework) were not removed owing to time constraints, and this practice was heavily teacher-centred. Furthermore, one student could not complete the homework and never felt a sense of attainment. This brought him stress and he became demotivated as a consequence (section 6.8). Therefore, this approach was not fully successful for convincing the students of the importance of expending effort.

Another issue to be noted regarding effort is that the way students studied outside class was quite often ineffective, which is related to metacognitive skills. All of the students studied at home to a certain degree even before the behaviour modification approach, but what some of them did was not always suitable for them (see section 4.2.2). Those students were short of metacognitive knowledge and could not assess their language skills properly and did not understand the task they primarily needed to do.

Understanding oneself as a learner is part of metacognitive knowledge, which is pertinent to self-efficacy. Without well developed metacognitive knowledge, students do not know thoroughly what they should do outside class. In fact, several students said that they did not know what to do without teachers’ feedback on their
study (WeekB10 during a discussion, see section 5.3.4). This explains why they did not properly prioritise what they needed to do at home. This also explains why some students were overconfident of their language skills and attributed their failures to external causes.

It is desirable that teachers help students assess their language skills accurately so that they will not have disillusioned self-efficacy. Saying that, changing students’ perspective is not easy, especially in the case of adult learners. Although Thanasoulas (2000) states that persuasive talks with students are useful when the teacher needs to change students’ views on a particular issue, there seem to be several conditions for successful persuasive talks. A trustworthy relationship between students and the teacher is essential. Also the way the teacher talks with students affect students’ feelings considerably. The teacher needs to be extremely careful in attempting to change students’ views. As explained in section 5.3, I was unable to communicate with the students to change their views. This is a task I need to work on continuously, as disagreement between students and the teacher is not uncommon and my classroom was not an exception.

7.2.2.3 Encouraging students’ orientation towards mastery goals

Goals in general motivated students whereas my encouragement of mastery-goal orientation did not seem to have a great influence. Once the students set up their own goals, either long or short term, mastery or performance, their motivational behaviour increased.

I tried various things to promote the students’ orientation towards mastery goals. At the beginning of the both terms, I explained my expectations for the term and said that students could use them as their short term goals and I encouraged them to decide their personal goals (sections 4.2.1 and 5.2.3). I wrote lesson objectives on the board before each class started. Class activities were designed to suit the students’ needs and preferences as a response to the feedback forms, diaries, interviews and observations. Although I publicly displayed their review test results several times in order to convince them of the importance of making effort, I usually discussed the students’ skills with them privately. Also I focused on individual progress without comparing students with others.
My attempts above might have affected the students’ attitudes towards mastery goals. Some of them showed their mastery-goal orientation during a discussion in WeekB8 (section 5.2.3) by stating that getting a good mark in a test and learning were different. However, their motivational behaviour seemed to be positively affected by the goals which they themselves had decided no matter which goal orientation students possessed, mastery or performance. AS2 started writing practice, which he had previously refused, when he decided to take IELTS (section 6.2). Similarly, when AW3 decided to study at TAFE and take the admission test to the academic course, her motivational behaviour was intensified (section 6.10). AS3’s long term goal shifted from getting a good job to understanding different cultures after he had arrived in Australia. He made more effort than before because this goal was very clear and directly connected to his every day life (section 6.3). AS4 was always dedicated and she had a clear goal from the beginning (section 6.4). Therefore, it can be concluded that as long as students decided their own goals voluntarily, goals motivated them.

On the other hand, common goals I suggested at the beginning of the terms did not motivate students. As Locke and Latham (1990) state in their study, shared goals must be internalised by students. External forces, such as teachers’ encouragement or advice, are unlikely to motivate students.

Students who had unstable goals showed less motivational behaviour than those with clear and realistic goals. As we have seen in sections 6.6 and 6.11, AM2 and BS1 seemed not to know what they were studying English for. As a result, they could not focus on the skills they needed to work on, did not see the connection between class activities and their goals, and did not feel the urge to narrow the gap between their ultimate goals and their levels at that time.

Merely having clear goals was not sufficient for learner motivation. AW1’s long and short term goals were always clear (section 6.8). Nevertheless, he did not start making more effort because he did not understand how much effort he had to expend to reach these goals, where metacognitive skills were involved. Although he wanted to study at university in an English speaking country and decided to take the admission test to the academic English course, he could not assess his skill level and blindly believed he would achieve these goals without expending extra effort outside
of class. Furthermore, AW1 showed more orientation towards performance goals than the other students, as can be seen in section 5.2.1. This orientation too might have prevented him from focusing on his skills and their improvement.

Overall, goals increased the students’ motivational behaviour. However, the goal had to come from the students and it had to be clear and realistic. A mastery or performance goal dichotomy did not appear to make a big difference in motivational behaviour among my students as long as they decided their goals by themselves. Metacognitive skills are again involved in the connection between goal setting and ensuing motivational behaviour, as in AW1’s story (section 6.8).

7.2.3. Summary for this section

As seen above, the results of the current study partially disagreed with previous studies. First, instrumentality strongly influenced the students’ motivational behaviour. Second, an autonomy-supportive environment did not have a positive impact on the students’ motivation. Lastly, a mastery or performance dichotomy in goal orientation was not significant in this study as students intensified their motivational behaviour once they set up their goals by themselves regardless of their types.

These discrepancies suggest how important it is for teachers to try out different kinds of motivating strategies and find out the effective ones for their own students. Although the socio-educational model is comprehensive, each classroom is different and each teacher needs to know what works for his/her own class. In this study, the students had extrinsic motives, which were not significantly enhanced by the autonomy-supportive atmosphere. On the other hand, informative feedback, which is the other factor that Noels’ study (2003) contends is important to increase students’ intrinsic motivation, helped the students keep motivated.

To develop self-efficacy, metacognitive skills are essential. As discussed in section 5.2.3, some students did not have well-developed metacognitive knowledge for assessing their own skills properly and for choosing appropriate tasks to improve their skills effectively. They were overconfident without realising how important making effort was for their study. To present a cause-effect relation between effort and improvement in their skills, behaviour modification was effective for most of the
students. It is desirable to shift control from the teacher to students in employing behaviour modification by gradually removing prompts in order to nurture students’ independence.

Common goals were not effective for my students. The students needed to set up their own goals. Class goals I prepared in the beginning of the terms did not cause students to strive to achieve them. Among students who decided their own goals, those who had clear and realistic goals increased their motivational behaviour. Also, again, metacognitive knowledge is essential in order to assess how far their goals are from their current positions and recognise the importance of making extra effort.

7.3 Self-motivating strategies

Successful ways to teach my students self-motivating strategies could not be found. Attempts were made to implement various suggestions from the previous studies (Lee, 2001; Pintrich, 1999), none of which resulted in clear emergence of self-motivating strategies among the students. This section reviews those suggestions from Lee (2001) and Pintrich’s (1999) studies in association with my students’ behaviour and describes what I actually did to encourage the students to use self-motivating strategies in class and the students’ reactions to them.

7.3.1 Suggestions from previous studies and my students

Lee (2001) and Pintrich’s (1999) approaches to creating an environment which nurtures self-motivating skills among students were discussed in section 2.4.

