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**Sociocultural dynamics affecting the additional
language learning process of Arabic-speaking
adult refugees in Australian learning settings**

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**A thesis in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all those who taught me lessons of morality and knowledge in my life and on the top of this list are Prophet Mohammad (PBUH), the 12th Imams (AS), my parents and my teachers.

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STATEMENT OF AUTHENTICATION

The work presented in this thesis is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, original except as acknowledged in the text. I hereby declare that I have not submitted this material, either in full or part, for a degree at this or any other institution.



Ahmad Radhy Raheem Al Khalil

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACL	Adult and Community Learning
AL	Additional Language
ALL	Additional Language Learning
AMEP	Adult Migrant English Program
AMES	Adult Migrant English Service
AQI	Australian Questioning Intonation
AQTF	Australian Quality Training Framework
CBD	Central Business District
CPH	Critical Period Hypothesis
CPSWE	Course in Preliminary Spoken and Written English
CSWE	Certificate in Spoken and Written English
DEST	Department of Employment, Science and Training
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship
DIBP	Department of Immigration and Border Protection
ELL	English Language Learning
ESL	English as a Second Language
L1	First Language
L2	Second Language
LGAs	Local Government Areas
LLNP	Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program
LSIA	Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia
NESB	non-English speaking background
NSW	New South Wales
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SLA	Second Language Acquisition
TAFE	Technical And Further Education
TL	Target language
TPV	Temporary Protection Visa
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
WSU	Western Sydney University
WLLP	Workplace, Language and Literacy Program

ABSTRACT

This qualitative research study has examined the English Language Learning (ELL) experiences of Arabic-speaking adult refugees to identify the nature of sociocultural dynamics that influence their additional language learning (ALL) in the Australian context. It highlights the positive and negative aspects experienced by former adult refugees when learning the target language (TL) in their attempts to settle in the host country.

ALL research (traditionally known as second language acquisition or SLA) acknowledges the role of social factors in learning the TL but it has not yet constructed a framework that groups these social and cultural factors together and explains the relationship between these factors and the ALL process. This study is important because it focuses on the role of sociocultural dynamics in ALL as it is perceived by adult refugee additional language (AL) learners who are already at disadvantage because of the forced and unstable nature of their migration (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013).

Hence, the study produces new ways of looking at the sociocultural forces and conditions affecting ALL to inform those involved in the ALL process and assist rethinking the nature of ALL and ways in which to enhance the learning process. Language is not only a means of communication, as it was approached by traditional theories (Ellis, 1994), but also a shared social practice that people use on a daily basis in order to exchange meaning, solve problems and meet their changing social needs.

One of the main methodological gaps in ALL research is the absence of the personal views of AL learners on their own language learning experiences. Personal perspectives are valuable tools, which can provide important and rich insights about the nature of ALL (Miller, 1999, 2000). Therefore, this study employed a qualitative narrative inquiry through the use of written biographies and semi-structured interviews in eliciting participants' perceptions of their ALL experiences (Hopkins, 2009). These narratives of refugee settlement, ELL and social integration reproduce former refugees as human agents with multiple identities (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013).

By using content analysis and Discourse analysis, three broad clusters of sociocultural dynamics were conceptualised. These findings suggest that social interaction opportunities, cultural capital and identities influence ALL, based on the understanding that language learning is culturally embedded and a socially mediated process (Lantolf, 2000, pp. 79-80). The findings also indicate that the nature and impact of sociocultural dynamics differ between different AL learners because learners have different learning experiences shaped by different social, cultural and historical contexts. Therefore, understanding the mechanisms of social interaction, learner identities and cultural capital is central to ALL.

CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.0 Background of the Research Study

The primary motivation behind the decision to conduct this research study came from my professional experience as an ESL (English as a Second Language) teacher in the South Western suburbs of Sydney where I taught English to former adult refugees and migrants for about seven years from 2004 to 2011. Being an ESL teacher and then a head teacher in charge of delivering English language programs has put me in daily contact with a range of teaching and learning issues. Teachers and head teachers were in continuous dialogue about how to deal with some of these emerging issues.

In the English language centre where I taught in 2008, I noticed that adult AL learners who are approximately 40 years old and over complained about facing real difficulties when using their English language skills in real life situations despite the fact that they receive English language instruction on a daily basis. At that time, the main purpose of teaching was to develop the learner's linguistic ability to use English effectively in different social situations. Learning activities and tasks are designed to imitate real life situations where AL learners are required to practise these situations in the classroom. Despite the resources invested and the commitment of the school to improve the quality and standard of its English language programs, I realised that the roots of these language learning issues are related to factors outside the classroom where language learners operate and communicate.

In addition to these classroom observations, my refugee background also helped me to accumulate extensive observations about the nature of ALL and how people learn an additional language. I witnessed many of my Arabic-speaking friends who were facing increasing difficulties in learning and using English. In my discussions with them, they described a range of sociocultural, psychological and linguistic factors that affected their ELL.

As an ESL teacher and in an attempt to uncover the nature of these learning difficulties, as well as the students' learning needs, I requested from the students in my mixed level class to explain in writing, either in English or in their L1, the difficulties they face in learning and using English. The class comprised of level one (or beginner) learners who could use gestures, single English words and phrases in their communication, whereas level two learners were able to use simple or compound sentences and write short paragraphs. In their responses, they described a variety of learning issues that were mostly related to social and cultural factors. Knowing the nature of these learning difficulties was not adequate to satisfy my curiosity and interest. Also, I was unaware of the theoretical interpretation of these factors. Therefore, I have had a great desire and ambition to conduct a systematic investigation to explore the nature of ALL and the role of sociocultural dynamics in this process.

1.1 Problem of the Research

For adult migrants and refugees, learning the language of the host community represents the most important part of a larger settlement process that entails building a new life in a different sociocultural context (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013). Hence, learning the new language is not an easy task and cannot be isolated from the

surrounding environment. Even after exiting English classes and achieving ‘functional’ proficiency in English, many migrants may still find themselves ‘socially and economically marginalised within the dominant culture of Australia’ (Butorac, 2014, p. 234). This cultural marginalisation and unproductive communication are due to dynamics that impact on language learning but they are mostly unexplored within the language learning context. Therefore, the current research problem, which emerges from my professional and personal experience, states that:

Significant numbers of adult AL learners, especially those from refugee background, face increasing difficulties learning English and some of them are unable to use English effectively in real life situations despite their personal efforts and commitment to learn the new language.

This research problem is explored theoretically and revisited through the literature review to examine how ALL research has dealt with this problem and also produce the main research question. The research study focuses on how adult former refugees from Arabic-speaking backgrounds perceive their ELL experiences. It identifies the nature and role of sociocultural dynamics in ALL in the Australian learning context through exploring the social context where the language learning process occurred.

To properly address this research problem, it is essential to use a methodology that is able to incorporate the study of language as social practice and discourse (Miller, 1997, p. 52). Language should be viewed as a set of discourses embedded with meaning, which is woven around specific themes, such as ethnicity, age, gender, class, or other factors (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 283). A poststructuralist approach is more concerned with the social and cultural aspects of language development since it deals

with language as a social activity that is constructed by social interaction (Pavlenko, 2002).

This research study seeks a sociocultural framing of the ALL process as lived by adult AL learners. ALL is a far-reaching and complex process, which cannot be influenced by a single factor or a group of limited factors. Therefore, sociocultural dynamics, for the purposes of this study, represent the forces generated from social, cultural and historical contexts based on the understanding that learning, including language learning, is a culturally embedded and socially mediated process (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf, 2000, pp. 79-80).

The field of ALL is a branch of applied linguistics that investigates the human capacity or ability to learn an additional language (AL) during late childhood, adolescence, or adulthood and after the first language (L1) has been acquired (Ortega, 2011, p. 171). Thus, an AL user is any person using another language rather than his or her L1 (Cook, 2002, p. 1). Throughout this thesis, the concept of additional language learning is used instead of second language acquisition. The concept of ALL has been used recently to refer to the learning of any other language after the acquisition of the first language. ALL does not necessarily mean learning a second language (L2), but it might mean learning the third, fourth (Ortega, 2011) and so forth because some AL learners may learn more than two languages in their life as this study reveals.

Finally, the research study used qualitative methods in the form of narrative inquiry to examine the social, cultural and historical environment where ALL took place. ALL occurs in a social context and it is highly affected by social interaction and power relations that arise within that context (Berry & Williams, 2004, p. 120).

Personal biographies and semi-structured interviews are the techniques used for collecting data in the research.

1.2 Justification and Rationale for the Research

To facilitate new entrants' settlement experiences and help integrate with the rest of the Australian community, the Australian Government funds a number of settlement programs including free English language tuition and job training, as detailed in Chapter Two. However, a number of adult migrants, especially refugees, are still unable to use English effectively in different social situations outside the classroom. Based on my professional experience in teaching and administrating ESL programs, I found out that there are still a number of adult former refugees and migrants who are able to provide limited personal details, but they are unable, for example, to book a medical appointment on the phone or to handle a casual conversation. This is in part due to little chance of social interaction in the target language (TL) (Miller, 2000).

In fact, this represents a waste of human and economic resources on behalf of all stakeholders (policymakers, funding bodies, service providers, curriculum designers, teachers and AL learners). In this regard, the current Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP) comes under criticism because of its allocation of hours, namely that it is a 'one size fits all' program (Department of Education and Training, 2015). Despite the wide range of increasing language and literacy needs for AL learners, the AMEP still provides up to 510 tuition hours because it does not allocate an entitlement of hours based on individual level of proficiency (Burns, 2003).

The ABC Media Report (Appendix A) shows an example of discourses about migrant language learning and attendant language ideologies in the Australian

decision making domain. These discussions were held in the Australian Federal Parliament in 2007 regarding the value of learning and using English for new and former migrants in Australia. The report also shows that there are calls to ‘examine why many long-term migrants are not able to grasp the English language effectively’.

The 2011 Census of Population and Housing data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2015) shows that more than 300 different languages are spoken in Australian households. The Census data shows that 76.8% of Australia’s population speak only English at home. Of recent migrants who arrived since 2006, 33.5% speak only English at home and 54.1% speak another language and English either very well or well. However, 11.5% of these migrants do not speak English well or at all. The inability to use English has negative consequences on all personal, social and economic measures, which can lead to social isolation and incompetence in managing personal dealings, especially if the new migrant does not have any family or friends for support (Hugo, 2011, p. 242).

Language not only serves as a means of communication and socialisation, as Watson-Gegeo (1988) indicates, but also as a power to enable its users to access public services and the labour market. Thus, English language plays a vital role in a refugee’s search for settlement in Australia. For example, in regard to the importance of English in gaining employment, Australian statistics, in general, show that the unemployment rate between non-English speaking background (NESB) migrants is higher than that between English speaking migrants (Hugo, 2011). In fact, these statistics align with the view that immigrants’ employment success is largely dependent on their proficiency in the TL (Chiswick, Lee & Miller, 2001). Similarly, the refugee population experiences higher rates of unemployment and lack of

suitable employment in terms of wages and work conditions (Colic-Peisker, 2009; 2010).

The ABS (2010) tracked the unemployment levels of new and former migrants through comparing with those of other visa classes. The unemployment rate for recent migrants and temporary residents combined was 7%, compared with 5% for people born in Australia. Migrants with Australian citizenship had an unemployment rate of 7%. Temporary residents had a lower unemployment rate (5%) than recent migrants on a permanent visa (9%):

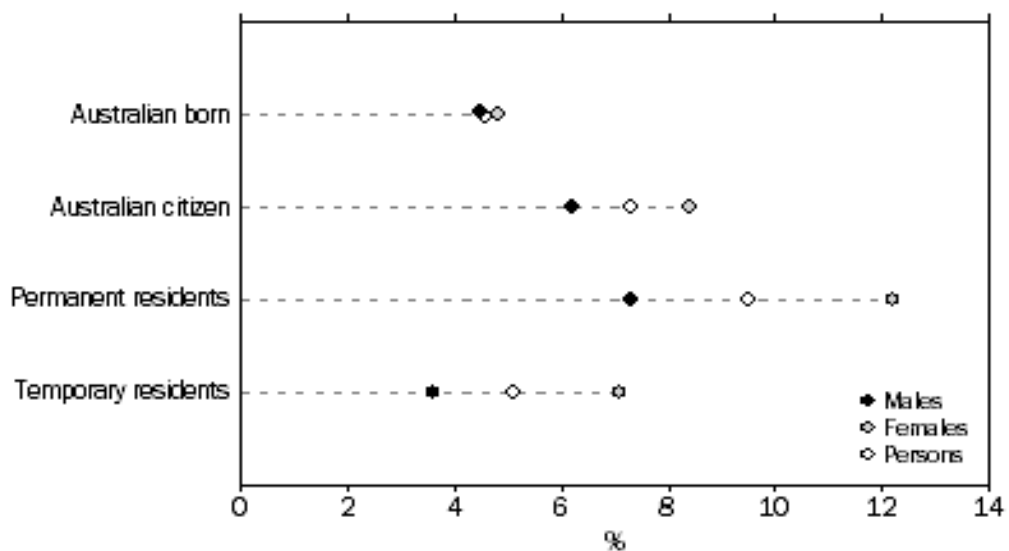


Figure 1.1: Unemployment rate by residency type, as at November 2010 and sex

All these studies and statistical data show that English language skills play a critical role in immigrant employability. Also, it has been confirmed that ‘the greater an immigrant’s competency in English, the more likely he/she is to have a job’ (Ehrich, Kim & Ficorilli, 2010, p. 489). In this regard, Colic-Peisker reports that migrants with a low level of English fluency have five times higher rate of unemployment than those of the rest of the population (2009, p. 189). Thus, this research study aims

to show the importance of ALL in improving the lives of refugees and meeting their social needs.

On the other hand, migrant workers might face different exploitative working conditions in terms of wages, working hours and safety conditions without real resistance. This is due to their inability to communicate effectively in the TL, as well as the relative lack of social power and resources arising from their social status as workers who lack the network of links with unions and other related government agencies that support employees (Hage, 2000, p. 134). This case becomes worse and its negative results are greater with humanitarian entrants who already have experienced hard conditions and trauma during their refugee period (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013). In this field, the TL is desperately needed to express the self and access cultural resources to prevent exploitation and discrimination in the workplace.

At a theoretical level, current literature on ALL, as investigated in Chapter Three, shows that there is a need for a theoretical framework, which explores this dynamic socialisation process of ALL and identifies the range of factors involved. Current literature reveals that there is a range of linguistic, psychological and social factors that affect ALL (Saville-Troike, 2006).

Finally, this study aims to fulfil the following four objectives: (i) to investigate how adult AL learners perceive their ALL experiences; (ii) to explore different insights of sociocultural dynamics and their role in ALL; (iii) to provide theoretical implications for future research that take into consideration the role of sociocultural dynamics in ALL; and (iv) to assist decision-makers, service providers and educators to reconstruct their own perceptions of the sociocultural barriers that influence the capacity of AL learners to learn and use the TL.

1.3 Significance to Applied Knowledge and Research

This research study presents new insights into the ALL process and the role of sociocultural dynamics in the process. ALL is viewed as a dynamic activity powered by the social opportunities available for interaction, the different identities adopted by the learner, which provide access to these opportunities and the cultural resources brought by the learner to the learning process. The value of this research study is in its broad focus on the social context and the theoretical framing of the research findings. The research study did not focus on examining one aspect of the social context or in isolation from other sociocultural dynamics, psychological and linguistic dimensions. Therefore, this approach provides better understanding of ALL and the ideal sociocultural conditions under which ALL can develop.