Lee’s (2001 p. 94) study suggests that by linking motivation to a decision-making process the language classroom can help students’ motivation management. In the present study, I asked the students to give me feedback on class activities, and according to their feedback I planned class activities. By giving me feedback, students participated in the decision making process in terms of class activities and they assumed the responsibility for their learning to a certain degree. Although it was impossible to accommodate everybody’s needs, both the students and I tried together to make our lessons motivating. The students and I shared the locus of control over deciding class activities. It can be said that this entire project was a process of helping students to make decisions on their learning, and hopefully to ultimately develop self-motivating strategies.
The result was not clear, however. The students did not show clear decline in their trait motivation despite the generally accepted idea that students’ motivation tends to decrease over time (Gardner, 2005 p. 15; Pintrich, 2003 p. 680), except AW1 and BS1, who explicitly expressed their less positive attitude to learning English in their final questionnaire. What underlay the students’ sustained or enhanced motivation could be class activities, living in an English speaking country, sensing their progress by communicating with people outside of their classroom, and their involvement in the decision making process. During the terms I saw some students use the self-motivating strategies which Dörnyei (2003) suggested, but whether the students had possessed those skills before they started studying with us or they learned to use the skills during their study is uncertain.

Another study which suggested the ways to move students toward the direction of self-motivating strategies is Pintrich’s (1999). The following is the changes which the classroom should adopt in order to promote self-regulated learning.

- Provide opportunities to exercise some choice and control
- Provide feedback that stresses competence and importance of effort
- Provide tasks that offer opportunities to be successful
- Provide interesting, useful and important tasks
- Use organisation and instructions that encourage students to attain their goals.

Throughout the two terms I attempted to make such changes in my classroom. I tried to give the students choices and control by inviting them to take part in decision making for class activities, asking them to play the role of a teacher in the grammar class (section 4.3) and asking them for any suggestions to improve their learning environment (section 5.2.3). The behaviour modification approach provided students with opportunities to see the cause-effect relation between effort and progress and to experience successes by making effort. I also tried to encourage orientation towards mastery goals among students as described earlier in this chapter (section 7.2.2.3). Finally, one of the main purposes of the current study was to find motivating class activities for my students and throughout the terms I tried to provide interesting, useful and important tasks.
Despite my attempts, I could not see tangible outcomes. This may be related to the fact that most of my students were extrinsically motivated. According to Young (2005), extrinsically motivated students tend to depend on teachers’ feedback and directions. My students usually positively responded to what I did to motivate them and they appreciated their involvement in decision making about class activities. Yet, they did not seem to foresee the benefits of doing anything further than that, that is, not only helping me create motivating lessons but actually creating such a learning environment for themselves more actively. This sort of passiveness and teacher-dependency even among highly motivated students was pointed out in a study by Song (2005). Students’ high motivation to learn the language may not be equated with their motivation to become active and independent learners.

7.3.2 Teaching self-motivating strategies

This subsection describes what was done as a class activity to introduce self-motivating strategies to students and how students reacted.

Before I began this research, I had planned to incorporate Dörnyei’s self-motivating strategies (2003 p. 25) into my class (section 2.4). In reality, I could not sufficiently and fully consciously do so because I was too preoccupied with other issues which came up from day-to-day lessons. However, what I implemented on other issues such as learner autonomy is connected with his self-motivating strategies.

7.3.2.1 Commitment control strategies

Dörnyei (2003 p. 25) maintains that there are five kinds of self-motivating strategies. The first one is commitment control strategies for “helping to preserve or increase learners’ original goal commitment”. In both Terms A and B, I encouraged students to set up their goals by spending quite a long time on goal-setting as a class discussion, but my encouragement did not seem to have a great impact on students (sections 4.2.1, 5.2.3 and 7.2.2.3).

Most of my students kept motivated, and having clear goals, both short term and long term ones, seemed to have strong influence on their trait motivation (see sections 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, and 6.10). Some students had a clear goal before they started studying with us, and the others set up goals voluntarily as they made progress. The latter students decided their goals without regard to my encouragement. In that sense, I did
not seem to play a significant role in teaching them commitment control strategies. Nevertheless, these students support Dörnyei’s first suggestion that preserving or increasing goal commitment helps learners keep motivated.

AW1’s story counters this, however. AW1 had clear distant and proximal goals (studying at a university and moving up to Certificate III respectively), but he became demotivated in Term B. As discussed in section 7.2.2.3, merely having a clear goal may not help students motivate themselves. They need to have a proper metacognitive knowledge to measure the gap between their current levels and ultimate goals, and they also need to see a cause-effect relation, in this case relation between effort and progress in language skills.

7.3.2.2. Metacognitive control strategies

I tried to nurture metacognitive control strategies for monitoring and controlling concentration and for curtailing unnecessary procrastination in Term B without tangible success (section 5.2.3). Review tests on vocabulary and grammar did not cause students to start revision at home. However, behaviour modification worked well for most of the students. They said that regular and challenging reading homework helped them discipline themselves to study at home (section 5.3.4). Although they managed time and emotions, and started making more effort owing to this approach, establishing their study routines for themselves needed more time than ten weeks. I could not remove the scaffolding within ten weeks and consequently students did not have an opportunity to take the initiative or assume full responsibility for their own study outside of the classroom.

7.3.2.3 Satiation control strategies

I initially thought that satiation control strategies would be developed through experiencing interesting class activities because these strategies are “for eliminating boredom and adding extra attraction or interest to the task” (Dörnyei, 2003 p. 25). I hoped that the students would learn how to make their learning less tedious or more attractive by applying what they found enjoyable in class, playing games for example, to their study at home because I was going to provide activities which the students would enjoy doing based on their feedback and suggestions.
However, after two terms my assumption proved too simplistic. Activities which students could enjoy were only one aspect of attractiveness. I should have been aware that all of my students had instrumental and extrinsic motives. They probably did not expect learning English to be interesting, but even so they had decided to study it for their future plans. Therefore, the extra attraction they might add to their learning first of all was not interest but usefulness. As can been seen in AW3’s story (section 6.10), students tend to be more engaged in activities when they see usefulness in them or homework, which concurs with studies by Wigfield and Guthrie (1995) and Biehler, Snowman and Bonk (1997). For adult learners like my students, probably the attraction of the task is not just evanescent pleasure, such as having fun by playing games (see section 5.3.4), but pleasure to see that they benefit from the activity for their goals.

Some of the students suggested changes in activities because they wanted to focus on particular skills in class. They wanted me to plan lessons according to their suggestions so that they could practise the areas they wanted to brush up. These students added more usefulness to our lessons and kept motivated. Outside class some students enjoyed communication in English, which gave them pleasure to see their capability and progress (see sections 6.2, 6.3, 6.5 and 6.6). Thus, they were able to please and motivate themselves. However, whether these students did the above as conscious motivation management is arguable. Similar to the commitment control strategies, the students had probably had the satiation control strategies before they started studying with us.

An important lesson for me was trying to understand how students regard studying English. I wrongly assumed that students would get more motivated when they found learning English interesting. That was because of my own past experience. When I was studying English as a foreign language in Japan, I found it interesting. Memorising a lot of new words and grammar rules gave me pleasure of learning. I realised that my past experience as an English learner was a double-edged sword. On the one hand, I believe that I can predict what problems my students may have. On the other hand, I may overgeneralise English learning by applying my experience to my classroom. Although my English learning experience is one of my strengths as a teacher (E. Ellis, 2004), it can be harmful if I am careless.
7.3.2.4 Emotion control strategies

Dörnyei (2003 p. 25) defines emotion control strategies as strategies “for managing disruptive emotional states or moods and for generating emotions that will be conducive to implementing one’s intentions”. I find it difficult to treat these strategies independently, as affective variables are interwoven with metacognition. I did not realise this before and during the terms, and I planned to hold a discussion to talk about some negative feelings toward studying English, such as losing motivation. What I did through discussions in class was not only related to the emotional control strategies, but also the metacognitive control strategies (the second suggestion of Dörnyei’s).