This study also aims to enrich our understanding as to why adult AL learners face difficulties when learning the TL. It is envisaged that the research study will provide new insights about the nature of sociocultural dynamics, their role in ALL and how they function within the social learning context.

In 1993, the Adult Migrants English Program (AMEP) was introduced, as a result of a new government initiative, the Certificates in Spoken and Written English (CSWE) as the national curriculum framework for teaching English to adult migrants. The AMEP curriculum is based on competency-based training, which focuses on outcomes as a practical way to make language education more responsive to the changing demands of labour markets and more accountable to funding authorities (Burns, 2003, p. 264). In this domain, competency-based instruction refers to:

An approach to teaching that focuses on teaching the skills and behaviours needed to perform competencies. These competencies represent the student's ability to apply different types of basic skills in situations, which are commonly faced in everyday life. (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 94)

However, the current ESL curriculum has not yet incorporated the complexity of the social context where the ALL occurs in a limited range of realistic situations practised in the classroom environment. Thus, future changes to the current ESL pedagogy should take into consideration all the sociocultural elements involved in ALL as a dynamic socialisation process. There is a need for a curriculum that gives the teacher a new role as a mentor and redesigns the language classroom to make it part of the outer social world.

On the level of methodology, the research study, through employing narrative inquiry, provided the motive and freedom for participants to recall their refugee histories and reflect on their settlement experiences. The freedom given to participants in thinking about then writing their biographies and also the interactive nature of interviews, gave participants the opportunity to analyse and evaluate their ALL experiences.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

The research study consists of two main parts: (i) Part One introduces the contextual, theoretical and methodological aspects of the research and consists of Chapters One to Four; and (ii) Part Two represents the field study, which is covered by Chapters Five to Eight and describes the course of the fieldwork and discussion of results.

Following this introduction, Chapter Two provides a background overview that briefly describes the historical, cultural and social context of the research

problem. The chapter explores some of the historical, political and demographic aspects that shape the immigration discourse in Australia. The focus is on all the aspects that construct settlement experiences of refugees, especially those from Arabic-speaking backgrounds. This includes issues related to policies, language programs, the relationship between language proficiency and unemployment, gender and religion.

Chapter Three presents the literature review. It aims to provide a theoretical context for the research study through locating the study in time, space and research culture. This includes reviewing past and current theoretical directions and prominent empirical studies in ALL. Within this description of literature, a range of topics related to ALL are discussed, such as age, cognition, transfer, motivation, education, agency, group membership and other influential factors. Presenting these theories and studies helped to shape the research question and design the theoretical framework that informed the discussion of the research findings. A poststructuralist approach by Norton Peirce, Vygotsky's theory of social practice and Bourdieu's modelling of cultural capital were used to examine the research findings.

Chapter Four determines and justifies the methodological design of the research study. The chapter first argues the philosophical foundations of the poststructuralist approach used to guide the study and the qualitative methodology used to conduct the research work. Then, it describes the narrative orientation of the biographies and interviews used to collect the data. The chapter also provides demographic information about participants and how they were selected. The research study employed coding, content analysis and Discourse analysis to administer and analyse the results. Data analysis produced five broader concepts as

the factors that influence ALL. Finally, the issues of the research quality, the role of the researcher and the ethical issues are also discussed.

Chapter Five deals with the research data that emerged from the biographies written by 16 participants during the first stage of data collection. Participants describe different aspects of their life histories, refugee journey and settlement experiences including their perceptions of English language learning. A wide range of conceptual themes are defined; these include cultural capital, social interaction opportunities, identities, psychological dimensions and linguistic dimensions.

Chapter Six deals with the findings of semi-structured interviews conducted with nine participants in order to gain deeper understanding of their ELL experiences, especially those mentioned in their biographies. The interviews explored the nature of sociocultural elements involved in the ALL process. Some of these interviews were designed to seek explanations for some of the issues raised from the initial biographies. Similar to Chapter Five, five broader concepts are identified in the data analysis process, which include cultural capital, social interaction opportunities, identities, psychological dimensions and linguistic dimensions.

The research findings from Chapters Five and Six were argued in Chapter Seven. The chapter discusses the main findings of the research study in the light of the theoretical frameworks identified in Chapter Three in relation to the impact of sociocultural factors on ALL. The sociocultural elements affecting ALL are: cultural capital, social interaction opportunities and identities. This theoretical dialogue attempted to examine the significance of these research findings. The discussion starts with indicating the context of the research and how the idea of the research

came into existence. Then, it recapitulates the usefulness of the research methods employed in the study.

Finally, Chapter Eight is the conclusion, which goes through what has been achieved during the course of the research. It starts with a summary of the aim, methodology and key findings of the research study. It also reflects on the importance of the new knowledge emerging from this study to current ALL research. In addition to these aspects, the researcher indicates the limitations faced and addressed throughout the course of the research. Finally, the researcher suggests a range of recommendations for future research, policy and learning practices.

CHAPTER TWO: A BRIEF CONTEXT OF REFUGEE SETTLEMENT IN AUSTRALIA

2.0 Introduction

This is a background chapter that briefly describes the Australian learning context where the ALL process is conducted by Arabic-speaking adult former refugees. The main purpose of this contextual examination is to explore the settlement conditions, which surround the ALL process of humanitarian entrants. These effective elements have been used as labels during the coding process of data analysis. Therefore, this chapter attempts to understand the historical, social, political and demographic aspects that shape the refugee discourse.

The chapter describes the key features of Australia's settlement and immigration policies, especially those related to humanitarian entrants. The Australian learning context is shaped by a range of cultural, historical and political forces, which place variable pressure on the lives of new settlers and their attempts to integrate with the wider community. The chapter also discusses the increasingly diverse ethnic and language backgrounds of refugees, describes the social and cultural characteristics of refugees from Arabic-speaking backgrounds related to gender and reveals the shifting policy contexts in relation to the recognition of refugees and the ESL curriculum.

Initially, there are a number of major drivers to international migration. One is economic where globalisation has increased international labour mobility as most countries seek to attract professional and highly skilled immigrants to fill labour

shortages. Another major driver of international migration is global inequality, since it is believed that globalisation has not delivered on its promise to reduce global inequality. Inequality drives international mobility towards those countries which can provide prosperity and welfare for their citizens. Political conflict is a major factor in driving international mobility since it forces the movement of millions of people who become refugees within and beyond national borders to seek protection (Collins, 2014; Reid & Al Khalil, 2013).

2.1 The Changing Face of Australia

Australia has a long and active history of hosting immigrants and asylum seekers fleeing persecution around the world (Hage, 1998; Hugo, 2011, p. 4). Refugees are those individuals ‘who have left their homes unwillingly, have not planned their migration and have been unable to bring resources with them in their migration’ (Hugo, 2011, p. 1). The experience of being a newcomer is a significant part of the Australian story (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013). Immigration has fundamentally reshaped the structure of Australian society and government policies. Since the 1788 British settlement of Australia, there have been many waves of people who migrated to the country from all over the world. The first systematic intake of settlers was in the late 18th century when Britain established colonies in Australia whereas the second large-scale systematic intake of migrants and refugees was during and after the Second World War (Collins, 1988, p. 1; Burns & Joyce, 2007).

In 1945, the Australian Government established Australia’s first Department of Immigration in order to manage the post-war entry of migrants and refugees. In this post-war period, migrants and refugees were expected to assimilate into the society as assimilation policies were based on the assumption that this process would

not be difficult (Spinks, 2009, p. 2). This post-war immigration was inspired by increased foreign investment and rapid industrialisation in Australia. While earlier immigrants came mainly from Italy, Greece, Turkey, Indo-China and South and Central America, the most recent groups of immigrants have come from Russia, China, Korea, the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Africa (Burns & Joyce, 2007, p. 5).

Australia formally accepted its legal obligations as a signatory to the 1951 United Nations Convention for the Status of Refugees in 1954. Since the Refugee and Humanitarian visa category was introduced in 1978, approximately 438,000 humanitarian settlers have arrived in Australia (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013, p. 16). During the 1960s and 1970s, the 'goals of assimilation' were replaced by 'goals of integration', in recognition of the fact that adjusting to a new way of life might not be easy for some new arrivals and new arrivals may not want to lose their cultural identity. In 1977, the Fraser government commissioned a Review of Post-Arrival Programs and Services to Migrants (the Galbally review, 1978). This initiated another policy shift in managing cultural and linguistic diversity towards multiculturalism. Multiculturalism continued to be the defining objective underpinning the provision of settlement services for migrants and refugees throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Existing services, such as language tuition, on-arrival orientation assistance and accommodation, interpreting/translating services and assistance with overseas qualifications recognition, were developed and new services were introduced including ethnic radio, Migrant Resources Centres and funding grants to ethnic community organisations (Spinks, 2009, p. 2).

The National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia, adopted by the Hawke government in 1989, officially defined multiculturalism. It emphasised the need to both further assist new arrivals to settle in the country and simultaneously respect cultural diversity. This was followed by officially including humanitarian migration in Australia's immigration policy discourse in the 1990s as changes in policy were made to include a conceptual distinction between offshore and onshore applicants for refugee status (Neumann, Gifford, Lems, & Scherr, 2014, p. 9).

Recent years have also witnessed a renewed focus on integration and social cohesion in the wake of incidents which have raised concerns over public acceptance of some groups of migrants. This has been occurring amid increased concerns relating to national security. Government policies and programs in the 1990s and early 2000s began focusing on attempts to promote 'Australian values' (Spinks, 2009, p. 3). Currently, one of the goals of the Australian immigration policy is to meet the needs of the Australian labour market. A significant number of entrants now come under the skilled migrant category of the permanent immigration program. A fundamental shift towards Asia to fill skills gaps in the workforce has emerged. In 2011-12, India (29,018) and China (25,509) were ahead of Australia's traditional source country for permanent migrants, the United Kingdom (Collins, 2013).

Nowadays, Australia is one of the world's major countries of immigration. While it is currently the 55th largest country in the world, Australia has the 11th largest foreign-born population (Hugo, 2011, p. 4). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report shows that Australia occupies the second highest place, after Switzerland, between the OECD's Western nations in per capita terms: 27.3% of all Australians today are born overseas, reflecting numbers

higher than Canada (19.8%), United States (13%), United Kingdom (11.9%) and New Zealand (24.1%). The OECD group represent 34 countries that originally signed the convention on the OECD (Collins, 2014).

However, recent trends in Australian immigration during the past two decades strongly indicate that Australia has shifted from being a settler immigration nation to a temporary migrant nation for the first time in nearly seven decades of post-war immigration history (Collins, 2013; 2014). Immigration data for 2012-13 show that around 766,273 migrants arrived on temporary immigration visas. This included 258,248 on working holiday visas, 259,278 on international student visas and 126,350 on temporary work (skilled) visas. This is compared to a total of 192,599 permanent settlers (19.8%). Surprisingly, Australia's humanitarian intake was 15,827 humanitarian entrants, which is equivalent to only 8.3% of entrants under the permanent immigration program and 1.6% of all arrivals (permanent plus temporary program) in 2012-13 (Collins, 2014).

The next section explores the national policy of multiculturalism as a critical change in the Australian immigration system. It indicates a change of values that opened the doors for immigrants from other countries and witnessed a boost in the range and quality of services provided to new arrivals, particularly for refugees in relation to settlement services and English language support.

2.2 Multiculturalism

Systemic racism towards non-European migrants has a long history in Australia, dating back to one of the first legislations passed after the Federation, the 1901 Migration Act, which made official the discouragement of non-European migration

to Australia (Jupp, 2002). This Act was associated with the ‘White Australia Policy’; which was watered down from 1958, for example in terms of allowing Asians as part of the Colombo Plan and reducing application for citizenship for Asian migrants from five to two years (Collins, 1988), but its legacy continued in the practices of immigration officials until 1973 (Jupp, 2002; Butorac, 2014, p. 241). In 1973, the Labor government, led by Prime Minister Gough Whitlam, replaced the White Australia Policy, which favoured immigration from specific countries, with the national policy of multiculturalism (Hage, 2002, p. 51). In fact, multiculturalism was ‘a ground-breaking and culture shifting moment because it focused on valuing, rather than erasing difference’ (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013, p. 14).

Multicultural policies do not discriminate on the basis of race, culture or religion in relation to immigration to Australia. Multiculturalism is based on the belief that ethnic communities are legitimate and consistent with Australian citizenship as long as certain values, such as respect for basic institutions and democratic systems, are followed (Hage, 2002, p. 51). Multicultural policies allow different ethnic groups the right to practise their cultural and religious beliefs. As a result, multicultural policies have enabled immigrants and their descendants to develop a sense of belonging and attachment to Australia (Ali & Sonn, 2009, p. 24). Cultural enrichment is considered one of the key themes in Australian multiculturalism since the main emphasis is on the value of various ethnic cultures living in Australia and the value of the constructive interaction between them towards developing a more general Australian culture (Hage, 1998, pp. 117-118).

Hence, multiculturalism was a major ideological, ethical and social break with the previous immigration doctrines characterised by the promotion of the White

Australia Policy, which favoured immigrants from certain countries to settle in Australia. Under assimilation practices, Anglo-Saxon culture had a superior status in Australian society while other migrating cultures were not recognised (Hage, 1998). Assimilation policies demanded non-British migrants adopt the culture that belongs to the heritage of the 'Anglo-Saxon'. Migrants were required to abandon their unique cultural practices and traditions, which they brought with them (Hage, 1998, p. 82).

However, multiculturalism still remains controversial as a more inclusive national narrative because of its tendency to construct closed cultural categories rather than negotiated ones (Hage, 2002, p. 223). The problematic issue is that the same policies unintentionally started to position the Anglo-Saxon descendants at a higher civilised status where they are seen as more Australian than their ethnic counterparts, who are confronted with ambiguity and astonishment when identifying themselves as 'Australian' (Ali & Sonn, 2009). Therefore, these policies provided stimulus for the construction of new discourses and the emergence of multiple identities (Hage, 2002). As discussed in the literature review chapter, there is an inherent connection between identity and language learning. Identities are understood as multiple, dynamic and fluid constructs, which are constituted in discourse (Hall, 1996; Norton, 2000; Menard-Warwick, 2009). And this is congruent with postmodernist interpretations of the interconnectedness of ALL and identity (Simon-Maeda, 2011).

In Australian terms, the ethnic category covers the identities of many migrants and refugees, as well as their descendants, but not the descendants of Anglo-Saxon background migrants who are presumably excluded from this category. In fact, citizens from an Anglo-Saxon background are simply identified as 'Australian',

without being attached to any ethnic identity. On the other hand, the ‘Australian’ identity of migrants and their descendants has to be hyphenated with their ethnic identity in order to be recognised. As a result, people other than those of an Anglo-Saxon background have noticed vagueness about their belongingness and attachment to the Australian nation since the ‘ethnics’ have been often positioned as the ‘Other’ in relation to Anglo Australians who occupy a privileged and dominant position (Ali & Sonn, 2009, p. 24; Hage, 1998).

Australia has long relied on migration policies to support its economic development. One principal foundation of the migration and settlement policies is language ideologies that privilege English monolingualism and position non-English speaking migrants as excluded from the imagined nation community, in spite of the fact that the assumed members of the Australian community speak at least 240 different languages (Clyne, 2005, p. 5). This represents a potential threat to multiculturalism, which is supposed to include all people of the nation under shared values.

2.2.1 Linguistic and cultural diversity

This section attempts to draw a brief picture of the linguistic and cultural richness brought by multicultural ideologies and migrating cultures flourishing in the state of New South Wales (NSW). Data on language usage between the Australian populations from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) provide a fuller understanding of the extent of linguistic and cultural diversity across Australia. It also sheds a light on the use of the TL on behalf of migrants, as well as the first language connections migrants build with the community they live in. In 2011, an estimated 53% of the population were third-plus generation Australian, which means

that both their parents were born in Australia, 20% were second generation who were born in Australia with at least one overseas-born parent and 26% were first generation Australians who were born overseas. Thus, in total, 46% of the population comprised first or second generation Australians who were either born overseas or have at least one overseas-born parent (ABS, 2012).

NSW is the largest and preferred settlement area for humanitarian entrants to Australia. From 2008 to 2013, more than 24,000 humanitarian entrants settled in NSW, comprising almost a third of the national annual intake. The majority of these humanitarian entrants who arrived in NSW settled in Western and South-Western Sydney (Refugee Council of Australia, 2014, p. 9). A close look at some suburbs of the Western Sydney region, the area in which most participants of this study live, where over 60% of the population is overseas-born and over 75% speak a language other than English at home, provides a clearer picture of diverse Australia.

The Greater Western Sydney Region includes ten local government areas: Auburn City, Bankstown City, Blacktown City, Blue Mountains City, Fairfield City, Hawkesbury City, Holroyd City, Liverpool City, Parramatta City and Penrith City (WSROC, 2011) (Figure 2.1). These suburbs, with a large proportion of population speaking a language other than English at home, include Cabramatta (88%), Canley Vale (84%) and Lakemba (84%) (ABS, 2012).

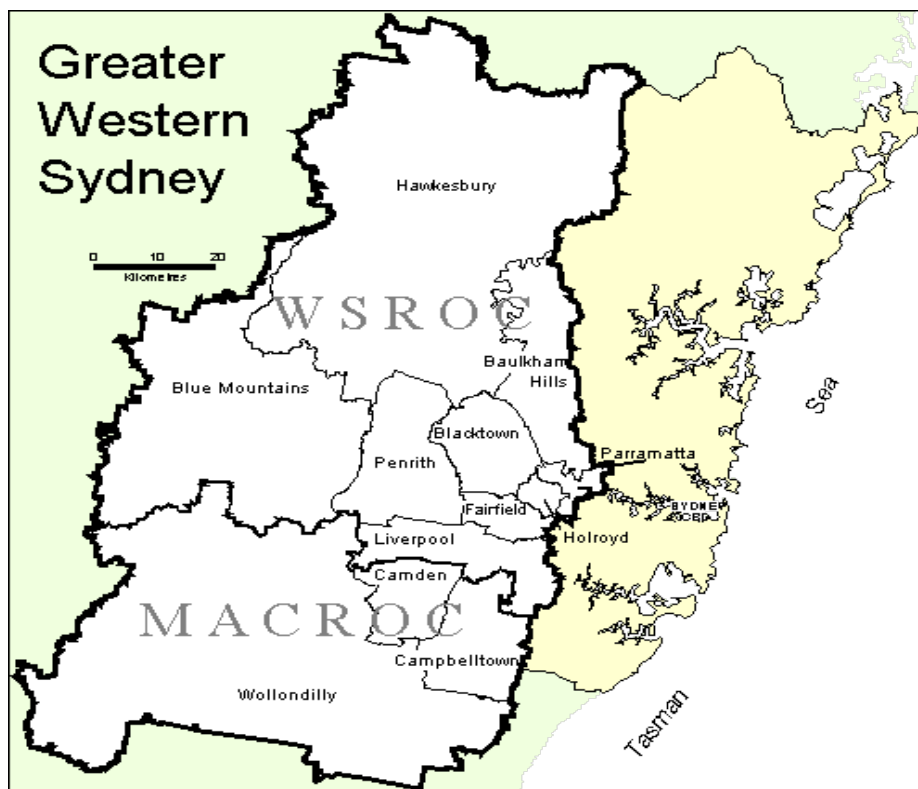


Figure 2.1: Map of Greater Western Sydney as adopted by Mossfield (2014)

Fairfield, a suburb in Sydney's South West, reflects the linguistic and cultural diversity that has shaped the region of Greater Western Sydney. Fairfield is the single largest Local Government Area (LGA) by residence, with one in five humanitarian entrants settling in the area over the period 2008-13 (Refugee Council of Australia, 2014, p. 9). Being a preferred settlement destination for a large number of humanitarian entrants in NSW has turned Fairfield into a linguistic amalgam stitched together by settlers where they prefer to speak a language other than English at home.

The 2011 population for Fairfield was 187,768 with a population density of 18.48 persons per hectare. The number of people born overseas living in Fairfield is 98,650. Based on an analysis of languages spoken at home by Fairfield residents in

2011, 25.9% of the population speak only English at home, while 69.9% speak a language other than English at home (WSROC, 2011). The first dominant language spoken at home by Fairfield's residents is Vietnamese, with 19.1% of the population, or 35,839 people, speaking Vietnamese. This is followed by Assyrian, which is spoken at home by 7.8% of the population. The third dominant language spoken at home is Arabic by 7.3% of the population (WSROC, 2011). This significant growth of ethnic languages is one of the results of multicultural policy that encourages diversity and cultural enrichment (Hage, 1998). These statistics show an estimated use of home language on behalf of those speakers from migrating backgrounds and consequently its effect on the development of English as the TL. Although these first language connections may negatively affect the learning of English, they help the settler in performing daily activities through interacting with other users of the L1.

The next section focuses on the settlement conditions experienced by new arrivals when they start settling in NSW and Australian Government policies on refugees. Settlement experiences are expected to affect the lives of new arrivals and the way they cope with the target culture.

2.3 Settlement Conditions of Refugees

This description of the political and social landscape that shapes settlement experiences of refugees after their arrival in Australia is important because it helps to define the settlement issues that surround the ALL process. It briefly explores the nature of refugee settlement in the Australian context. The description focuses on Australian Government policies toward refugees and the demographics of refugee settlement within the state of NSW. Australia provides newly arrived immigrants and refugees with a range of settlement services to help them settle in the new country.

Refugees are often disadvantaged when they start settling in the new country compared with other immigrants due to the forced nature of their migration and the traumatic experiences they went through (Hugo, 2011, p. 1). Although the search for settlement is like a life circle of different places and events and sometimes accompanied by traumatic events with lasting consequences, being a refugee is an exceptionally important life experience that enriches and strengthens the individual (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013, p. 18). Migrants from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds face, throughout their journey, a range of settlement experiences that may include homesickness, language change and sociocultural changes, as well as new educational and political systems (Miller, 1999, p. 152).

The most prominent model of settlement in Canadian immigration literature outlines three stages of adjustment following first arrival to the new country according to the need for services that occurs at each stage (Mwarigha, 2002). In the initial settlement stage, newcomers may need translation services, housing, health services, language instruction and orientation services. During the intermediate stage, flexible access to government/community programs is required to obtain basic services and understand cultural differences. Other social needs during this stage might include employment-related language training, job search skills and legal support. The final stage of settlement is the long-term struggle for acceptance and equal participation in all realms of the new life, socially and culturally (Mwarigha, 2002, p. 9).

As a consequence, the first few years of settlement for humanitarian settlers are often difficult and intensive in the use of government provided support services. The difficult conditions that refugees went through in their refugee journey before

reaching the host country make this inevitable. Nevertheless, there is evidence which demonstrates that over time there is a solid pattern of not only economic and social adjustment but also significant contribution to the wider community and economy. This does not deny the fact that there are some minorities who get stuck in a situation where it becomes difficult to achieve upward mobility (Hugo, 2011, p. 256).

Recent research on refugee settlement in Australia has focused on the difficulties that refugees experience in adjusting to Australian culture, including social relationships, employment, housing, education, health and other aspects of lifestyle. So, reaching the final destination in their refugee journey marks the beginning of a new journey of settlement in which refugees need to overcome different kinds of difficulties in order to establish a new life in the new country (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013, p. 16).

The Australian Government has a long tradition of support for the provision of a comprehensive migrant settlement program. This program is developed based on the notion of investment in the present for the future successful settlement of new migrants and their long-term integration in Australian society. Successive Australian governments have looked for ways of developing and aligning the settlement program to social, political and economic goals. In recent years, labour market priorities have had a direct impact on the shaping of the AMEP curriculum, which has taken an increasingly vocational focus that aligns it with a plan for migrants to fill labour shortages (Butorac, 2014, p. 236). In this broad sense, the AMEP is delivering a settlement language service that aims to not only provide language tuition but also help migrants decide on future educational and professional goals (Butorac, 2014, p. 237).

Indeed, new arrivals receiving different kinds of income support can find themselves in serious financial hardship or consumer debt. Settlement agencies, Migrant Resources Centres and other community organisations play a key role in supporting new arrivals during the initial stages of settlement. They play a key advocacy role in refugees' relationships with utility providers, real estate agents, government agencies and job networks. In fact, these agencies and organisations are critical in facilitating new arrivals' access into the wider community (Hugo, 2011, p. 243).

Current research shows that new migrants and refugees who have been in the host country for less than five years are often at a disadvantage in relation to searching for and finding employment, as mentioned in Chapter One. Yet, refugees and humanitarian entrants are at risk of being unemployed more than their counterparts coming in through other migration streams. Even when they gain employment, it is often short-term, low wage and less upwardly mobile. For those engaging in any sort of vocational training, it is often at low levels with limited progression to employment (Hugo, 2011, pp. 161-162). Nevertheless, unemployment remains relatively high between humanitarian settlers and refugees. Those settlers who are employed are allocated 'unattractive jobs' or low skilled employment, mostly because of discrimination related causes, despite high levels of skills and education (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2007).

One significant barrier to successful settlement and social engagement with the wider community between new arrivals is related to education. The relationship between education and success in the labour market is a strong one, not only between humanitarian settlers but also between the Australian population (Hugo, 2011, p.

159). Settlement success in Western migration contexts requires educational credentials as a basic necessity to how migrants adjust to their new country. Labour market integration is a central measure of successful settlement for new migrants and having educational credit makes this market accessible (Creese, 2011, p. 60). In Australia, settlement success is defined in terms of economic independence, which hinges on prior education and post-migration professional skills, as well as participation in other domains (Spinks, 2009). Similarly, Liebig (2007, p. 44) concludes, based on his extensive study of Australian and European immigrant employment outcomes, that language proficiency is the most important aspect of human capital with respect to labour market integration. However, low language proficiency does not represent an obstacle towards obtaining lower skilled jobs. These are also the findings of Chiswick and Miller (2010) in respect of migrants to the United States, namely that a good command of English leads to higher earnings, but migrants with lower level English skills still find employment in lower paid jobs where English proficiency is not as important.

2.3.1 Government policies on refugees

The government policy on immigration has a great impact on the lives of migrants and asylum seekers after they arrive in the host country (Pedersen, Kenny, Briskman & Hoffman, 2008). In Australia, there has been hot debate between politicians and within the society about immigration policy and boat arrivals since 2000 (Briskman & Goddard, 2007). Australian immigration authorities divide people seeking immigration to Australia into two main immigration streams: (i) the Migration Program; and (ii) the Humanitarian Program (Burns & Joyce, 2007, p. 5).

People entering Australia on permanent humanitarian visas through an ‘off-shore’ programme who are nominated by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and those ‘special humanitarian’ entrants who have sponsors in Australia are eligible to receive intensive short- and long-term settlement support. Other family and skilled migrants receive minimal and conditional settlement support from government agencies. This special and continuous support is justified as a result of past experiences, which reveal that the integration of humanitarian entrants into mainstream society is problematic and a long-term process, due to the traumatic experiences and the cultural distance between Australia and the countries of origin (Colic-Peisker, 2009, p. 176). However, this perspective contradicts with the recent treatment of Temporary Protection Visas holders (TPV) and other refugees, as discussed below and the settlement services provided to them.

In Australia, policy debate occurs at the macro level where policies are developed according to principles and laws legislated based on the will of political parties and interest groups (Hopkins, 2009, p. 136). This makes immigration an issue that can be highly politicised, especially during the federal elections. Since late 2009, there has been a great emotional and political debate over the policies of the Australian Government towards asylum seekers, especially during election campaigns. This debate has been fuelled by the increasing arrivals by boats since 2008 and the focus of the media. In 2010, 6,850 asylum seekers arrived by boats. In 2011, the number dropped to 4,733, but in the first seven months of 2012 the number reached a record level of 7,120 asylum seekers (Markus, 2012).

To stop and control the flow of boat arrivals, the Australian Government introduced the TPV regime in 1999. TPV is a temporary visa that allows holders of

this visa category to remain in Australia for 30 months, after which time the holders can apply for a further protection visa (Pedersen, Kenny, Briskman & Hoffman, 2008, p. 62). This immigration regime has effectively created two classes of Convention refugees: (i) legal refugees; and (ii) illegal arrivals (Mansouri et al., 2006). Through the creation of this visa category, some refugees become unentitled for most of the essential settlement services they usually receive from the government. The TPV restricts access to some critical federal government-funded settlement services, such as formal English language training and Migrant Resource Centre support schemes. Although TPV holders are allowed to work and access low-cost healthcare, they still have to rely on a range of uncoordinated and mixed of free services provided by community organisations and local government agencies to meet their settlement needs (Mansouri et al., 2006, pp. 396-97).

This policy of temporary protection status and limited access to settlement services has had a profound impact on the capacity of TPV refugees to settle into the mainstream society. The temporary nature of the TPV visa means that TPV refugees live for several years with the fear of deportation. This kind of temporary protection visa also prohibits family reunions and the right of returning back if leaving Australia. The denial of rights to family reunions can intensify the sense of anxiety since the ultimate goal for most refugees is to provide social and financial security for their families. Family reunions are an essential social need to minimise the sense of isolation and provide a source of social, cultural and emotional support (Mansouri et al., 2006).

This policy, which started in 1999, was toughened further in 2006 when it was announced that all asylum seekers arriving by boats would be processed offshore

under the ‘Pacific Solution’, not only those arriving at offshore islands previously excluded from the Migration Zone in 2001 (Mansouri et al., 2006, pp. 396-97). Many participants in this research study have mentioned how Australian immigration laws on boat arrivals, such as unlimited detention and temporary protection residence, affected their settlement conditions and educational opportunities for a number of years.

2.3.2 Refugee settlement trends in New South Wales

Early and positive settlement is critical for refugees to facilitate their ALL. In NSW, most humanitarian entrants are attracted to areas dominated by migrant communities. Humanitarian settlers are more connected to their local communities than other categories of migrants and this indicates a strong attachment to the immediate communities in which they live and share the same language and culture. It appears that humanitarian settlers are better integrated into local communities than into wider Australian society (Hugo, 2011, p. xxv). In the case of Arabic-speaking entrants, a great majority have chosen to reside in the Western Sydney region. This choice is due to social and language support that new entrants receive from their ethnic communities that gather in these areas. This reliance on the original language community in terms of language support might have consequences for learning the TL, as discussed in Chapter Five.

The current size of the Australian Refugee and Humanitarian Program is 13,750 places annually. The visas under this program are granted to people who have been subjected to persecution in their home country and are in need of resettlement. Most people who are granted refugee visas have been referred to the Australian Government by the UNHCR. The Australian Refugee and Humanitarian Program

consists of two main components: (i) offshore component for refugees who are resettled from overseas; and (ii) onshore component for people who seek asylum in Australia and are recognised to be in need of protection. With the exception of TPV holders, all visa subclasses within the Refugee and Humanitarian Program entitle their holders to permanent residency in Australia. The TPV falls under the onshore component of the Refugee and Humanitarian Program but are not counted towards Australia's humanitarian intake. There is no limit to the number of TPVs that can be granted in a given year (Refugee Council of Australia, 2014, p. 3).