We had several discussions which focused on how to control negative emotions and behaviour (sections 4.2.1 and 5.2.3). While students showed their understanding of how important it was not to be negative toward studying English and toward activities they needed to do but did not want to do, such as studying grammar and practising writing, they did not act in the way they hoped: AW3 did not study vocabulary and AM3 did not practise writing, although they said that they had to or wanted to work on those areas, for example (section 4.2.2). Students may not start disciplining themselves without any apparent triggers or critical incidents even when they know they should act that way. Language learning is a long, strenuous process. Students need not only understand but experience the benefit of controlling their emotions and behaviour. Behaviour modification seemed to help students feel the result of controlling their emotions and behaviour, although how much that helped students control their emotions in particular is not clear from my data. Several students, namely AS4, AM3, AW3, BS1 and BS2, verbalised their acknowledgment of this approach (section 5.3.4). The homework prevented the students from being lazy and it curtailed procrastination. On the other hand, AW1 disliked this approach. It was clear from his feedback form that his feelings were negatively influenced by it.

When it comes to feelings, in Term B the students told me how they changed their negative moods. Their ways to do so were going for a walk, singing songs, talking with friends, and telling themselves that they had to study (Interviews WeeksB2 and B3). These students studied English by choice, and so are different from students who study the language as a school subject in terms of their initial motivational
orientations. Even so, they shared some strategies for controlling their feelings with subjects in a study by Oldfather (1994). Oldfather’s subjects were elementary school students and did not have a choice but studied in class. This means that even adult learners are most likely to feel fed up and lazy from time to time even though they decide to study English. In the case of my students, behaviour modification was generally effective. It is desirable for students and teachers to know how to deal with negative feelings so that students can keep motivated until they achieve their long term goals.

7.3.2.5 Environmental control strategies

Environmental control strategies are for eliminating negative environmental effects on their learning and exploiting positive ones so that students can reach their goals (Dörnyei, 2003 p. 25). My students were basically capable of using these strategies. I found this out through class discussions, interviews and casual conversations. When I asked them during a class discussion and regular interviews if there was anything they wanted to change in our learning environment, they suggested a change in the timetable, class activities for their needs, and more teachers’ feedback on their learning. On the other hand, some aspects of their environment could not be easily changed. For example, some students were staying with their relatives and spoke in their first language at home, and some worked a lot after school for financial reasons.

One interesting aspect to the environmental control strategies was when students made suggestions to change their learning environment, their proposals did not always indicate their enthusiasm for learning. When I asked students if there was anything they wanted to change in our learning environment so that they could study more comfortably, one student said that he wanted a new microwave in the kitchen and a flashy student card (section 6.8). His remark showed his lack of enthusiasm because he was distracted by the microwave and the student card. Environmental control is one of Dörnyei’s self-motivating strategies, and it is also part of self-regulated learning skills (Pintrich, 1999 p. 462). However, the teacher needs to be careful about students’ suggestions for their learning environment so as not to blindly believe that students use their environmental control strategies to motivate themselves.
7.3.3 Reflection on teaching self-motivating strategies

With hindsight, I could not help students learn how to motivate themselves as much as I had wanted. Before starting Term A I had anticipated two possible problems which would prevent students from developing self-motivating strategies. They were time constraints and the students’ unwillingness to learn non-language skills, both of which were in fact the partial causes of this unsatisfactory result.

As can be seen in section 5.2.3, it takes time for students to develop metacognitive skills. Being interwoven with metacognitive skills, self-motivating strategies too require students to invest a lot of time. Thus, the limitation in time was one of the reasons why students did not develop self-motivating strategies to the extent that the development could be clearly seen.

Self-motivating strategies are non-language skills, in which the students might not have been interested. The initial questionnaire showed all of my students had a strong desire to learn English, but whether or not they had also a strong desire to learn non-language skills, even though these would ultimately help them improve language skills, was another story. They came to school and studied for five hours five days a week. In their view, being in class for twenty-five hours a week might have seemed sufficient to improve their English. By the same token, they might have wondered why their teacher encouraged them to reflect on their learning, to write and talk about it. After all, they had decided to come to Australia to study English, not to study how to study. Moreover, my part was not problem-free. Especially in Term B, I was under a lot of pressure to help students improve their language skills fast. Even though I believed at heart that learning to be independent would be of students’ benefit in the long run, I could not spend much time on such non-language skills as metacognitive skills in class.

My failure in this aspect does not mean that teachers should give up on exploring the ways to teach self-motivating strategies in class. Teachers may not see a great success in helping students develop the strategies. However, they should be able to see some emergence and what works to lead their students to the direction toward the strategies in their own classroom.
7.4 Summary

The current study did not explicitly show a relation between state and trait motivation, either for the whole class or for individual students. Although most students kept motivated or became more motivated over the course, it can not be shown that class activities played a role in it. As students pointed out (sections 5.3.4 and 6.2), class activities did not stand alone but were part of a lesson. How the teacher presents activities in what ways may affect student motivation more than activities in themselves. In that regard, teachers’ behaviour can be crucial and this issue will be discussed in the next chapter (section 8.3).

My students’ motivation did not perfectly fit in the framework of the socio-educational model or the other four psychological theories in that instrumentality was a rather strong motivational factor for my students, an autonomy-supportive environment did not motivate them, and mastery goals did not have a significant difference from performance goals. Creating an environment for self-regulated learning and introducing self-motivating strategies also presented interesting and rather unexpected outcomes. The uniqueness of individual classrooms explains these results. It is important for teachers to acknowledge this in trying to motivate their own students. Time was an important element for the current study in that metacognitive skills and self-motivating strategies need a lot of time to develop. The same goes to behaviour modification and developing a good relationship with students. Especially when students study English for instrumental and extrinsic motives, they usually want to satisfy required language levels for their purposes quickly and move on. Teachers, accordingly, are required to do as much as possible in a limited period of time, helping students improve their language skills, motivating them, as well as nurturing their metacognitive skills and self-motivating strategies. This is a challenging task, and can be demotivating for teachers. However, we, language teachers, always need to remember that teachers play an important role for learner motivation and we should keep trying to do as much as we can.
Chapter 8

Conclusion
Chapter 8 Conclusion

This chapter summarises the current project (8.1), presents implication for teachers (8.2), discusses teachers’ influence on students’ feelings (8.3), suggests further research topics (8.4) and winds up with my final reflection on the project (8.5).

8.1 Summary of the research

As indicated in Chapter 1, I have been anxious to find ways to motivate my students. Choosing my own students as subjects resulted from my desire to improve my teaching and become a better teacher for them.

Chapter 2 summarised previous studies on learner motivation directly related to the current study. This review led me to four suggestions on how language teachers could create motivating classrooms. In addition, self-motivating strategies and how to teach the strategies were introduced. Teachers’ positive and negative influence on learner motivation was also discussed.

Research on motivation has mainly employed self-report questionnaires, which has brought considerable contribution to understanding what motivation is and the relation between motivation and academic achievement. The purpose of the current study, on the other hand, was to find out how to motivate students through class activities. Therefore different types of data gathering, mainly qualitative methods in an action research type of approach, were employed. A cyclical and close investigation of small samples enabled me to evaluate and modify how I tried to motivate students through class activities. This type of research has its own disadvantages, of course, as discussed in Chapter 3.