In terms of population, over the past five years, more than 24,000 humanitarian entrants have settled in NSW, comprising almost a third (32%) of the national total (Refugee Council of Australia, 2014, p. 6). The majority of those humanitarian entrants have settled in Western and South Western Sydney, predominantly in the local councils of Fairfield, Liverpool, Auburn, Blacktown, Parramatta, Canterbury, Holroyd, Bankstown and Penrith (Figure 2.1). This density of refugee population in the Western suburbs justifies the selection of research participants from these areas where more than half of the population come from a NESB.

The next section of this chapter introduces a number of the social and cultural issues encountered by migrant women from Arabic-speaking backgrounds. Defining these aspects, especially gender related issues, helps to understand some of the narrative events highlighted by the female participants of the study in Chapters Five and Six.

2.4 Arab Communities in Australia

The ‘Arab world’ is where Arabic is either an official language or it is spoken by a significant portion of the population (VASS, 2015). The Arab world is marked by diversity of religion, nationality and political systems, but it is most notably language that makes them a distinctly identifiable group (Mansouri & Trembath, 2005, p. 517). Arabic-speaking countries extend from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Arabian Sea in the east and from the Mediterranean Sea in the north to the Horn of Africa and the Indian Ocean in the southeast. There are 19 Arab countries with a combined population of more than 367 million people. Islam is the dominant religion (Halm, 2012).

Arabic is a Semitic language spoken by more than 400 million people around the world. However, the Arab world does not only share common language, but also history and heritage (Ghareeb et al, 2008, p. 24). The Arabic language originated in the Arabian Peninsula and was spread throughout the Middle East and North Africa due to conquests by Islamic armies and trading. Arabic is the language of the Koran, the holy book of Muslims, as the Arab world largely follows Islam (Migrant Information Centre, 2015), although there are a number of Christian communities in most Arabic speaking countries. There are more than 15 national dialects of spoken Arabic, as well as other local variations, defined by rural–urban differences and all have varying degrees of mutual intelligibility. Arabic speakers can understand each other even in neighbouring countries (Ghareeb et al, 2008, p. 24). These variations of dialects mark a more specific identity (Federation of Ethnic Communities’ Councils of Australia, 2009).

The sentiment of Arab nationalism arose in the first half of the 20th century along with other nationalisms during the colonisation era. Today, the Arab states are characterised by their autocratic rulers and a lack of democratic governance. The popular recent protests, political unrest and civil wars throughout the Arab world since late 2010 are caused by foreign interference, authoritarian governments, a lack of freedom and unemployment (Craner, 2011). This political instability occurring in Arab countries might have affected some participants in terms of the way they view the world, even if they reside far away from their original countries, since recent technological advancement in the fields of communications and the internet has made the world look like a small village.

In Australia, the Arabic speaking population represents 1.3% (287,174 people) of the total Australian population. Arabic was the third most spoken language at home (other than English); 61.9% of these spoke English very well and 38.5% were born in Australia (ABS Census, 2011). The large number of the Australian-born population who can speak Arabic demonstrates that Arabic has been maintained through the generations since the Arabic speaking community first arrived in Australia (ABS Census, 2011).

The issue of 'religious classical' is central to the maintenance of Arabic language. It refers to languages that are particularly related to the practice and continuance of religious ritual. These languages are not the vernacular but the formal or standard languages. Fishman mentions classical Arabic, Old Testament Hebrew, Ecclesiastical Greek and Latin as examples of 'religious classical' (1991, p. 360).

Many Arabic speaking settlers have come to Australia as refugees. The Lebanese community is the largest overseas-born Arabic speaking population living

in Australia since they make up 23.8% of the total Arab community. This is followed by Iraq (8.8%), Egypt (7.1%) and Sudan (3.7%) (SBS Census Explorer, 2015).

Lebanese migrants came in three waves: before and after World War I; during World War II; and during Lebanon's civil war in 1975. Egyptian born migrants who settled in Australia after World War II were largely Coptic Christians. Muslim Egyptians arrived between 1970 and the 1980s. Iraq's involvement in the two Gulf Wars and 'War on Terror' has influenced the flow of Iraqis to Australia till now.

Approximately 95% of Sudanese migrants have arrived under the Refugee and Humanitarian program in recent years (Migrant Information Centre, 2015).

Over the past two decades or so, but certainly since 9/11, there has been a reappearance of public debate over the integration of Muslims as the most heavily ostracised 'Other'. This has been going in Australia and all the countries of immigration of Western Europe. Yet the return of the rhetoric of integration is noteworthy in Australia, where multiculturalism had become so embedded for more than 30 years on both official policy and practice levels. Even in everyday life, the notion of integration in ethnic affairs was hardly expressed in public debate (Poynting, 2009, p. 373). However, since the July 2005 London bombings, we have seen a constant increase in public worrying about second-generation Muslim immigrants (Abbas, 2007). For example, in August 2005, Australia's Liberal Education Minister Brendan Nelson, at the time, complained about the lack of integration on behalf of Muslim immigrants, urging them to fit in or 'clear off'. He recommended the inculcation of 'Australian values' in schools through absorbing the Anzac legend and learning stories of heroes, such as Simpson and his donkey (Poynting, 2009, p. 374).

The debate about integration is sometimes interrupted by ‘Islamophobia’, which refers to ‘unfounded hostility towards Muslims and therefore fear or dislike of all or most Muslims’ (University of California, 2015). This fear of the ‘Other’ and cultural misunderstanding has affected the social image of Arab Australians in Sydney, which is not a very positive one. There is a visible amount of prejudice and negative stereotyping, especially of the Arab youth who have been portrayed as criminals. Open discrimination and racial attacks on members of the Arab and Muslim community became evident during the Gulf War in 1991 when members of the Arab and Muslim communities were seen as disloyal to Australia (Hage, 1991).

This has since been followed by several local and global incidents, which have added to the intensity of the situation, such as September 11, the invasion of Iraq, Gang rapes, shooting incidents (Hage, 1991) and other terrorist attacks around the world. Arab Australians currently face serious challenges even after their successful settlement due to these political and cultural limitations. After each terrorist attack around the world, Arab Australians are faced with accusations of disloyalty to Australia and are required to defend their cultural heritage or religion. While Arab Australians might be accused of not being able to integrate with the wider Australian society, Arab Australians themselves might claim they are not socially included. In this regard, social inclusion is associated with the inclusion of people from different cultural backgrounds in the mainstream culture of the host society (Butorac, 2014, p. 235).

2.4.1 Gender and cultural barriers

Gender roles in society are socially constructed and, therefore, they differ in different societies. Gender roles have an impact on the resettlement process of families, the

educational pathways family members follow and participation in the labour force. In the case of refugees, gender intersects in complex ways with factors of class, race, language, motivation, trauma and educational background (Butorac, 2014; Hatoss & Huijser, 2010, p. 147). Refugee women from male-dominated societies experience increasing opportunities to enact and empower their gender identities and roles in Western societies where women are given an equal status to men. On the other hand, men might experience a fall in social status because they are unable to access their traditional sources of power (Ho & Alcorso, 2004). This situation becomes worse if the man's educational qualifications and professional skills are not recognised or required in the new market. However, this case cannot be generalised to all migrating families due to the nature of social structure and relationships circumstances of each family (Gordon, 2004, p. 437).

In their works on Sudanese refugees in Australia, Hatoss and Huijser investigated the limitations that refugees face in accessing educational opportunities and building their social capital in the host country. Socially constructed gender roles, such as family obligations, continue to pose challenges to women's educational pathways (2010, p. 158). Furthermore, Ho and Alcorso (2004) state that the labour force participation of migrant women can often be explained by the employment preferences of their male partners. They reported some cases in which male partners discouraged women from accepting the work opportunities offered to them and even discouraged their female partners from seeking work. Some male migrants believe that a working female partner would threaten their power status within the family.

Consequently, some women may avoid participating in the labour force, either because of pressure from their partners or because they wish to prevent

conflict within the family. It is also noted that, upon arrival, men's employment generally takes priority within the families, while women's primary responsibility is to facilitate the settlement of the family into a new environment (Ho & Alcorso, 2004). Humanitarian entrants agree that it is not always possible to enrol in English classes within the first three months of their arrival in Australia. This is especially so for women who bear the burden of family responsibilities and, thus, do not consider formal language learning as a first priority (Refugee Council of Australia, 2008). It is significant to mention here that the majority of humanitarian entrant women, between 1998 and 2008, entered Australia as part of a family with children; 18% of these women were members of large families that had between five and 12 members. In addition, many humanitarian entrant women came to Australia as single mothers (Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria, 2009, p. 9).

Throughout settlement stages, migrant women face real challenges in integrating with the new society and accessing educational opportunities. An analysis of disadvantaged women's social engagement reported that approximately 75% of humanitarian migrant women who entered Australia between 1998 and 2008 did not speak English (Ethnic Communities' Council of Victoria, 2009, p. 9). Furthermore, Hatoss and Huijser (2010) conclude that women from refugee backgrounds are particularly at risk because they face both language and cultural barriers in their attempts to access educational opportunities. In particular, Muslim and Arab women face racial discrimination as a result of their cultural background and appearance and this happens more regularly than men. The headscarf, for example, serves as a symbol of feminine submission to Eastern male oppression, as well as a sign of what Hage (1998, p. 251) calls 'Third-World looking backwardness'. The woman who

wears the hijab or scarf seems to be a target for more acts of racism since the first Gulf War and have been increasing since 9/11 and after every terrorist attack (Poynting, 2009, p. 380).

These social and cultural challenges differ in nature from those faced by Arab men in regard to social engagement and accessing educational opportunities. Western media has critically written about the status of women in Arab and Muslim societies. From a Western point of view, Arab women, in particular, are often constructed as dominated and intimidated. In fact, the status of women is a sensitive and controversial issue in Arab societies today; in part because it has received a great deal of negative attention in the Western press and also because there are many emerging movements between educated Arab women calling for equal recognition and rights (Ghareeb et al., 2008, pp. 13-14).

The treatment of women in Arab societies is partly associated with the belief in a man's honour and the reputation of family. The protection of women is a central principle in Islamic society where the man is the head of the family and he has to protect his family. Therefore, any behaviour that looks like repression to Westerners is often seen by Arab women themselves as evidence that they are valued and protected. On the other hand, Western freedom of women is sometimes interpreted by Arab society as a sign of neglect and immorality. Furthermore, men and women are different in physical appearance; therefore, the role of women is mainly centred on house duties and family obligations (Ghareeb et al., 2008, pp. 13-14). This cultural view of Arab women continues when Arab families start to settle in a new country where men expect women to perform the same traditional duties, such as looking after other family members and performing house duties. These cultural

expectations and challenges do limit the role of woman in the new society and minimise their learning and socialisation opportunities (Gordon, 2004; Chamberlayne, 1968). Therefore, some migrant women face greater difficulties than men when it comes to learning the TL and making use of educational opportunities.

2.5 Adult English Language Programs

This final section of Chapter Two briefly describes the government policy related to adult education and the development of ESL curriculum in line with multicultural policies (Burns & Joyce, 2007). Adult English language instruction is one of the key services provided by the Australian Government to support newly arrived immigrants and refugees. The availability of free English language instruction is an essential need for new arrivals in order to develop their English language skills and build a new life in their host country. Adult English language programs are often influenced by Australian Government policies in immigration, language, tendering and labour-market development (Burns & Joyce, 2007). In 1987, the Labor federal government released the national policy on languages (Lo Bianco, 1987), which supports multiculturalism and social equity.

However, this plan was replaced in 1991 by Australia's Language: the Australian language and literacy policy. The aim of this policy is to promote an economic agenda highlighting the need to grow a skilled workforce to meet the needs of the growing Australian market and compete in a globalised economy. This policy development overlapped with national reforms on vocational and educational training, which witnessed a move to competency-based training. The Australia's Language: The Australian Language and Literacy policy focused on child and adult literacy and the teaching of selected foreign languages in secondary schools (Moore,

1996). With the election of the Liberal government in 1996, another document entitled *Literacy for All* was released to reflect a new vision. It focused on the need to improve English language literacy through offering literacy benchmarks into schools (Burns & Joyce, 2007, p. 7).

These policy agendas were aimed to guide and inform syllabus improvement for different groups of learners. They highlighted the need for a national curriculum for adult language programs. Also, this curriculum project was motivated by the aspiration to integrate the adult migrant English program within a broader settlement program. As a result and to facilitate the settlement process of newly arrived immigrants, the Australian Government offered free English language tuition to immigrants under the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), which was administered by the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC), currently known as Department of Immigration and Border Protection (DIBP) (Burns & Joyce, 2007, p. 7; Department of Education and Training, 2015).

There are also two other major adult language programs funded by the Australian Government and administered by the Department of Employment, Science and Training (DEST). The Language, Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP) aims to assist unemployed adults to develop language skills to participate in the workplace. Students in this program are required to complete the program by attending and completing the assessments. The Workplace, Language and Literacy Program (WLLP) provides language training in the workplace. In this program, both the government and employers contribute to the cost of courses, which must be geared to the language and literacy requirements of the workplace or vocational training (Burns & Joyce, 2007, p. 8).

The AMEP program was initiated in 1949 and currently provides English-language tuition for newly arrived immigrants and refugees but not to those who enter the country as skilled or business immigrants through classroom-based programs, distance learning, a volunteer home-tutor program and community-based programs (Martin, 2000). Public and private AMEP providers have begun tendering for the program since 1998 (Burns & Joyce, 2007, p. 8).

Under the AMEP, the baseline entitlement is 510 hours of tuition, with an extra 100 hours available to humanitarian entrants who have suffered from torture and trauma during their refugee journey or who have barriers to learning. Also, an additional 400 hours are available to humanitarian entrants between the ages of 16 and 24 years who received less than seven years of formal schooling (Ehrich, Kim & Ficorilli, 2010; Department of Education and Training, 2015). Despite these entitlements, many participants or AL learners in the program do not complete their designated hours (Burns & Joyce, 2007, p. 8). This causes negative impact on the ALL process in general and affects the development of English language reading and writing skills since these skills are better mastered through formal instruction.

2.5.1 The AMEP curriculum

Multicultural policies in education forced frequent developments in adult ESL education and curriculum. The 1980s witnessed enormous innovation in curriculum and teaching in the AMEP domain. The dominant methodology was communicative language teaching (Brindley, 1986), which was an influential approach in English language teaching for at least three decades. Its main theoretical concept ‘communicative’ carries profound meaning and implications, which are focused

around the idea that we learn to communicate by communicating (Larsen-Freeman, 1986, p. 131; Department of Education and Training, 2015).

The curriculum was a learner-centred and negotiated curriculum (Nunan, 1988) where the teacher develops tasks and courses for AL learners through needs analysis and goal clarification exercises. However, in the late 1980s, a number of problems were identified with this individualised curricular approach, including a lack of feedback to learners on their progress and uncertainty about syllabus planning and content since these were often guided by the teacher (Burton, 1998).

As a result, in 1992, the NSW Adult Migrant English Service (AMES) accredited the Certificate in Spoken and Written English (CSWE) and the Australian Government adopted it as the national AMEP curriculum. The CSWE was introduced as a result of policies from a reformist government under conditions of economic restructuring where competency-based training focused on outcomes was seen as a way of making education more responsive to the changing demands of the labour market and more accountable to funding bodies. This centralised and outcomes-driven approach is in contrast with previous curriculum development practices in the AMEP whereby teachers were free to design and deliver programs to meet the needs of individual learners with little or no accountability (Burns 2003, p. 264).

Currently, the AMEP program uses the CSWE as its curriculum, which is nationally recognised and accredited within the Australian Quality Training Framework (AQTF). The CSWE curriculum consists of four certificate levels or courses: (i) CSWE I for beginners; (ii) CSWE II for post-beginners; (iii) CSWE III for intermediate language learners; and (iv) CSWE IV for advanced learners. There

is also an additional course for preliterate or low level learners, namely, Course in Preliminary Spoken and Written English (CPSWE). The CSWE curricula involve task-based learning, which aims to facilitate the settlement stages of migrants in Australia. Previously, a great deal of the tasks across three CSWE levels (I–III) was settlement-focused. Latest changes to the CSWE curriculum placed a greater emphasis on tasks aimed at developing employability skills at higher levels (Ehrich, Kim & Ficorilli, 2010, p. 486; Burns & Joyce, 2007).

In regard to language proficiency and employability, Chiswick, Lee and Miller (2001) found that as an immigrant's English language proficiency developed, so did the likelihood of finding a job. Likewise, when immigrants enter the workforce, their English language proficiency tends to improve as a result of everyday social interaction in the workplace (Arkoudis et al., 2009) and this is consistent with one of the findings of this research study, as argued in Chapter Seven.

Given this recognisable relationship between English language proficiency and employment outcomes established in the literature, curriculum developers assumed that there would be a strong relationship between the CSWE level and employment because the CSWE curriculum is more focused on developing employability skills. The language policy behind the design of the CSWE curriculum focuses on developing English language competencies that promote employability skills. Hence, this curriculum might not have the capacity to develop those English language competencies, which are supposed to help new settlers to communicate effectively in different social contexts in order to meet their everyday increasing needs.

In the CSWE, achievement is stated in terms of learning outcomes. The assessment tasks are administered by class teachers who determine the content of the tasks, or the topics and other minor details when the students are to be assessed. When English learners achieve a predetermined number of competencies based on the outcomes of these assessments, they are awarded a certificate of achievement (Brindley, 2001). Thus, this curriculum is mainly competency-based, which is primarily designed to allow students to perform various tasks in English as the major objective of AMEP instruction. As a result, English language proficiency is not the primary focus of the curriculum (Brindley, 2001; Department of Education and Training, 2015).

Since 1992, the CSWE curriculum has been implemented in other educational sectors and programs, including Indigenous education, high school ESL programs, Corrective Services training programs and English-language programs for overseas students. It has been reaccredited a number of times after seeking feedback from stakeholders, including curriculum designers, educators, assessors, service providers and students (Burns, 2003).

2.6 Conclusion

This close examination of Australian learning settings, as reflected through settlement conditions, uncovers a variety of issues that are related to ALL and AL learners. There is a mutual relationship between education, employment and settlement success as demonstrated by research on settlement and migration. The demographic distribution of humanitarian entrants in NSW is expected to play a role in determining the interactional opportunities available to AL learners. Government policies can also be a factor that affect the lives of refugees and disrupt their

settlement conditions, including educational opportunities as with TPV holders, who were not entitled to free English tuition.

English language learning represents an important element of post-migration settlement in Australia, in which English proficiency will lead to the new arrivals gaining employment, therefore achieving a critical benchmark of successful inclusion in Australian society (Butorac, 2014, p. 234). In fact, achieving English language competency represents acquiring the symbolic and cultural capital needed to mediate ways of starting a new life in the host country – accessing the employment market, pursuing further education and building new social relationships.

Chapter Three deals with the theoretical part of the research study to further understand the issues described in this chapter. It discusses the main theoretical developments and trends in the field of ALL. Reviewing existing literature is necessary to define the theoretical context for the research study and draw theoretical and analytical frameworks that can guide the study and examine the data.

CHAPTER THREE: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a theoretical context for the research study and locates the study in time, space and research culture (Evans & Gruba, 2002, p. 69). This includes reviewing existing language learning theories and empirical studies in order to locate the research problem within the map of ALL research. This chapter also reviews a range of influential factors related to social context and social interaction, which were used later as a guide to organise the data coding process. Exploring theoretical frameworks for the study has enabled the researcher to define the research problem in order to analyse and develop solutions (Levy & Stockwell, 2006, in Kao, 2010, p. 115).

Having these aims in mind, this chapter describes the critical shifts in the history of ALL research and how ALL was influenced by the research practices in the psychology field. Describing these important developments in ALL research in a chronological order helped to highlight the theoretical gaps in relation to the impact of sociocultural dynamics on the ALL process. The research study aimed to identify these sociocultural dynamics involved in the ALL process within the Australian learning settings in order to identify their impact in relation to other psychological and linguistic dimensions.

Hence, this chapter starts with describing the initial focus of ALL research on individual and affective factors when it was first established and how it moved gradually to recognise a limited role of social factors. Then, the chapter examines the

works of some research figures and theorists, such as Spolsky (1989) and others, on the conditions of ALL. The chapter also examines the role of ‘age’ in ALL and how the effects of the social context are embedded in its complex influence. Finally, the chapter describes the role of some influential learning theories and how they changed the views about the nature of language and language learning. These theories include Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory (1978), Bourdieu’s theory of social practice (1973) and poststructuralist approaches to language and identity.

Finally, the chapter provides a brief summary of the current state of knowledge and the theoretical gaps in ALL research. To address these gaps and solve the research problem, the research questions were derived from the initial assumptions made at the beginning of the research study and then finally developed based on the literature review.

3.1 Unseen Role of Sociocultural Dynamics in Additional Language Learning Research

This initial section of the chapter describes the focus of ALL research in its early stages and how it partially neglected the role of social factors in the ALL process. Sociolinguistics had generally played an independent but complementary role in ALL research. This is due to the fact that social and cultural aspects of ALL were usually viewed as distant from the mental and psychological processes of language learning and consequently of less importance theoretically (Davis, 1995, p. 430). So, up to the mid of the 1990s, the theoretical position of ALL research was the focus on the relationship between cognition, as well as other individual factors and the classroom environment. This is due to the fact that many concepts and practices of ALL research were originally borrowed from L1 acquisition theories, which

emphasised the role of cognition and emotions in language learning. As a result, some researchers, such as Long (1998) concluded that there was no vital evidence for the impact of social factors in ALL.

For example, Krashen (1985), who made important contributions to ALL, neglected the role of social context in his early work. Instead, he focused on the value of ‘meaningful interaction’ in the classroom using the TL where AL learners are supposed to focus on meaning rather than form. Krashen believes that successful learning merely needs motivation and ‘comprehensible input’ to develop the natural learning process in the long run. According to Krashen (2008), AL learners need sufficient exposure to the TL by providing them with a ‘comprehensible input’; that is, input made easy for them to understand. Although Krashen did not mention the social context, he stressed the value of learning where the focus is on meaning and interaction between the AL learner and the linguistic input. Unlike Krashen, Lightbown (2000) commented on the value of social context in language learning and acknowledged that ‘a learner’s ability to understand language in a meaningful context exceeds his/her ability to comprehend decontextualised language’ (p. 432).

Similarly, research on the relationship between attitudes and ALL has been conducted as part of the research on motivation, of which attitudes play an important role (Lightbown & Spada, 1993, p. 39). In his work on the comprehensible input, Stephen Krashen developed the concept of an affective filter, where the psychological variables of anxiety, motivation and self-confidence may intensely enhance or inhibit ALL by playing a critical mediating role between the linguistic input (comprehensible input) available in the learning setting and the learner’s ability to learn (1982, pp. 30-32).

In fact, up to the beginning of the 1990s, a significant amount of ALL research had focused on psychological and linguistic factors that influence ALL and somehow neglected the key features of social context (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). In a brief historical overview, Palfreyman (2006) pointed out that the AL learner was previously seen as a decontextualised and cognitive learner while the context represented the ‘container’ of that individual learner. During that period, a great deal of ALL literature focused on classroom settings and neglected the effects of the surrounding larger social context that contains that classroom.

However, some researchers started to consider the link between language learning and culture. For example, Gardener (1979, p. 193) commented that learning another language is not just a matter of learning new information but of ‘acquiring symbolic elements of a different ethno-linguistic community’. Kramersch (2004, p. 8) also reflected on the relationship between language and culture by concluding:

If, however, language is seen as social practice, culture becomes the very core of language teaching. Cultural awareness must then be viewed both as enabling language proficiency and as being the outcome of reflection on language proficiency. (Kramersch, 2004, p. 8)

In this regard, Schumann (1986) introduced the concept of ‘social contact’ between the ALL group and the TL group as a critical condition to acquire the target culture. He suggested that the similarity between the original culture and the target culture affects the degree of culture acquisition or language learning. Schumann (1986, p. 382) also suggested that cohesiveness and size can minimise the opportunities of ALL; if the AL community is small, its members will tend to isolate themselves from the larger target community. In Schumann’s case, he indirectly confirmed the importance of ‘social context’ to language learning since social contact between the

AL and TL groups occurs in a social context and learning the language is part of learning the culture.

Like Schumann, Svanes (1988) examined the concept of 'cultural distance' while investigating the learning of Norwegian as an AL by three ethnic groups in Norway. The research shows a correlation between 'cultural distance' and AL achievement; that is, AL learners who are closer to the target culture are more likely to outperform those who are more distant. However, Svanes did not explore the reason why learners who are closer to the target culture performed better than others at learning Norwegian, although this might be due to a limitation with the use of quantitative methods, which lacks the tools of interpretation.

In the same way, sociolinguists investigated the impact of linguistic variables on ALL. Cummins' (1977; 1992) threshold theories enhanced our general understanding of the particular connections between first and ALL. In the interdependence hypothesis, he proposed that there is a clear linguistic transfer between the original and TL. Thus, achieving competence in the AL is partly dependent upon the conceptual development and proficiency previously achieved in the original language (Baker & Prys Jones, 1998). So, it can be assumed that AL learners, who are illiterate in their L1, or even those with minimal education, might suffer when learning another language.

Although linguistic skills, such as reading, writing, speaking, listening comprehension, grammar and vocabulary, are taught in the classroom, linguistic competence is not adequate by itself to achieve language proficiency. Sociolinguistic research shows that the level of competence required to use a language involves, in addition to linguistic competence, 'the ability to use socially and culturally

acceptable norms of interaction in the target language' (Crozet, 1996, p. 37). In most cases, miscommunication is caused by social and cultural misunderstanding. Heny supports this view, commenting that 'social patterning and not grammar' is the factor that fails communication (1994, p. 180). The example statement Heny used to support his argument, 'We must have lunch together', highlights the point that the literal meaning of a collection of words does not necessarily reflect the actual semantic meaning of the words (1994, p. 181). He explains that the above message hardly leads into an actual lunch date in an Anglo-American culture. A misunderstanding could result from a limited knowledge of the social conventions Western culture attaches to the language use in this social situation.

To summarise, the ALL research and literature of this early period on the relationship between ALL and social factors were more focused on the variables, which involve the relationship between the AL group and the TL in terms of cultural distance, as in Schumann's (1986) work. However, little attention was given to social and cultural variables, which involve the relationship between the AL learner and other social groups. Also, the focus of investigation was on single factors rather than a collection of factors; that is, researchers tried to investigate a specific factor and not examine the possible range of factors involved in the ALL process as a whole. With sociolinguistics, the focus was on investigating the linguistic issues that affect achieving linguistic competency in the TL.

3.2 Recognition of Social Context in Additional Language Learning Research

The focus on the role of social context in ALL increased in the mid-1990s. Until that time, the belief was that the process of ALL is affected by a group of internal and

external factors, such as age, motivation, anxiety, learning style, learning strategies, language aptitude, attitudes, transfer, L1 and social factors (Ellis, 1994). At the time, researchers realised the complexity of the ALL process since it involved the integration of several clusters of interrelated variables (Schumann, 1986; Spolsky, 1989). As a result, ALL researchers started to investigate the direct relationship between social factors and the ALL process.

One example of these empirical studies is an ethnographic study conducted by Berry and Williams (2004), where researchers examined a range of variables through exploring the inner world of a group of high school Chinese students who were studying in an independent school in the United Kingdom. Researchers investigated the difficulties encountered by the young AL learners during the first few months of their international study program. The study concluded that the ALL process is affected by three clusters of variables: (i) social; (ii) affective; and (iii) linguistic and these factors are often interrelated with each other. In fact, this distribution of factors influencing ALL has been used by a majority of modern ALL studies (Ellis, 2008; Mitchell, Myles & Marsden, 2013).

An Australian case study, conducted by O'Neill and Hewagodage (2010), provided an insight into the impact of social factors on AL learners – namely social isolation, personal circumstances and social marginalisation. The research shows that a comprehensive understanding of sociocultural factors is essential to improve additional language learning and teaching. AL learners need to use their interlanguage in learning settings where they are not subject to marginalisation and pressure. For the purpose of this study, interlanguage refers to ‘the type of language

produced by second language (L2) learners who are in the process of learning a language' (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p. 267).

For the last three decades, the study of ALL has been greatly affected by human mobility and migration. As discussed in Chapter Two, globalisation has yielded significant changes on economic, cultural, social, political and technological levels, which contributed to growing international migration. This meant massive movements of immigrants across borders (Collins, 2014). During immigration, refugees acquire valuable language and cultural knowledge due to the interactive nature of their immigration and different settlement experiences (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013). With this kind of ever-changing mobility, it becomes inaccurate to claim that the learner's language abilities were acquired solely as a result of the interaction between the learner's cognition and the classroom setting since both the classroom and cognition are situated in a wider social context. This opens the door for a wide range of contextual possibilities to influence the ALL process. For a refugee, ALL is increasingly affected by what is happening in the outer world in terms of cultural norms and social conditions, including the classroom.

The research on migration and settlement has provided practical insights into the existence of a range of social, cultural and political factors that shape the settlement conditions of migrants and refugees in the host country. Most of these studies have focussed on the issues of social inclusion, such as accessing the labour market and education. One of the recent studies in this regard was conducted by Butorac (2014). This study is based on data from a longitudinal ethnography that examined subjectivity in three interactional domains – family, society and work – in order to explore how language, race and gender influence the post-migration

settlement and sense of social inclusion of female migrants to Australia. The researcher questioned post-migration language learning as a mediator of social inclusion (Butorac, 2014, p. 234). While English language competence is justifiably seen as an important vehicle for social inclusion in Australia, to view the two in a causal relationship based simply on the development of a bounded lexico-grammatical system is to misunderstand the process of language socialisation (Butorac, 2014, p. 246). The experience of Asian participants in the study indicates that race and language may influence the process of gaining entry to the Australian labour market and other social domains. Language ideologies and attitudes to race in Australia, as well as the ways in which migration is a gendered process, are deeply involved in the impact that learning English has on social inclusion and the settlement trajectories of migrant women (Butorac, 2014, 246). Language and race mediate identities of belonging and exclusion across social and workplace interactional domains. In the social domain, exclusionary language practices marginalise some migrants in the host society, an experience that is associated not only with language but also race (Butorac, 2014, p. 238).

Although, migration and settlement research has focussed on the symbolic value of using the TL in accessing educational opportunities, employment and social groups (Leibig, 2007; Neumann et al, 2014; Butorac, 2014), investigating the nature of language learning and teaching practices is beyond its inquiry scope. This kind of sociological research is more interested in exploring factors that mediate social inclusion and help access employment and facilitate settlement.