In Chapters 4 and 5 I present eight action research cycles, which were implemented in Term A and Term B. While Chapter 4 focused on how to motivate students through class activities, Chapter 5 discusses not only activities to motivate students but also how I could help students develop metacognitive skills, which are essential for students to become more independent learners. A whole section (section 5.3) was devoted to students’ affective variables, as there were various factors which influenced the students’ feelings negatively and the relation between affect and learner motivation deserves our attention. Chapter 6 details the motivational fluctuations of individual students and their analysis. Chapter 7 discusses the relation
between state and trait motivation, and examines how suggestions from the previous studies on how to motivate students and to teach self-motivating strategies, which were introduced in Chapter 2, worked in the context of my classroom.

In the end, class activities were not clearly influential on trait motivation although they might have positively influenced state motivation. On the other hand, their negative influence on state motivation was clear. In addition, the current study has found different results from previous research as summarised in section 7.2.3. These findings offer important implications and a warning to practising teachers.

8.2 Implications for practising teachers

There are two important issues in this study for language teachers. One is how to create motivating classes (section 8.2.1), and the other is the benefits of action research (section 8.2.2).

8.2.1 How to create motivating lessons

Class activities in themselves did not explicitly function as a motivating factor. They seemed to be interwoven with my behaviour and atmosphere in my classroom and the combination of these possibly affected learner motivation. One possible key to motivating lessons, therefore, is to consider lessons as a whole without paying too much attention to disassembling them into small parts while incorporating students’ opinions into designing lessons.

Although Dörnyei (2001b p. 48) stated that it would be beneficial to identify factors of task motivation because it would enable teachers to systematically select tasks in a motivating manner, systematic selection of tasks will be extremely difficult, if not impossible, because students even reacted to the same class task differently depending upon their needs and the composition of the class at that time (sections 4.5 and 5.4). This indicates that what affects state motivation is unstable and complex, and therefore that it is difficult to design curriculum far beforehand to aim at increasing students’ task engagement.

One of the main factors which influenced the state motivation of my students was usefulness and it was related to their goals, which can change, especially in the case of short-term goals, as we have seen in the stories of AS2, AS3, AW3 (sections 6.2,
6.3 and 6.10). Therefore, even after teachers find that a certain activity increases students’ task engagement, they need to constantly monitor whether or not students still find the same activity motivating. In designing the curriculum, teachers must be aware that the components of task motivation are likely to be compound and unstable, and therefore, the curriculum may need adjustments in order to suit students’ needs.

In this study, there were several motivating factors which students mentioned apart from class activities and curriculum. Some were outside the classroom and others were inside. There is little teachers can do with external factors, but they could incorporate the internal factors, particularly motivating teacher behaviour, into lessons.

What my students found helpful for their learning among the teacher’s behaviour in Term A were:

- Writing lesson objectives on the board before class
- Regular interviews with students about their problems
- Demonstrating confidence in and enthusiasm for teaching.

In Term B, students wrote an essay about a good English lesson, in which they referred to the qualities of a good teacher. Those were:

- Being able to deliver lessons which students understand easily
- Being helpful to students’ learning by explaining and giving examples clearly

To create motivating lessons, it must be beneficial for teachers to consider their lessons holistically, meaning not only thinking of curriculum but also other factors like the above, which can influence students’ emotions. Because my students were all adult learners, some of them to say the least had certain ideas about ways to learn English, thanks to which I was able to ask them for their opinions about their class and to change whatever I could to make lessons more suitable for their needs as long as their suggestions were reasonable. Although adult learners may have incorrect fixed ideas or prejudices about how to study and, in fact, some of my students could not bring themselves to start making more substantial effort because of it, asking them for their opinions and respecting them is important. Knowing learners’ attitudes
towards the lesson content and teaching methods, teachers can improve their classroom practice (Wong, 2001). Without knowing how students feel, teachers would not know how to make a positive impact on their affective variables.

It must be noted that this may not apply to other situations, for instance high school students in an EFL setting. These students may not be keen on studying English to begin with and may not have particular ideas about how they want to study it. Yet there are ways to involve these students in lesson planning, as we have seen in Kuramoto’s (2001) study (section 2.3).

8.2.2 Benefits of Action research

The current study demonstrates the benefits of action research and collaboration with students. Dörnyei (2001a) introduces thirty-five useful motivating strategies, but, as he states, the teacher must try out these strategies and select the effective ones for his/her own students, which implies that it is difficult to generalise how to motivate students, and that it is important for the teacher to understand his/her own students well. Student cooperation is pivotal for teachers to get to know their students better.

This study helped me discover many things about my teaching. During my own English learning and teaching experience, I had developed prejudices and fixed ideas without knowing it and had unconsciously assumed that several activities were boring or interesting for students, only to find my assumptions wrong thanks to the cooperation of my students for the current study. I got to know my students better in the process of the data collection, such as weekly interviews which students highly valued as well. I critically reflected on my own teaching, spotted flaws, tried to improve them and see how new ways would fit in the classroom. All the way, students were contributors as well as subjects in that they provided me with information about themselves as learners and their evaluation of my teaching. Although I was the only official researcher in this study, my students acted as co-researchers.

My students noticed the changes I had made and reacted to them positively most of the time (sections 5.3.4, 6.1, and 6.9), which contrasts with Kubanyiova’s (2006) study. She presents a disappointing result of a professional development workshop where practising teachers learned how to create a motivational classroom
environment. Although all the participants in the workshop were keen on improving their classes in order to motivate their students, their students did not perceive the changes in teaching after the teachers completed the workshop and taught them again. It goes without saying that the lack of the students’ perception of changes does not mean that the teachers did not change their teaching, and in fact there were numerous obstacles against the teachers exercising what they had learned, such as bureaucracy and objections from other teachers. Admitting that those teachers were not living in the ideal world, from the students’ point of view, their teaching did not positively change, and students’ perceptions are what matters.

The difference between the participants in Kubanyiova’s study and mine is that they attempted strategies which they had learned in a professional development workshop while I changed my teaching based on my students’ responses and behaviour, and my students participated in the current study with interest in order to help me become a better teacher. During my endeavour to improve my teaching, the students’ reactions were varied even toward the same activity (sections 4.5 and 5.4), and while most of the students favoured one activity, one student was unsatisfied with it (section 5.4). This indicates that there is no panacea for creating a motivating environment, and the teacher needs to make incessant effort to create such an environment by communicating with his/her own students, and action research which invites students as collaborators definitely makes this possible. The power of students' voices has been acknowledged in education for a long time (Fullan & Stiegelbauer, 1991).

Needless to say, teachers’ own experiences and receptive attitudes to critical student feedback are not always sufficient to make action research successful. As mentioned earlier in this section, I used my own experience and intuition to make some judgments, which was the wrong thing to do. It is true that experience helps teachers improve their teaching, but they need to consciously attempt to expand their views on teaching too. Listening to students’ voices is important, but as my colleague pointed out (section 5.2.2), accepting students’ opinions all the time is not the critical attitude which is necessary for successful action research.

Reading literature to understand theories which underlie approaches and techniques is essential too. When I encountered mysteries in the process of data gathering, I
turned to my previous experience, my colleagues and literature. While my past experience and colleagues offered practical advice to me, reading literature gave me theoretical explanations of why certain things took place in the classroom as well as suggestions which neither my colleagues nor I had come up with. Although my situation simply happened to lack other sources, sources from which teachers can learn theories include not only research but conferences, seminars, and workshops. The point is that teachers need both experienced knowledge and received knowledge (Nunan, 2001 p. 198) in association with their current practice in order to enhance their competence.