In this regard, Piller and Lising (2014) have investigated the role of language in the employment and migration trajectories of meat processing workers from the

Philippines in rural Australia. They employed a case study approach collecting data from language and migration policy documents and media reports, as well as data from ethnographic fieldwork. The researchers investigated the role of language in recruitment, in the workplace, during leisure time and in gaining permanent residence in Australia. Because of their limited education and limited opportunities to practise English, most participants could not pass the English test for migrants that enable them to apply for a permanent residency. Most participants could not reach this proficiency level (Piller & Lising, 2014, p. 35). Therefore, the study shows that meat workers who do not have high levels of English language proficiency before coming to Australia have limited opportunities to acquire English at work or in the community. This is partly because the management and the rigors of their work discourage their English language development and privilege the continued use of their first language (Piller & Lising, 2014, p. 56). However, the study does not explain why participants could not develop their English outside the workplace and what other factors might be involved in their language learning and settlement.

3.3 Conditions of Additional Language Learning

A wide range of ALL studies aimed to design a general theory of ALL or a framework that is able to explain the mechanism of the ALL process. These studies suggest multiple conditions under which ALL occurs. The purpose of exploring such studies is to show the complexity of the ALL process and the variety of factors involved in this learning process. These studies describe a variety of conditions related in one way or another to the role of social factors in ALL. According to Spolsky (1989), language learning conditions refer to the internal and external

factors that influence ALL. This means that such conditions are either typical of the AL learner or essential for the learning process.

One of the traditional studies in this domain is Gagne's 1965 concepts, as reported in Oxford (2008), which widely affected the area of ALL and language teaching at that time. Gagne used a learning approach, which focused on the learner's internal cognitive processes. The conditions deal with five key learning types: (i) verbal information; (ii) intellectual skills; (iii) motor skills; (iv) attitudes; and (v) cognitive strategies. These types of learning require observation and attention on behalf of the learner.

Gagne's conditions were largely influenced by the behaviourist concept of sequenced learning events since he suggested that each type of learning has its own sequence of instructional procedures. This is an example of the impact of psychology, which was dominant at the time in education and ALL borrowed most of its concepts from educational psychology. Gagne's framework paid little attention to social context as the focus was on the verbal context of encoding, cognitive strategies and attitudes in isolation from the social causes of these psychological constructs (Oxford, 2008, p. 42). This emphasis on cognitive processes as the core of language learning during the last century might be due to the fact that the learning process was conducted in the classroom, whereas technology advancement as a result of globalisation has brought education into a new era based on open and online learning.

As noted earlier in this chapter, Krashen's 'comprehensible input' has had a significant impact on early ALL research (2008). In fact, Krashen intended to design specific conditions for ALL through building his comprehensible input that

represents correct linguistic input and claimed to be essential for ALL. Krashen focused on the interaction between the AL learner and the linguistic input. He believed that ALL develops only when the individual learner receives sufficient comprehensible input, which is slightly above the current level of the learner's comprehension.

However, any comprehensible input must occur in an atmosphere where the learner's affective filter is low; that is, the teacher should help the learner to design an ideal situation or environment for language learning with as little anxiety as possible (Krashen, 1985). So, Krashen linked the AL learner, linguistic input and psychological conditions without acknowledging any role of social factors, although motivation and anxiety are not generated without suitable social conditions that produce them (Spolsky, 1989).

One of the ambitious attempts to examine the role of social context in ALL was conducted by Spolsky (1989), who argued that social factors enjoy a higher position in ALL because of the complexity of social context. In one of his seminal studies, Spolsky (1989) introduced his preference model for a general theory of ALL, which contained 74 conditions and involved the interaction of several clusters of interrelated conditions that were assumed to shape ALL. He claimed that meeting some of these learning conditions will ensure achieving the various possible outcomes in ALL. In addition, Spolsky attempted to explain the mechanism by which social context affects other linguistic and psychological variables during the ALL process.

Spolsky's central question was: Who learns how much of what language under what conditions? He viewed ALL as 'individual but occurs in society and

while the social factors are not necessarily direct in their influence, they have strong and traceable indirect effects' (1989, p. 15). Spolsky argued that social context impacts ALL in two ways: firstly, social context conditions generate various kinds of attitudes towards the language learning process, the TL and the host community, which in turn create motivation towards learning achievement. Secondly, social context creates formal and informal communicative opportunities for language learning (Spolsky, 1989, p. 26).

One of the learning conditions related to social interaction is called 'linguistic convergence', which suggests that AL learners prefer to learn the TL when they discover a great value in being able to communicate with its speakers and that learning the TL is encouraged by the speakers of the TL (Spolsky, 1989, p. 22). Another condition is called 'exposure', which suggests that the more time spent on learning the new language the more will be learnt (Spolsky, 1989, p. 166). Generally speaking, these conditions recognise the role of social context in ALL and in conjunction with other psychological factors, such as motivation and attitudes.

In another contribution through his psycholinguistic approach, Ellis (1999) used the term 'instructed second language (L2) acquisition' arguing that acquisition or learning is achieved when a linguistic item or feature is internalised and entered into the learner's interlanguage system for communicative use. Ellis (2005) suggested 10 principles of instructed L2 acquisition, which can also be described as learning conditions. Some of these conditions are related to social interaction.

According to Ellis (2005), AL instruction should ensure that learners focus mainly on meaning, which includes both semantic meaning (AL as a subject of study) and pragmatic meaning (AL as a tool for communication). Besides, AL

instruction has to provide extensive linguistic input by using the TL in the classroom, as well as searching for AL learning opportunities outside the classroom, including extensive reading. At the same time, AL instruction has to provide opportunities for AL output, where classroom interaction in the TL develops AL learning. So, when a communication problem occurs, students are required to negotiate meaning to solve it.

In fact, there are some similarities between Krashen's (2008) and Ellis's (2005) conditions of ALL in terms of focusing on meaning and the value of linguistic input. Ellis focuses on the cognition to achieve internalisation before linguistic features used in communication, without searching for any potential role for social interaction in stimulating this process. Conversely, Ellis (2005) argues that the opportunity to interact in the TL is important to engage students in tasks beyond their current proficiency level and develop AL proficiency. Also, students must have a reason to attend to language, such as problem solving or meeting personal needs. Although, Ellis (2008) adopted a psycholinguistic approach towards ALL, he managed to acknowledge the role of social interaction in developing the ALL process.

In regard to technology, Zhao and Lai (2007) produced their theory of technology-enhanced instruction, which confirms the role of technology in developing ALL as a way of interaction between AL learners and computerised devices. The theory introduces four instructional conditions that relate to AL instruction. The authors cited some research, suggesting that technology-enhanced AL instruction is often better than other learning approaches in fulfilling these learning conditions and achieving AL development. Two of these conditions might

imply an interactional relationship between technology and the AL learner. The first condition suggested that learners need high quality input and that modern technologies can offer authentic input of various types, whether comprehensible, simplified or enhanced. Like Ellis (2008), Zhao and Lai (2007) agree that AL learners need sufficient opportunities to produce their linguistic output or practice the new language and technology provides this kind of opportunity to practice the TL via computer-mediated communication, social media and mobile phones.

These different empirical studies acknowledge the mutual impact of social, psychological and linguistic conditions on ALL. At the same time, they tried to explore the complex and far reaching role of social context in achieving AL proficiency. Despite the fact that many conditions are of a cognitive and linguistic nature, the role of social context and interaction is still essential and could not be neglected. Describing these social conditions is important for this research study because it allows us to expect the nature of some of the social and cultural factors might emerge from this study's data.

Linguistic anthropologists and other qualitative researchers interested in language education have recently used a holistic perspective in conducting language research, which is different to traditional mainstream language learning studies. They have viewed language learning as not only a cognitive activity, but also one that is embedded in its social context. This means that cognitive processes are important, but they operate within a wider sociocultural space that is equally important (Davis, 1995, p. 432). This research direction in ALL research leads us to question the separation between the social and psychological factors influencing ALL. Many psychological factors, such as motivation, attitudes, anxiety, or trauma, have social

extensions. They act as psychological factors but they are shaped by social and cultural conditions. For example, the understanding and implication of being a female or male are not the same across different societies and cultures in the West or the East (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 280).

This socio-cognitive approach in ALL research attempts to reach a compromise between the communication from a pragmatic view and from a cognitive view, therefore, the term socio-cognitive is an attempt to reconcile the social and affective sides of learning. There are different studies that are based on a socio-cognitive view that have been undertaken in the past decade. Rob Batstone's (2010) volume explores the connection between social and cognitive factors in ALL. The chapters argue that social and cognitive factors are not two different phenomena but two sides of the same phenomenon. The chapters, which are based on a collection of empirical studies, call for dissolving the artificial distinction between social and cognitive factors when studying the process of ALL in formal and non-formal learning settings. Most chapters claim that the focus of ALL research has been divided into two unrelated areas by most SLA theories: either exclusively cognition or exclusively social. Atkinson (2010, p. 24) advocates this recent approach to ALL, which is based largely on extended and embodied conceptualization of cognition. This is a view of language acquisition that is simultaneously occurring and interactively constructed both within the human mind and in the social world. This socio-cognitive approach states that there is no gap between cognitive and social sides of additional language learning since most language learning takes place in social contexts and learning itself is a cognitive process by definition (Atkinson, 2010).

Although these claims might be true for a specific time-period during the history of ALL, the complex and mutual relationship between social, psychological and linguistic factors is well established in ALL literature (Ellis, 1994; Mitchell, Myles, & Marsden, 2013). As shown earlier in this chapter, Spolsky (1989) made a thoughtful attempt to design a theoretical framework that shows the mutual impact of social, psychological and linguistic factors on the process of ALL. The current research study aimed to explore the forces, which are generated by social, cultural and historical contexts, that drive the dynamic process of ALL. This study acknowledges the collective impact of all factors involved in ALL, whether social, individual and linguistic. It strongly supports the view that social and cognitive factors are inseparable from each other due to their mutual influence on language learning.

3.4 Social Aspects of the ‘Age’ Factor

This section discusses the social aspects attached to the factor of age in ALL. It shows that age is not an isolated biological factor. There have been a number of exceptional cases of adult AL learners who learnt an AL outside the classroom and achieved high levels of proficiency. ‘Age’ is one of the most important affective factors in ALL. There is some consensus between the researchers that age brings about different performance stages in the ALL process. Singleton believes that talking about a single age factor is unwise; instead, we should direct our thinking towards a range of age factors (Singleton, 2001, p. 85). Some cases of those successful and talented learners are used as empirical evidence to challenge the claims of the critical period hypothesis (CPH), which assesses the role of ‘age’ in ALL as a standalone factor. According to the CPH, younger children are better than

adults in learning an AL because they possess innate biological structures (the L1 acquisition system and universal grammar framework) in the brain, which facilitate language learning processes (Ellis, 1994, p. 484).

In comparison, it is claimed that adult learners lose these innate structures after puberty and instead they activate some other learning capacities. The CPH further assumes that there is a limited time span in which acquiring another language is an easy and effortless task. This critical period is approximately between birth and puberty. The focus on this specific period of time is related to the biological changes (puberty) occurring in the human body and are accompanied by the firm localisation of language-processing abilities in the left hemisphere when the brain becomes lateralised as described by Lenneberg (1967). Lamendella (1977), between others, challenged Lenneberg's conclusion by introducing the concept of a sensitive period to suggest that language acquisition may be more efficient during early years but is not impossible at the later stages of life.

In this regard, a number of studies have investigated social aspects related to age in ALL. For example, Wang (1999) analysed the learning experiences of 30 female immigrants in Canada. The findings uncovered the complexity of the ALL process since it involved variables related to both the learner and the social context. Wang (1999, p. 10) concluded that most adult AL learners hold personal views of the relationship between age and ALL, but these views are mainly based on social beliefs since some of the participants believed that age is the reason behind their declining memories while some of them thought that their tongue's muscles were getting 'stiffer' with age.

Researchers who conducted case studies of successful adult AL learners tried to disprove the CPH through claiming the opposite; that is, adults are superior to children in learning another language (Bongaerts et al., 1997). These researchers attributed this exceptional success in learning and using the TL like native speakers to two factors, which are related to talent. First is the unique brain organisation for language, as demonstrated by the use of a larger amount of the cortex for language processing. Second is being less left-lateralised for language processing. Additionally, it is also claimed that such exceptional AL learners retained the neurocognitive flexibility that is supposed to be present with young learners. Therefore, those AL learners are not bound by the biological constraints decided by the CPH (Bongaerts et al., 1997, p. 451).

Both supporters and opponents of the CPH did not clearly acknowledge the role played by social context in these successful learning stories. Nowadays, it is generally accepted that a critical period is available for L1 acquisition but this claim is still subject to controversy between psycholinguists when it is generalised to include ALL (Marinova-Todd et al., 2000). This is due to the fact that the variety and quality of social learning opportunities available to children may support the widespread belief, although research has yet to prove this convincingly, that younger AL learners generally perform easier and faster than adult AL learners in the long run (Ellis, 1994, p. 484).

While there is a strong possibility that adult learners are less likely to master the TL than young learners, current research on age and ALL reveals that 'age differences reflect differences in the situation of learning rather than in capacity to learn' (Marinova-Todd et al., 2000, p. 9). There is also a belief that age differences

do not demonstrate limitations on the capacity of adult learners to become highly successful AL learners or proficient speakers of the TL. Age affects ALL mainly because it interacts with other sociocultural and psychological factors (Marinova-Todd et al., 2000, p. 28). The following example of a successful AL learner is discussed briefly to show this complex and interactive role of social context, which accompanies the biological factor of age in ALL.

Julie's Case of Learning Arabic was conducted by Ioup, Boustagui, El Tigi and Moselle (1994), concerning the ability of exceptional adult AL learners to achieve near-native-like fluency in learning another language after being exposed to the TL after the close of the critical period. Julie is a native speaker of English who lived in Egypt after marrying an Egyptian man at the age of 21. Julie had lived in Egypt for 26 years at the time of the study. Julie did not receive any formal instruction in Egyptian Arabic, therefore Julie can neither read nor write Arabic.

After nine days of her arrival in Egypt, her husband was called to do his military service, so she was left alone for 45 days with her husband's family who spoke only Egyptian Arabic. As a result, she relied on the surrounding context and gestures to interpret utterances and express her meanings. After two-and-a-half years, she became more immersed in the Arabic-speaking environment and Arabic became her home language since she had reached a level of fluency that enabled her to converse comfortably in Arabic (Ioup et al., 1994, pp. 77-78). Regardless of her initial trauma resulting from the new language and culture shock, Julie learnt Arabic very quickly. Julie's Arabic language skills were monitored and tested by the researchers who collected her tape-recorded natural speech samples from a variety of social situations. Then, these speech samples were played to 13 judges who were

native Arabic-speaking teachers of Arabic as a foreign language. Remarkably, Julie was described as an Arabic native speaker by eight of the 13 judges with no noticeable foreign accent, while the rest of the judges considered her to be a native-like speaker (Ioup et al., 1994, p. 80).

Ioup et al. (1994) believe that 'talent' in learning languages and attention to forms are responsible for Julie's success. Language learning talent is considered to be an innate and inherited trait, which is related to a cluster of inherited human characteristics such as left-handedness, twinning, allergies and so on (Jedynak, 2009, p. 164). Therefore, the study concluded that the case of Julie can be classified as a neuropsychological phenomenon associated with unusual cognitive abilities. Thus, the case of talented adult AL learners was considered an exception to the CPH because, as the study assumes, the neurocognitive change did not occur in the usual way (Ioup et al., 1994, p. 93). Therefore, Ioup et al. (1994) did not take in consideration the impact of social context as a contributing factor in the case of Julie, since the focus was on the biological and cognitive aspects of age.