As mentioned in section 3.2, there are different types of action research. Not all action research requires teachers to employ structured and objective approaches or to connect with existing knowledge (A. Burns, 2000). For instance, when teachers are confronted by a concrete and personal problem in the classroom, they may want to deal with it immediately and swiftly, focusing on only their classroom with no intentions to relate their findings to outside communities. They have a question on their mind, collect, analyse and interpret data to improve their situation, which suffices as a definition of research (Nunan, 2001 p. 199). However, teachers may intend to share their findings with a wider audience in hope of receiving comments on their interpretations, because exchanging ideas is always helpful to expand their horizons, which can improve their skills as teachers. In that case, it is desirable to take an objective point of view, and reviewing literature enables teachers to learn other people's ideas in a directed and purposeful manner (Wallace, 2003 p. 214).

Action research is as an effective way to improve teachers’ practice because it is a way of enhancing teachers’ knowledge about teaching in their own classroom (A. Burns, 2000). Teachers often behave in their classroom without reflecting on their conduct. In acting in a routinised way, they may demotivate students. Action research makes it possible for teachers to look at their teaching in a critical way in order to make positive changes.

8.3 Teachers’ influence
This section first looks at teachers’ negative influence on learner motivation by reviewing my experience with the current study. Secondly, it describes how five types of teacher power were perceived by my students.
8.3.1 Warning for teachers

The current study warns that teachers can be culprits for demotivating students. AW1’s story (section 6.8) clearly shows my negative influence on his state motivation and his long-term attitude toward learning English, and this is supported by previous studies which contend that the teacher is the biggest cause of learner demotivation (e.g. Arai, 2000; Christophel and Gorham, 1995; Ushioda, 1998).

What AW1 could not stand was coercive power, one of the five types of teacher power introduced in section 2.5. Teven and Herring’s (2002) study showed that coercive power was negatively related to student satisfaction. I had known the result of their study and had been aware of the risk of using coercive power. Nevertheless, at the stage where I attempted the behaviour modification approach, I felt that I did not have any other choices due to the pressure I was under. I desperately wanted to help students improve their language skills and wanted them to regulate their learning (sections 5.1 and 5.2.3). Still, the fact that I demotivated AW1 can not be justified.

Particular teaching methods and tasks are said to be a major cause of learner demotivation (Thanasoulas, n.d.). It was obvious in AW1’s story that he did not like the method of behaviour modification, and was overloaded with homework. On the other hand, the other students managed to deal with the tasks and made positive comments on the method. Needless to say, demotivation is as complex as motivation. The cause of demotivation varies from student to student, which means that there is always a possibility that teachers may demotivate students no matter how they may try not to.

The first step for teachers to prevent learner demotivation is to acknowledge the detrimental effects they can possibly have. As Chambers’ (1993) study showed, teachers are not always conscious about their negative influence on their students. Recognising it will enable teachers to pay more attention to their behaviour and as a result the possibility of demotivating students by criticising or yelling at them will at least decrease.
8.3.2 Teacher power in my classroom

Although Teven and Herring’s (2002) study and mine had some findings in common, the two studies did not agree on everything.

Teven and Herring (2002) stated that student satisfaction was positively and significantly related to both teacher referent power and expert power, and my study concurred with this. In Term A, AS1 said that my teaching skills improved and my confidence as a teacher was important for students’ learning (section 6.1). In Term B, several students said that my explanations were easy to understand and when they understood they wanted to study more (section 5.2.2).

One important element of expert power, which is related to teacher feedback, is how soon the teacher evaluates students’ work and returns it to them (Brewster & Fager, 2000; Chickering & Gamson, 1987). This aspect seems to have been neglected in spite of its importance, as not many studies mention it. When students are keen on improving their language skills, they are anxious to know how well they perform in their homework or tests. In fact, some of my students urged me to mark their homework or tests and give them feedback as soon as possible (my journal WeekB2). In reality, teachers have plenty of things to do apart from marking. However, it is advisable for teachers to remember that swift evaluation of students’ work makes a difference. Time management and organisation skills are surely part of expert power.

With regard to referent power, students in both Terms A and B highly valued our interview sessions because they received advice and suggestions to improve their skills efficiently during the interviews. Also they felt that I cared about students as I interviewed all of them every week and occasionally listened to them talk about personal aspects of their life in Australia.

There was one difference between Teven and Herring’s (2002) study and mine. Although AW1 did not like my use of coercive power, the other students appreciated it, which disagreed with not only Teven and Herring’s but other studies (Noels, 2003; Young, 2005). The students, except AW1, welcomed the challenging reading homework provided by me for Thursday afternoon. They did not have a choice but to do this reading even though I asked them for their preferences for the topic and opinions about the levels of material in order to involve them in the decision-making process and to lessen my coerciveness. I did not give them punishment, but not doing
homework meant not being able to participate in the discussion, which led to lack of practice, and ultimately, lack of progress in speaking, which can be considered as a kind of punishment.

In my opinion, the reason why most of the students were not deflated by my use of coercive power was because their metacognitive knowledge made them aware that they had to study at home, but they did not know what to do and they could not control their emotions and delayed what they needed to do. With homework given, they were to read and think for a discussion in the following week, which provided them with the opportunity to exercise time management and self-regulation, and to improve speaking and reading skills. They also perceived that they were able to discuss more difficult topics in class and that gave them a sense of achievement. All things considered, students must have regarded my control as scaffolding and accordingly their appreciation of coercive power is understandable. There are three possible reasons why only AW1 reacted differently and they have been discussed in section 6.8.

As Teven and Herring (2002) point out in their study, students’ background and the characteristics of each classroom influence students’ perception of teacher power. This again leads to a similar conclusion to 7.2.3, which is that each classroom is so individual that teachers must take this into consideration for creating a good learning environment.

8.4 Further research

This project has a number of limitations. Because this is a case study with a small sample size using an action research type of approach, it is not easy to generalise from it. Although the small number of subjects helped me examine their motivational fluctuations closely through qualitative methods in addition to the self-report questionnaires and feedback forms, and my role as teacher/researcher enabled me to draw in-depth information about their motivation, this study was conducted in a specific classroom and the detailed results are unlikely to be applicable to other circumstances. The classroom is a place for interaction. The students reacted to my teaching and vice-versa, and therefore the data obtained in this study will not be reproduced in a different setting.
There is some disagreement between previous studies and the current study. Possible reasons for this include the nature of the case study explained above and different data gathering tools. Six instruments were employed for the current study while a majority of previous studies were quantitative ones based on self-reporting questionnaires. How motivation was examined was different between previous research and mine. In addition, the setting of the current study is different from previous studies, where subjects learned the language in their home countries. These factors might have led to the differences.

One of the differences is that the changes in students’ trait motivation according to the questionnaires were not mediated by their academic achievement, despite the results of previous research (Gardner, 2005, 2004; Pintrich, 2003). The students who showed a clear decline in trait motivation in the questionnaires were AS1 (section 6.1), AW1 (section 6.8) and BS1 (section 6.11), two of whom were strong students, whereas the levels of those who sustained motivation varied greatly. Perhaps ESL students from various countries studying in the target language country may show different characteristics from the subjects in previous research, who were learning a second or foreign language in their home countries. Some studies pointed out that learners’ cultural backgrounds affect learner motivation (Iyengar & Lepper, 1999; Pintrich, 1999 p. 682) while others found no major differences among motivational goals, perceptions and influences across cultures (McInerney, Hinkley, Dowson, & Van Etten, 1998; McInerney, Roche, McInerney, & Marsh, 1997). Hence, whether or not the setting of research may change its outcomes is not clear. Accordingly, studies on cross-cultural differences in motivation continue and studying learner motivation closely in different situations may broaden our understanding and untangle the mysteries of learner motivation.