In fact, the impact of social context and interaction is evident. The effect of social environment was present from day one when Julie entered Egypt. Julie decided to learn Arabic because she did not have any other way of verbal communication after her husband left her with his family who speak only Arabic. Dynamic socialisation played a critical role in directing Julie's Arabic language learning through providing suitable interactional opportunities needed to use the TL. Julie created her own social learning strategies necessary to support and accelerate her learning, as well as manipulating cultural and linguistic resources available in the immediate social context. This included using the social context around her as an AL

input and output at the same time. The failure of this empirical study to investigate the impact of social factors in Julie's case is due to the theoretical perspectives that drove the study and the inefficiency of the research methods used in collecting and analysing the data that failed to interpret the learning setting.

The next section discusses Vygotsky's sociocultural approach to cognitive development or learning. His sociocultural theory is important for this research study because it stresses the central role of social interaction in language learning. Vygotsky (1978) believes that community plays a fundamental role in the process of constructing meaning and he places great emphasis on culture in shaping learning in general.

3.5 Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

An emphasis on the importance of context in language learning has prompted a number of approaches, termed 'sociocultural perspectives', which emphasise the joined nature of individual and social entities in mental development or learning (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Mitchell & Miles, 2004). Vygotsky is considered the founder of sociocultural psychology. Although he was known in Russia in the 1920s, many Western scholars and researchers re-examined his work during the last two decades. Lantolf (2000; 2006), in particular, focused on the application of Vygotsky's work to ALL.

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory dealt mainly with the concept of mental development in childhood (Vygotsky, 1978), but theoretical implications can still be drawn to support the role of social interaction in adult ALL. The main purpose of language is to communicate meaning and the sociocultural theory suggests that the

most effective way to convey meaning is through social interaction. According to this theory, interaction with people of different levels of knowledge and skills often leads to effective learning, which in turn encourages young learners to move on to the next stage of learning (Kao, 2010, p. 117). Accordingly, AL learners need to know and practise how meaning is conveyed in real life situations. For the purposes of this research study, Vygotsky's theory has been used to inform the study through examining the usefulness of participants' communicative practices.

One of the primary tools of cognitive development is meaning, which is constructed primarily through interpersonal semiotic interaction (Kozulin, 1990). This statement represents the general role of cognitive development as embraced by Vygotsky (1987), which states that all higher mental functions develop as a result of transferring meaningful observations and happenings from the environment into the individual's mind through social mediation for cognitive processing. In cognitive theory, the way learners deal with their thoughts is claimed to be similar to 'processing' information through a number of 'mental activities', which are seen as 'ways of processing information that enhance comprehension, learning or retention of the information' (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 1).

Learning, according to Vygotsky's theory, is developed through social interaction with more knowledgeable or proficient individuals (Vygotsky, 1978). This social process of interaction through language, as well as other systems and tools, such as gestures, narratives and technologies, mediates the construction of knowledge. It leads to the individual's development of a framework that is able to make sense of learning experiences that are consistent with the sociocultural context in which the learner and learning are situated. This framework internalises and

converts the key elements in these language texts into complex mental functions, such as planning, organising, evaluating, analysing and synthesising (Oxford, 2008, p. 43; Lantolf, 2000). Therefore, cognitive development occurs twice: the first time through the process of social interaction and the second time within the mind of the individual (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57).

Vygotsky believed that the core of cognitive development is mastering the use of cognitive tools, such as language, in order to accomplish advanced thinking activities. Problem solving actions are not possible without using these tools. Therefore, language is integral to learning because it is the major means by which people accomplish thinking processes through creating meanings, sharing ideas and negotiating social relationships. Thus, language is considered the most significant semiotic (symbolic) tool that humans own (Gredler, 2009).

One of the central concepts in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory is 'mediation', which emphasises the role of social interaction in childhood learning (Kozulin, 1986). According to this sociocultural theory, mediation refers to the use of tools selected to solve a problem or reach a specific goal or resolution. Language is one of these symbolic and psychological tools of mediation, which serves as a mediator for the individual's mental activity in order to facilitate the child's learning (Lantolf, 2006). Mediation can be applied to include other things, such as people and technological devices. According to William and Burden, individuals sometimes act as mediators when they play a major role in enhancing the learning process of their children through selecting, designing or amending the learning opportunities available to them in the environment (2009, p. 40).

Applying Vygotsky's perspective to ALL means that problem solving will involve using symbolic tools, mainly the TL, on behalf of the learner, through active participation with other individuals in order to construct the world according to their vision, goals and needs (Lantolf & Appel, 1994 in Kao, 2010, p. 116). This suggests that new arrivals need mediation to resolve their communication problems and meet daily needs through using the TL as a mediation tool with other individuals and the physical world. This social interaction with people and the environment can lead to effective learning since individuals have different levels of knowledge and life experiences. Therefore, the concept of mediation is important to adult ALL since learning is considered a socially mediated process where the learner is taught or learns how to master the use of a psychological tool in order to use it in various social situations for purposes of problem solving and meeting personal needs (Mitchell & Myles, 2004).

Although Vygotsky's sociocultural theory is claimed to provide an inclusive explanation of the children's cognitive development, its application to adult ALL raises a number of questions. The theory does not explain the relationship between social and cognitive processes and how they collaborate. The theory deals with social interaction as a mechanism to mediate the construction of knowledge but it does not say much about how learners create social interactional opportunities and adjust them to serve the individual's cognitive development. This research study explores different sociocultural dynamics and explains how they affect ALL. This study also shows the role of social interaction in creating communicative opportunities.

The next section deals with one of Bourdieu's most important concepts related to his theory of social practice. Cultural capital was used by Bourdieu to

represent the knowledge, rules and learning experiences that people draw upon when they participate in social activities, including learning (Bourdieu, 1973).

3.6 Bourdieu's Theory of Social Practice

The work of Bourdieu provides useful conceptual tools for researchers and educators working closely with language learning. He is an important figure in developing a contextual view of language learning. His theory of social practice builds on three key concepts: (i) capital; (ii) habitus; and (iii) field (Carrington & Luke, 1997).

Bourdieu's method observes the social world in the form of 'capital', which represents indexes of social power. The concept of capital is derived from his theoretical ideas on class. He identifies three dimensions of capital, each with its own relationship to class: (i) economic; (ii) cultural; and (iii) social capital. These three materialistic and figurative assets are socially operational and their ownership is legitimised through the mediation of symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1973).

Cultural capital represents all forms of knowledge, skills, intellect, style of speech and other advantages that a person possesses and they have value in a given society in relation to status and power (Bourdieu, 1973). Linguistic capital represents an important aspect of cultural capital since it refers to access to grammar and the ability to produce appropriate expressions in an appropriate way in a given social context (Flowerdew & Miller, 2008, p. 202). Therefore, people who do not have access to particular social institutions or settings, such as schools, are unable to obtain this linguistic capital (Flowerdew & Miller, 2008, p. 203). Bourdieu argues that differences in linguistic abilities can be attributed to the different social backgrounds of language learners and he used the term 'cultural capital' to refer to

those attributes, which are acquired through the membership of a particular social class, group or institution (1973).

Social capital, as a resource, is powered by group membership and social networks, since the capacity of social capital, which is possessed by a given agent, is measured by the size of the network of connections that he/she can effectively activate or use (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 249). Within this framework, access to institutions and positions of power is much controlled and mediated by social capital. Also, the activation of such networks enables activation of other forms of capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Therefore, social capital is used to produce and reproduce social inequality.

Economic capital is seen as the basis for other forms of capital, when social and cultural capital become commodities to be exchanged when agency is activated for position and power. Bourdieu (1977) believes that social and cultural capitals are major factors in educational inequality; learners with greater social and cultural capital have wider educational opportunities than other learners with no social and cultural capital.

Bourdieu started his modelling of capital with 'habitus'. He defined habitus:

As a system of lasting, transposable dispositions which integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks. (Bourdieu, 1977, pp. 82-83)

In other words, habitus is driven by socialisation and exposure to systemic resources and results in 'what is comfortable or natural' to the individual (Lareau, 2002, p. 275). This means habitus shapes the amounts and kinds of resources a person accumulates and draws upon over time (Bourdieu, 1973).

The ways in which habitus can operate might be random and unpredictable as a direct reflection of the social context in which it is produced. While habitus is often informed and shaped by individual actions, it is also subjected to external and objective structures. Bourdieu claims that aspirations and practices of individuals and groups correspond to formative conditions that are often embedded in external social structures (Bourdieu, 1990). As a result, habitus allows individuals to act in a certain way with a sense of how to respond to daily social activities (Bourdieu, 1990). Habitus is the ‘system of schemes for generating and perceiving practices’ (Bourdieu, 1993, p. 87). This involves the resilient incorporation of dispositions, practices and perceptions recognised both naturally and generatively at the moment of social practice within a social context (Bourdieu, 1990).

Social ‘fields’ refer to broader institutions such as family, school, media, clubs and law, as well as micro institutions such as relationships, topics and social situations (Bourdieu, 1990, 1993). Swartz (1997) argues that Bourdieu conceptualised society as an array of autonomous but structurally homologous fields of production, circulation and consumption of cultural and material practices that mediate the relationship between social structure and cultural practice. For Bourdieu, the culture of the school is a representation of the dominant culture, where practices are reproduced and maintained through education. Therefore, society is conceived as a plurality of social fields, where the three forms of capital are the core factors defining status, positions and options of the various actors in any field. Each social field has a profile of its own, depending on equal importance within each of the forms of capital. The forms of capital, which are owned by the various agents, are the

powers that decide the chances of winning any challenge or conflict (Bourdieu, 1973).

The forms of cultural capital most relevant to refugees' language learning and cultural integration include institutionalized cultural capital (academic credentials) and embodied cultural capital (accents and other cultural competences). Academic credentials can also be considered as embodied since the possessor shapes how educational credentials are converted into jobs and economic capital. For refugees, failure to have their educational credentials fairly recognized, alongside the absence of other forms of embodied cultural capital (like the "right" accents, work experience and cultural knowledge) are central to ALL and their successful settlement including deskilling and downward occupational mobility (Creese & Wiebe, 2009, p. 7).

Bourdieu's theory, which visualises the social world, is important for informing this research study because it focuses on the society and its different fields as the setting where agents interact with each other and with the cultural properties of that society, including language. Cultural capital represents important symbolic assets for new settlers or AL learners when starting their learning in general. However, the theory of social practise does not determine how an agent can manipulate cultural capital in different fields or how an agent negotiates or exchanges this capital in the learning process. The movements of agents and interactions are not spontaneous but governed by lasting dispositions that are driven by forms of capital in order to generate social practices. Based on these effects, language learning, as social activity or practice, is also governed by the various forms of capital. Although Bourdieu's social theory shows the importance of capital

in the learning process, he blames cultural capital itself for being a cause of disadvantage or inequality for other learners from lower class families.

The next section deals with the role of identities in ALL. Identity is used in ALL research to reference the relationship between the individual and the social world in which he/she operates (Norton, 2000, p. 5). The concept of identity has the potential to explain the relationship between the AL learner and the learning setting.

3.7 Sociocultural Identities

ALL theorists now view language as a social practice since they are more interested in the way language constructs and is constructed by social relationships. Therefore, these social relationships are rarely established on equal terms, but may display inequitable relations of power in social interactions according to classifications such as gender, class, ethnicity or sexual orientation. Such theorists are interested in investigating the social, historical and cultural context in which language learning takes place and how AL learners accept or resist the various positions those contexts impose on them (Norton, 2008, p. 45).

In his book ‘Arabic, Self and Identity: A Study in Conflict and Displacement’, Suleiman (2011) explores the language-self-identity link within the narratives of conflicts in the Middle East, displacement, anxiety, trauma, and globalisation. The book reveals the complexity of the language-identity link in society and the value of language as a symbol of identity in Arabic society on the individual and group levels. This complexity of the relationship between language and identity is also reflected in this study’s narratives in Chapters Five and Six since participants, as former

refugees, experienced a great deal of danger, agony, instability, and trauma during their journey of refugee.

Norton Peirce (1995) indicated that ALL theorists had not been able to conceptualise the relationship between the language learner and the social context. This is due to the fact that they had not developed an inclusive theory of 'social identity', which integrates both the language learner and the social context. For example, in Julie's ALL experience discussed earlier, the researchers who investigated her case did not assume any relationship between Julie as a learner and the social context where the ALL process occurred. As Norton Peirce (1995) noticed, this is due to the absence of any social identity theory that identifies the relationship between the AL learner and the social context. In his comments on Norton Peirce's call for a comprehensive theory of social identity, Block (2007) noted that before the 1990s there was no research to examine this new emerging field of social identity and social context in ALL research.

Informed by Weedon's (1987) poststructuralist feminism, Heller's (1988) ethnolinguistic identity theory and Spolsky's (1989) general theory of ALL, Norton Peirce (1995) introduced her theory of social identity, which emphasises the critical role of power relations in social interaction. In her theory, Norton Peirce (1995) argues that the language learner 'has a complex social identity that must be understood with reference to larger and frequently inequitable social structures, which are reproduced in day-to-day social interaction' (p. 13). Norton (1997) decides that social identity, cultural identity, sociocultural identity, ethnic identity and voice are totally inseparable from the material resources in society.

Sociocultural identities are dynamic, negotiated and transformed constructs by means of language. Thus, the idea of the AL learner is consistent with the poststructuralist view of the language learner as ‘culturally complex and dynamic’ (Sole, 2007, p. 204). Identity also represents a site of struggle and unstable reality since it is attached to individuals, who are moving across borders experiencing different sociocultural conditions. In her study of migrant women in Canada, Norton Peirce concluded that social identity represents a site of struggle for some of these women. Martina, for example, was an immigrant woman, a language learner, a kitchen hand. At the same time, she was a mother, a wife and a primary caregiver. By setting up a counter discourse in her workplace and resisting the subject position as ‘immigrant woman’ in favour of the subject position ‘mother’, Martina claimed the right to speak (Norton Peirce, 1995). However, Norton Peirce does not explain how the concept of social identity can be used to assist teachers in empowering their AL learners to invest in language learning outside the language classroom.

Also, Norton Peirce (2008, pp. 47-48) developed the notion of ‘investment’ to designate the socially and historically constructed relationship of AL learners to the TL and their desire to learn it. When learners start learning and ‘investing’ in the TL, they do so with the understanding that they will acquire a wider range of symbolic and material resources in the future, which, in turn, will increase the value of their cultural capital through varying investments and commitments to education (Bourdieu, 1977). However, this investment in the TL is also an investment in the learner’s own identity.

Although McNamara (1997) agreed with Norton Peirce (1995) in her criticism of ALL theorists, he criticised her work for not paying attention to the

social identity theory originally formulated by the social psychologist Tajfel (1974) who suggested that a given social context, which comprises different social groups, provides individuals with the ability to categorise individuals into group memberships. According to Tajfel, social identity is:

... that part of an individual's self-conception which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the emotional significance attached to that membership. (Tajfel, 1974, p. 69)

Similarly, Giles and Johnson (1987), who used Tajfel's theory of social identity, formed their ethnolinguistic identity theory, which focuses on language as prominent marker of group membership and social identity. According to their theory, individuals compare their social group to other groups in order to create, change or amend their own social group to make it more distinct from other groups. In this regard, Heller (1988) suggests a close relationship between language and ethnicity. Ethnicity may minimise the extent of social interaction between individuals from two different ethnic groups when using the TL and this is in favour of a shared ethnic community interaction as language here is dealt with as a symbol of group identity.