Another interesting disagreement between previous research and this project was that my students’ attitude toward their course did not affect their state motivation. As we have seen in section 5.3.1, several students in Term B were unhappy with their course. In spite of this, their motivation did not decline at the time they felt dissatisfied with their learning situation. Although previous studies (e.g. Gardner, 2005; Lee, 2001) found that learner motivation was linked to their learning environment, my students seemed to distinguish their lessons from the course as a whole. Teachers occasionally find that some students stay motivated even in an
unfavourable situation. What is behind their strong motivation despite the discouraging environment and how they let their environment have little negative influence on their motivation would be worth investigating.

8.5 Final reflection

This study for me was a discovery process for understanding my students better and reshaping myself as a teacher. Although that was the foremost significance of this study, it was also beneficial for my students and it should be for other practising teachers.

Until I commenced this project, I had been frustrated over apparently lack of motivational behaviour of my students. Because I am an ESL learner myself, and I, as a mediocre student, have had to make tremendous effort, I vainly believed that I knew how much effort the learner had to expend. In my view, the majority of my students appeared lazy. This blatant view was overturned thanks to the literature related to this study and to my students who participated in this study. According to Biehler et al. (1997 p. 399), one of the major misconceptions many teachers have is that some students are not motivated. They maintain:

As long as a student chooses goals and expends a certain amount of effort to achieve them, he is, by definition, motivated. What teachers really mean is that students are not motivated to behave in the way teachers would like them to behave (Biehler et al., 1997 p. 399).

This misconception is exactly what I was entangled in.

An action research type of approach enabled me to monitor motivational fluctuation of my students in association with day-to-day lessons. One of the data collecting tools, interviews, increased the amount of time I talked with each individual student and consequently I understood them better, which helped us to establish a trustworthy relationship. There were times I felt discouraged and depressed over my teaching because students were so honest about their feelings toward our lessons that their valuable opinions were sometimes hurtful. Although I was quite experienced and had confidence in my practice, critical student feedback easily shattered my confidence. I felt as if I had become a novice teacher again and recognised there were still so many things I had to learn to be a good teacher.
Action research made a significant demand on me in that I had to reflect on my teaching in a critical manner. It was, however, worthwhile because I learned a number of things through this study. Before this study, I intuitively felt that motivation and motivating was a complicated issue. Now I know it is complicated as solid knowledge made up with information and theories from related literature and my own experience in the classroom. Students too benefited from this study because they were provided an opportunity to develop and use metacognitive skills and to participate in a decision-making process for their learning. Additionally, they generally seemed to enjoy helping their teacher improve her teaching.

The knowledge I have acquired through this study should not be kept to myself. As Wallace (2003 p. 208) states, teachers should share their experience and findings with other teachers because by so doing they can give each other an insight into problems, suggestions and advice, and can save time until they reach solutions. I read articles not only for the current study but to come to grips with issues and problems which sprang from day-to-day teaching. I find articles written by practising teachers inspiring and helpful and I do not think my impression unusual. As for the benefits of the case study, Robert Burns (2000 p. 473) states that readers of case studies decide the extent to which the researcher's case is similar to and likely to be useful and enlightening to theirs. Other teachers can relate their own practice to this study, link it to their own knowledge, and through this vicarious experience they decide whether or not what I have written here can be applied to their situations.

As mentioned earlier, this study focuses on a particular classroom and it is inappropriate for generalisation. Even so, when teachers in a similar setting try to find motivating strategies, this will provide them with information and suggestions, and then they can decide what to choose among them using their own knowledge. Also, this study shows how I found the ways to create a motivating classroom as a form of action research, which will also give other teachers inspiration on how to find motivating strategies in their own classrooms. In other words, this study encourages other teachers to use their autonomy and responsibility as practising teachers when it comes to finding ways to motivate their own students.
This is the end of my journey of action research on learner motivation. However, my journey as a language teacher never ends. With what I have acquired through this study, I will incessantly endeavour to motivate my students.
## Appendix A

### Plain Language Statement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROJECT:</th>
<th>What can the language teacher do to motivate students?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RESEARCHER:</td>
<td>Mikiko Kawano</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PURPOSE OF THE STUDY:</td>
<td>You are invited to assist me to find out what the language teacher can do to motivate students and how this might help improve their language skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BENEFITS OF THE STUDY:</td>
<td>This study will help language teachers make their classes more effective and productive.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WHAT WOULD BE EXPECTED OF YOU?</td>
<td>If you decide to take part in this research, you would answer two questionnaires on your motivation, preference for activities, and how much you study outside of the class. During the course, your class would be sometimes video-taped. You would be asked to provide feedback about class activities briefly after lessons, too. Some of your regular written work and contents of your interviews would also be used in this study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISCOMFORTS/ RISKS:</td>
<td>There are no specific risks associated with this study and your participation will have no effects on your academic record. The only discomfort might be being video-taped.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONFIDENTIALITY:</td>
<td>Your answers to questionnaires, feedback and class work will be kept confidential. Parts of the videotapes will be made available as part of the outcomes, but you will not be identified by name. Your name or other information which might reveal your identity will not appear in this study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YOUR PARTICIPATION:</td>
<td>I would be grateful if you did participate in this study but you are free not to participate. Even if you do decide to participate, you may withdraw from the research at any time. Whether or not you participate will not affect your academic record.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESULTS OF THE STUDY:</td>
<td>If you wish to see the final outcomes of this study, they will be sent to you as a CD or DVD.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PERSONS TO CONTACT:</td>
<td>If you have any questions about the project, please contact the researcher, Mikiko Kawano on ph: [telephone number] or e-mail: [email address]. If you have any worries about the project, you can contact the Executive Officer of the Charles Darwin University Human Research Ethics Committee [telephone number and email address]. The Executive Officer can pass on any concerns to appropriate officers within the University.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONSENT FORM BY ADULT

I, ........................................................................ of (address)
...........................................................................................................................................
...........................................................................................................................................
hereby consent to participate in a study to be undertaken by Mikiko Kawano of Charles Darwin University and I understand that the purpose of the research is:

• To find out effective class activities for students’ motivation
• To investigate the relation between motivation and improvement in language skills
• To examine the ways how students can motivate themselves.

I acknowledge that:

• the aims, methods, anticipated benefits, and possible discomforts of the study, have been explained to me by Mikiko Kawano.

• I voluntarily and freely give my consent to my participation in such study which will include;
  a. video-recording in regular classroom sessions
  b. answering questionnaires on my motivation and preference for class activities.
  c. giving feedback about class activities to the researcher
  d. allowing my regular written class work to be used in the study
  e. allowing the content of my interviews with the researcher to be used in the study

• I understand that aggregated results will be used for research purposes and may be reported in academic journals and conferences.

• individual results will not be released to any person except at my request and on my authorisation.

• I am free to withdraw my consent at any time during the study, in which event my participation in the research study will immediately cease, and any information obtained will be returned to me or destroyed at my request.

Signature: ................................................................. Date: .....................................
Appendix B

Questionnaire Week 1

Part A. Question: How much do you agree with the statements below?
Please circle the number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I want to spend more time learning English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I study English to talk with more and different people</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really have no desire to learn English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really enjoy learning English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning English is really useful.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I hate English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like doing homework.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning English is a waste of time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I speak English at home.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t try to understand the more difficult English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I study English to get a good job.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I study English at home everyday.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t pay attention to the feedback from my teacher.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

☺ Feedback means comments about your English from your teacher.

Part B. What are your preferred ways of learning English?
How much do you like each activity in class? Circle the number which is the closest to your opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>dislike very much</th>
<th>dislike</th>
<th>no opinion</th>
<th>like</th>
<th>like very much</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. reading texts silently in class and do exercises</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. reading texts aloud in class</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Writing</strong></td>
<td>3. writing short passages (less than one page)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Speaking</strong></td>
<td>4. talking in pairs (2 people)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5. talking in groups (more than 2 people)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6. giving oral presentation by yourself</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7. whole-class discussions</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Listening</strong></td>
<td>8. listening to teacher’s instructions and explanations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9. listening to classmates giving oral presentations</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10. listening to tapes and doing exercises</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Feedback</strong></td>
<td>11. teacher giving feedback (oral/ written)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12. classmates giving feedback (oral/ written)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13. checking writing on your own</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar</strong></td>
<td>14. doing grammatical exercises</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15. listening to teacher talk about grammar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16. studying grammar by yourself</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation modes</strong></td>
<td>17. working by yourself</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>18. working in pairs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>19. working in groups</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20. working as class and following teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>21. working as class without teacher</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Others</strong></td>
<td>22. playing language games</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>23. role plays</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>24. listening to and singing English songs</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>25. using a computer to study English</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Do you want to do any other activities? Write them here.

---

**Part C.**

From Part B, please choose at least 3 activities you **like the most.** **Write the numbers** of those activities and give the **reasons** why you **like** them. *You can write in English or your own language.*

a. **Activities I like the most** 😊

   Number ____, reasons:
   Number ____ , reasons:
   Number ____ , reasons:

   From Part B, please choose at least 3 activities you **don’t like.** **Write the numbers** of those activities and give the **reasons** why you **don’t like** them. *You can write in English or your own language.*

b. **Activities I like the least** 😞

   Number ____, reasons:
   Number ____ , reasons:
   Number ____ , reasons:
   Number ____ , reasons
Questionnaire Final week

Part A. Question: How much do you agree with the statements below? Please circle the number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>strongly disagree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I want to spend more time learning English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I study English to talk with more and different people</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really have no desire to learn English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I really enjoy learning English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning English is really useful.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I hate English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I like doing homework.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning English is a waste of time.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I speak English at home.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t try to understand the more difficult English.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I study English to get a good job.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I study English at home everyday.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t pay attention to the feedback from my teacher.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Feedback means comments about your English from your teacher.

Part B. Please compare Week 1 and Now.

Q1. Do you enjoy English study more than Week 1?  Yes or No
Q2. Why do you say so?

Q3. Do you study English more than Week 1?  Yes or No
Q4. Why do you say so?

Q5. Do you want to study English more than Week 1?  Yes or No
Q6. Why do you say so?
Do you have any comments about our class? Go ahead 😊
Appendix C
Class activity feedback form 1

Week ___ Term ___

Q1. Which activity was good for you?
   Activity 1 Activity 2 Activity3 Activity 4

Q2. The activity was good because it was;
   Difficult Easy Enjoyable Exciting Fun
   Important Informative Noisy Quiet Useful

Q3. Which activity was not good for you?
   Activity 1 Activity 2 Activity3 Activity 4

Q4. The activity was not good because it was;
   Boring Complicated Difficult Easy
   Exciting Noisy Quiet Sleepy Tiring

Q5. How much did you like today’s class?
   0------1------2------3------4------5------6------7------8------9------10
   not at all         liked it very much

Q6. Did you study hard today?
   0------1------2------3------4------5------6------7------8------9------10
   not at all            very hard

Q7. Did you want to study English more during the lesson?
   0------1------2------3------4------5------6------7------8------9------10
   not at all         I wanted to study more
Class activity feedback form 2

Week ___ Term ___

Q1. I **want to do** this activity more;
   Activity 1  Activity 2  Activity 3

Q2. I want to do the activity more because it was;
   Difficult  Easy  Enjoyable  Exciting
   Fun  Important  Informative  Noisy
   Quiet  Useful

Q3. I **don’t want to do** this activity any more;
   Activity 1  Activity 2  Activity 3

Q4. I don’t want to do the activity because it was;
   Boring  Complicated  Difficult  Easy  Exciting
   Noisy  Quiet  Sleepy  Tiring

Q5. How much did you like today’s class?
   0------1------2------3------4------5------6------7------8------9------10
   not at all  liked it very much

Q6. Did you study hard today?
   0------1------2------3------4------5------6------7------8------9------10
   not at all  very hard

Q7. Did you want to study English more during the lesson?
   0------1------2------3------4------5------6------7------8------9------10
   not at all  I wanted to study more
### Appendix D

**Observation form**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grouping arrangement P/G/C/I</th>
<th>Skills S/L/R/W, Stages</th>
<th>Time spent</th>
<th>Engaged</th>
<th>Attentive</th>
<th>Co-operative</th>
<th>Risk-taking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E

Term A Student essay

Week 1 Essays on why the students studied English

AS1
There are many reasons for studying English around the world. Some would like to study English to do business and enter university. When I was young, I studied English for some examination. As time went by, I changed my mind about purposes of studying English.
Firstly, I would like to learn live English. Unfortunately, I have not studied live English since I first studied English. For example, my grammar skills are better than speaking and listening. Secondly, I want to study English to communicate with foreigners. Actually, I can read English books and newspaper. However, I can not talk to any foreigners very well, not to mention listening.
In conclusion, I have to speak live English. Unfortunately, I do not meet good circumstance to study English. As a consequence, I have chosen Australia.

AS2
For me, English is important. We can use English in any country because English is a universal language. Reason number 2; I want to study at CDU, so I must learn English very hard. And the last reason; some day, I want to go around the world to see many people from different cultures, maybe to see many girls, too.

AS4 (This essay was written in WeekA8)
English is international languages. In many country in the world they use English for official languages. In my country our official languages is [the language]. Learn English is very important because we are not only stay in one country, sometime we have to move or travel outside the country. In my work everyday we have to speak English because we are working with international staff from many different country, they can’t speak out languages. We are learn English. I think is very benefit for us because easy to go around the world or easy to access for international news.

AM1
I think I’m studying English because if I will be know this language, I will be can travelling around the world, and I will haven’t my problems when I will want talking to everybody. My mother lives in Australia and everybody speaking in English. If I will want living in this country I must know English. This is very important things. Maybe in the future I will be working in the Australia and I must speaking very well.

AM2
I’m studying English because I want to practise English for my work. In my county, English language is important because many companies in [my country] contact with another company overseas. In [my country], it used to be a second language. I want to take the exam for Certificate III because I want to practise writing. I want to be an expert in listening, speaking, reading and writing. I think this class will help me.
AM3 (This essay was written prior to Term A)
I’m studying English for my job. I worked at bank in my country. I want to work at bank in Australia too. I want to go learn Certificate III. I need Certificate III to work at bank.

AW1
About 15 years ago, I didn’t like English but I have changed my mind. I want to speak and write English in order to sing an English song and I want to study about Aboriginal arts. So I am studying English.

AW3
I am learning English in Australia because I want to be an English teacher. I want to explain English. If some people from another country question me, I can answer. My cousins visit Bali. They talk in English with their mother. I think it is very important to learn English because if I want to talk to my cousins from Australia we can talk.

**Term B Joint essay writing**

**Writing Task: Describe a good English class. You can use your own experience to support your opinion.**

In the world we can find many languages but English is one of important languages. People must know English and learn it because it can bring you a bright future. A lot of places are open for students to learn English and you can choose where you want to learn English. However, not every place can provide you with good English lessons because sometimes business is more important than education. You must be clever to choose where you receive a great English lesson.

Good teachers are very important for our English study. Teachers can help students to improve English skills. When the teacher teaches a lesson, it must be clear, consequently, it makes students understand quickly. If students do not understand, the teacher can give them simple explanations by giving effective examples.

Exciting activities are crucial. From our experience, if students want to learn quickly they have to practise listening, reading, writing and speaking in the class to improve their English. Students must practise every activity. For example, they must speak English in class do exams because they are important for students to be successful.

Supportive atmosphere is essential for students’ feelings when they study English. Speaking English in class helps them to develop listening and speaking skills. So, firstly they should not speak their own languages in class. Secondly students and teachers should be like family and get on well each other.

English is an international language, therefore, you must study hard until you English becomes excellent. With support form brilliant teachers, activities and atmosphere, your English can definitely improve when you learn English.
### Appendix F

#### Action research cycles Term A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 2 Action plans</th>
<th>Learner autonomy</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Essay writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion (encouraged students to set up their goals, write about their study in their diaries etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Comments from students were ‘easy’ (from strong students) and ‘difficult’ (from weak students).</td>
<td>Listening test (students listened to a tape and answered questions).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Two students wrote their goals and weekly study plans in their diaries.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Decided to give reading homework as preparation for class activities.</td>
<td>Students’ reactions were not positive (my observation) Nobody chose this as ‘not good’ activity in the feedback form.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 3 Action plans</th>
<th>Learner autonomy</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Essay writing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students did reading at home. In class they started with vocab and a comprehension exercise.</td>
<td>Listening segments became easier and shorter.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Giving reading homework worked well and nobody made negative comments on the reading activity.</td>
<td>Mixed responses. Two students thought it was ‘fun, important, informative, enjoyable and useful’, while two students thought it was</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 Action plans</td>
<td>Reminded students of goal setting and personal homework.</td>
<td>Two different types of grammar practice (it takes --- to-infinitive, prepositions) and varied student feedback.</td>
<td>‘difficult’.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Only one additional student wrote about study in her diary. I decided to try a different approach to encourage students to think about their study.</td>
<td>Students’ reactions were varied (3 students thought the first grammar activity good, while 2 students thought otherwise. 6 students thought the second activity good and 1 thought ‘not good’).</td>
<td>Interview revealed that weak students liked reading at home as preparation.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5 Action plans</td>
<td>Speaking: “How to improve speaking skills”, talking about and comparing an imaginary student with themselves.</td>
<td>Two different approaches to grammar (comparative and if clause).</td>
<td>Listening segment was shorter and its topic was familiar to students (food): 1 negative comment (easy and sleepy).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>The first activity showed mixed reactions; 5 students thought it as a good activity while 2 students thought it difficult. The second activity seemed to work well; 3 students</td>
<td>These two activities received mixed and unexpected feedback. The practice on comparatives: positive comments from 3 students, negative comments from 2 students. The practice on if-</td>
<td>Five students found this good while one student thought it not good because it was easy and sleepy.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
chose it as a good activity, especially AS1 wrote ‘fantastic’ in his feedback form.

Week 6 Action plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speaking: talking about and comparing an imaginary student with themselves</th>
<th>Reduced explanation and increased use of grammar</th>
<th>Monday: I read the script out instead of CD: students enjoyed it and there was no negative comment. Thursday: Back to CD: no negative comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6 students thought this good. 1 thought otherwise because it was difficult. All students were engaged in this activity (my observation).</th>
<th>Mixed responses from students; 2 students thought it good while 3 students thought otherwise (their reasons were ‘easy’ and ‘difficult’).</th>
<th>This activity went very well. 4 students thought it good and no negative comments.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Week 7 Action plans

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Listening test again: students looked more confident and comfortable except AS1.</th>
<th>The first essay writing practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>5 students thought the test good and two students did not think so. AS1, especially, showed strong negativity.</th>
<th>All students thought the essay writing good. My observation agreed with the feedback.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 8 Action plans</td>
<td>Essay writing: “good things and bad things about my study”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Most students answered the essay question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9 Action plans</td>
<td>Through an interview, misunderstanding between AW3 and me was found.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Action research cycles Term B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1 Action plans</th>
<th>Metacognitive skills</th>
<th>Grammar</th>
<th>Speaking, reading and listening</th>
<th>Listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Discussion (goal-setting etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All students thought this activity useful and important. Students contributed more to the discussion than Term A although not all students seemed keen on this topic (my observation).</td>
<td></td>
<td>Students asked me to keep using BTN. 1 student wanted to borrow the BTN video.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 2 Action plans</td>
<td>BTN and newspaper article</td>
<td></td>
<td>BTN and newspaper article</td>
<td>Listening test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>2 students did not do homework and could not participate in a discussion on the newspaper article. One student did not like a BTN session because it was sleepy. Other students seemed to like this sort of challenging task (my observation) and it was confirmed by the interview.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 3 Action plans</td>
<td>In class, I explicitly said how important revision was. Behaviour modification (I explained clearly the relation between making effort and their progress)</td>
<td>BTN and newspaper article</td>
<td>Listening test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>1 student did not like this approach at all although he seemed to understand its importance according to his feedback form.</td>
<td>Students asked me to teach grammar instead of their presentations.</td>
<td>1 student did not do homework, was discouraged and marked 0 for attitude to learn English.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 4 Action plans</td>
<td>Conversation in class (importance of revision)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Newspaper article</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion about homework</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion about homework</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Some students responded to me, saying that memorising new words was important.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Students thought a discussion on newspaper articles useful and important whereas to me they were not so keen on talking about it.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 5 Action plans</td>
<td>Showed AW3 her first writing and asked her to correct her own mistakes.</td>
<td>I taught modals (should etc.) with adverbs (probably etc.).</td>
<td>Listening test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>She corrected her own mistakes and perceived her progress.</td>
<td>Students looked contented (my observation).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 6 Action plans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Students asked me to give them a test every week.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Less strenuous topic (comparing two pictures and find differences)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Week 7 Action plans</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Week 8 Action plans</td>
<td>Evaluation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Everybody liked the activity based on the pictures, especially AW1 was confident.</td>
<td>Feedback on the listening test</td>
<td>I taught will and be going future.</td>
<td>No newspaper article (instead students did a role play)</td>
<td>Listening test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 7 Action plans</td>
<td>Feedback on the listening test</td>
<td>I taught will and be going future.</td>
<td>No newspaper article (instead students did a role play)</td>
<td>BW1 volunteered to take the test (He wanted to study more now because he understood better than before). Students again said practice tests were useful (in class and interviews).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>I taught will and be going future.</td>
<td>No newspaper article (instead students did a role play)</td>
<td>BW1 volunteered to take the test (He wanted to study more now because he understood better than before). Students again said practice tests were useful (in class and interviews).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 8 Action plans</td>
<td>Discussions 1. imaginary student 2. their own problems</td>
<td>I taught past simple and present perfect.</td>
<td>No newspaper article (instead students decided a seating plan for a party)</td>
<td>Listening test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Students were actively engaged in both discussions. For the first topic 3 students wanted to do it again For the second, all the students wanted to do it again</td>
<td>4 students thought it important and useful (2 students were absent).</td>
<td>This activity went well and students gave me positive feedback. Students asked me to give them a practice reading test.</td>
<td>BW2 volunteered to take the test. Students thought taking practice test was useful as preparation for the admission test. They wanted to do it more than once a week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 9 Action plans</td>
<td>I taught past perfect and passive.</td>
<td>Practice reading test Newspaper article again</td>
<td>Listening test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Students did not quite understand these two grammar features.</td>
<td>Students made positive comments after the test in class.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week 10</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References
References