After Norton Peirce's (1995) call, the situation changed significantly as ALL researchers shifted their focus from the formal and traditional context of the classroom to other wider informal contexts (Miller, 2000; Piller, 2002; Kurata, 2007). Various studies have been conducted featuring social identity as a key poststructuralist construct. According to this understanding, the AL learner now belongs to a multiplicity of sociocultural identities, which are fragmented (Sole, 2007, p. 204).

Identities have been generally theorised as increasingly fragmented, fractured and constructed products of the marking of difference and exclusion across different

discourses within the play of specific modalities of power. They are produced in and through specific historical, cultural and language sites within specific discursive formations and practices and during the process of becoming rather than being (Hall, 1996, p. 4). Instead of being described as unified and essentialist, models of identity have been conceptualised as a process of continual emerging and becoming rather than being (Hall, 1996).

Hall (1996) believes that this important conceptual shift is due to a number of social and historical conditions, which are largely caused by globalisation and international migration. Hall (1993) examined identity in terms of the relationship between identity and culture since identity represents a shared or collective culture where cultural practices and mutual histories bring together codes of solidarity and imagined uniformity within individuals and groups. Identity is a transformative and situational construct which is subject to negotiation and change since identity has the capacity to include and exclude individuals and groups based on the concept of imagined homogeneity. However, within these constructed forms of shared cultural discourses, practices and social processes, there are points of difference that are fragmented and contingent on historical and power relations (Hall, 1996).

Berry and Williams (2004) describe the situation faced by AL learners when they try to adapt to a new cultural and linguistic context:

Individual learners may find it hard to adjust to the new culture and feel powerless in affirming their identities there. In cases where the sense of self is perceived to be endangered, distress may be felt, possibly resulting in lower performance academically. In the worst scenario, learners may admit failure and drop out of the school. (p. 121)

This kind of inner self-struggle in terms of identities is also perceived in Piller's (2002) study where a number of adult AL users from different language backgrounds

discussed the issue of ‘passing’ practices as a native speaker. The participants’ accounts conveyed an in-depth picture of the nature of the struggle between original identity and adopted identity. When AL users face an everyday situation where they are required to prove their language attainment, they do their best to match the level of an ideal native speaker. But the challenge at that moment is the question of identity; that is, *What identity will they claim?*: the original identity, which might make them stereotyped as incompetent users or the adopted identity, which might expose them later as non-native speakers if the conversation is extended suddenly and linguistic errors might emerge.

Miller (1999) examined the dynamic relationship between English language use, institutional context and the construction of identity in recently arrived young students. In her study, audibility was shown to be vital requirement to use the TL. It is not enough to be only heard or seen but also to be accepted as a legitimate group member and language user. Also, Miller (2000) suggested the concept of self-representation as a key link between language use and identity. Identity was recently perceived as a social practice; it is ‘who we are’ and ‘what we are doing’, therefore identity is more about belonging and membership of the group. Miller (2000) concluded:

What seems inescapable is the understanding that our identities are shaped by and through our use of language. And so the question of which language is in use is an important one in the identity stakes. (Miller, 2000, p. 74)

By using Gee’s theoretical model, Miller was able to analyse her findings in relation to social context and interaction. Gee (1996) argues that identity is endorsed through a three-way simultaneous interaction process between sociocultural group memberships, a particular language and a particular social context.

One of the important topics related to the relationship between language learning, identity and culture is the role of religion as a core value in maintaining the first language. Earlier research suggests that migrants may maintain their ethnic languages for up to three generations in spite of all social, cultural and political factors pressuring them for language shift. Yet, language shift is often accomplished with the third generation using the majority language (Fishman, 1991). Usually, the members of migrant communities show great respect and positive attitudes towards their ethnic languages, but their efforts to maintain and transmit their original language are challenged by the fact that English is invested with considerable cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977) in Australia. Acquiring English often takes first priority, particularly for many new settlers.

Gogonas (2011) investigated language maintenance/shift between second-generation Arabic speakers in Athens using adolescents of mainly Egyptian origin and their parents as informants. Quantitative data on language competence and patterns of language use within Egyptian households indicate language shift in adolescents of the Coptic religion. In contrast, Muslim informants emerge as language maintainers. Qualitative results emerging from interviews with parents indicate that the significance of religious practice leads Muslims and Copts to view Arabic and Coptic respectively as core values for their identity (Gogonas, 2011, p. 113). Unlike their Muslim counterparts in Greece who recognise the cultural and linguistic boundaries between their group and the majority group as significant, Coptic Egyptians perceive cultural closeness between their group and the larger Greek community. In fact, this cultural distance enhances language maintenance between Muslim Egyptians while promoting language shift in Coptic Egyptians

(Gogonas, 2011, p. 126). Nevertheless, how much impact does language maintenance/shift have on AL learners when it comes to learn another language? Moreover, how does the willingness to maintain or shift language impact upon motivation and attitudes towards learning the TL? These are questions that need answers from researchers investigating the relationship between ALL and religion.

The issue of religious classical languages, as defined in Chapter Two, may become very important in maintaining boundaries between the host culture and the minority culture, a factor that Fishman (1991) considers as the basic issue in language maintenance. The existence of such highly regarded languages presumes a cultural group or religious community that is separate from the mainstream cultural institutions of the host country (Gogonas, 2011, p. 115).

The final section describes the role of poststructuralism in informing the role of identity in ALL. Poststructural approaches have provided new views of language, language learning and the relationship between the AL learner and the social context.

3.7.1 Poststructuralism and additional language learning research

Poststructuralist approaches are highly useful for understanding the relationship between the individual and the social context. In fact, poststructuralism provides important insights into the relationship between identity and ALL, which occurs in lived experiences of social contexts (Block, 2007, p. 864). Poststructuralism, in the broad sense, is understood by Pavlenko (2000) as:

... an attempt to investigate and to theorise the role of language (or rather discourses within it) in construction and reproduction of ideologies and social relations and the role of language ideologies and social dynamics in the processes of additional language learning and use. (p. 87)

Poststructuralist approaches provide a more context-sensitive way of theorising social impact on ALL learning and use (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 295). Thus, poststructuralist approaches are used in this research study to investigate the relationship between the AL learner and social institutions, which represent the TL community. Poststructural approaches are able to define the ways AL learners access cultural groups and linguistic resources.

The new trends in ALL research and language education have become more concerned with the social and cultural aspects of language development.

Poststructuralism views language as a set of discourses embedded with meaning and these discourses are woven around specific themes, such as profession, gender, class or any other merits. These discourses are in competition with each other to create diverse and incompatible versions of reality (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 283). In this sense, language becomes a site of identity construction or struggle since identities are constructed by and in discourses, which are in turn produced by language.

Accordingly, scholars view all kinds of language use in different multilingual contexts as identity acts.

In migrant communities, AL discourses offer AL learners different identities as refugees, parents, students or workers (Hansen & Liu, 1997, p. 571). However, AL learners might reject some of these identities if these new roles reflect on them negatively since these new identities may contradict the identities they embraced previously or they may not be consistent with their actual subject positions that are based on culture, race, gender, class and profession. This resistance to the new identities is an identity struggle, which might lead AL learners to construct new ones. This identity resistance reflects on the ALL process as AL learners will reject

learning the new language because they consider it as part of the new identity structure (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 285).

Language has also been seen by poststructuralists as a social practice, which is constructed in and by social interaction. At the same time, AL users (learners) have been seen as socially constituted beings (Pavlenko, 2002). Social practice refers to a relatively stabilised form of social activity; for example, classroom setting, television news, family meals and medical consultations) (Fairclough, 2001, p. 1). That is, poststructuralists describe AL learning as language socialisation where AL learners acquire linguistic competency and become culturally competent members of their host community. It is an interactional process in which meaning is negotiated between AL learners and those more competent members of the target community (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 286).

This view provides new ways of framing the relationship between the social context and the ALL process, which can be productively combined with other linguistic and cognitive oriented processes (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 291). AL learners, who were viewed previously by different socio-psychological theories as social recipients of input and producers of output, have been portrayed lately by poststructuralists as individual agents whose multiple identities are subject to change over time (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 292; Norton Peirce, 1995, p. 15). This new view of AL learning is different from the previous view, which defines ALL as an interlanguage development process.

As a result, Norton Peirce perceives the AL learner as having a complex social identity with multiple desires. It assumes that when AL learners speak, they are not only exchanging information and ideas, but they are also regularly

reorganising the sense of who they are and how they connect to the outer world.

Hence, any investment in the TL is also an investment in a learner's own identity, an identity that is constantly changing across time and space (Norton Peirce, 1995, pp. 17-18).

This relationship between the AL learner and the TL has been described as a kind of investment for future opportunities. While instrumental motivation is a fixed personality trait, investment is the socially and historically constructed and dynamic relationship of the AL learner to the TL, as well as the desire to learn it (Norton Peirce, 1995). AL learners expect to gain some return for their investment in a form of material resources, such as employment or any other financial benefits and symbolic resources, such as education, literature or social relationships (Bourdieu, 1991). At the same time, the investment relationship between the AL learner and the TL is a dynamic one since it might change with time, leading either to higher investment at times or to complete withdrawal from the learning process at other times (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 295).

Thus, poststructuralism emphasises the interactional aspect of AL socialisation as the key factor, which determines the success of AL socialisation. Poststructuralists argue that any intensive classroom instruction has little value when natural and unprompted interaction in the TL is limited (Miller, 2000; Norton Peirce, 1995). However, the access to linguistic resources and availability of interactional opportunities should not be considered an easy process in ALL contexts since this access is influenced by the AL user's gender, ethnicity, age, social status and linguistic background (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 287). A familiar example for this issue is when some TL speakers indirectly refuse to interact with AL users because they see

them as incompetent communicators and ultimately illegitimate speakers of the TL. For instance, Miller reported that a Bosnian ESL student in Australia reported that ‘all these Australian people, they are nice but like, now they really won’t, you know, talk to you’ (1999, p. 157).

Within the poststructuralist domain, AL users are defined as ‘individual agents whose multiple identities are subject to change over time’, that is, AL users are human agents who are in charge of their own learning (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 292). The concept of agency as contributing to cognitive processes involved in learning was developed originally from the concept of constructivism by Piaget (1967), which assumes that knowledge is constructed through a process of taking action in the immediate environment and making adjustments to the existing body of knowledge based on the outcome of those actions. Thus, the focus in poststructuralism is on a human agency as a key factor in ALL. The decision to learn another language is a matter of personal choice and determination whenever the learner’s wishes are allowed by the immediate environment. However, these human agencies are always constructed by their sociocultural contexts (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 293). Thus, this approach is used in this research study to examine how AL learners’ diverse identities are used to negotiate access to interactional opportunities and other linguistic resources.

3.8 Summary of Purpose and Research Questions

This literature review has shown how ALL research has moved from a general focus on a collection of individual factors affecting ALL, mostly of a psychological and linguistic nature, to a more context-sensitive inquiry on social interaction and the learner’s identity. Little regard has been paid to the dynamic relationship between the

AL learner and the social context where the ALL process occurs. There is no linear link between classroom language instruction and language proficiency or effective communication as ALL is an interactive activity that is socially and culturally sensitive. Therefore, when the expected results are not achieved, AL learners are seen as the problem and their inability to learn English for settlement is blamed on them and usually taken as a deliberate refusal to learn English and ‘integrate’ (Tse, 2001). Within this misunderstanding, sociocultural or contextual constraints that impede their progress to learning the TL and active participation in the wider community are left unexplored for them (Butorac, 2014).

ALL researchers have recognised that social context has an influence on ALL in one way or another (Kramsch, 1993a; Crozet & Liddicoat, 2000). However, they have not investigated adequately the possibility of the existence of other social and cultural elements (Mitchell, Myles, & Marsden, 2013). This tendency in researching limited social factors in isolation from other contextual constraints might be due to their willingness to develop theories or get full understanding of a single phenomenon. In fact, there is a need to fully understand the nature of sociocultural dynamics and their actual role in the ALL process. Sociocultural dynamics are interrelated in nature due to the complexity of social context and the learner’s changeable needs (Miller, 2000).

Current ALL literature demonstrates that the question of social context in ALL is complex and requires thoughtful examination since learning contexts show different features and produce growing challenges to AL learners based on time and place (Holliday, 2009). So, this research study aimed to identify sociocultural dynamics influencing the ALL process as lived by former adult refugees. The initial

assumptions of the research study expected that sociocultural dynamics play a significant and complex role in the ALL process. They are present throughout the entire ALL process through acting as a container for that process and also through affecting other individual variables, such as motivation and attitudes (Spolsky, 1989). AL learners enter the ALL process equipped with their life experiences and a wide range of cultural assets that are invested in their language learning. In addition, AL learners adopt multiple identities based on gender, ethnicity, profession, economic status and beliefs (Hansen & Liu, 1997). These identities are dynamic, negotiated and transformed continually by means of language (Norton, 1997).

These initial assumptions were examined in the light of the literature review and informed by current theories in the field to find out how much ALL research has achieved in this direction in order to develop the research question, which is:

What are the sociocultural dynamics that affect the additional language learning process of Arabic-speaking former adult refugees in Australian learning settings?

To better address the research problem, the research question was broken into three secondary questions based on the initial assumptions and as informed by the literature review. Through these research questions, the research study managed to investigate the relationship between the AL learner and the ALL process within the broader sociocultural context:

- What is the role of cultural assets in supporting ALL?
- How does meaningful social interaction benefit the ALL process?
- How do social exclusion practices govern the access into linguistic and cultural resources?

Due to the complex nature of social context and based on the research questions, the research study adopted multiple theoretical approaches in order to examine and conceptualise the themes emerging from the research data. First, Vygotsky's concepts of social mediation and meaning were employed to explain the nature of social interaction and the mechanism of meaning transmission. Second, Bourdieu's concept of capital was employed to accommodate the use of cultural assets owned by AL learners before and during the language learning process. Third, poststructuralist approaches were used to analyse the construction of identities.

In Chapter Four, the methodological development of the research study is presented in order to describe and explain how the study was conducted. The chapter discusses how the methodological framework shaped the design process and data processing methods.

CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

The previous chapter has reviewed the existing literature related to ALL. It focused on the critical developments in the field through discussing the theories and concepts that contributed to the development of ALL research. Through the conceptual and chronological order of these theories and concepts, the chapter showed how ALL literature moved progressively in recognising the role of social and cultural factors in ALL and the current research gaps in the literature.

As indicated in Chapter One, this research project focuses on how former adult refugees from Arabic-speaking background perceive their ALL experiences. The main task of this research study is to identify the nature of sociocultural dynamics affecting the ALL process in Australian social settings. To do so, the research examined the language learning experiences of 20 former adult refugees from Arabic-speaking backgrounds.

This chapter first briefly reviews the philosophical foundations of the research study that justify the choice of the qualitative methodology employed in this research study. The epistemological and ontological assumptions determined the nature of the research problem addressed in this chapter. A comparison between poststructuralism, as the theoretical perspective driving the research methodology and other paradigms is briefly discussed in order to justify the narrative orientation of the research methodology.

The rest of the chapter outlines the applied processes of methodology where the focus is on describing the role of narrative inquiry and research methods in conducting the research study. There is a detailed description of the ways data collection techniques were conducted. This also includes a discussion of the rationale behind the selection of these methods. This is in addition to describing how participants were selected and recruited. Then the chapter covers the data analysis process, which employed coding, content analysis and Discourse analysis. This section starts with explaining how data was organised and categorised into meaningful themes and then mapped further into sociocultural concepts.

Finally, the chapter reflects on the quality and credibility of the research study. The issues of transferability and crystallisation are discussed, followed by describing the role of the researcher in the research study. Then the chapter concludes with describing the ethical issues raised throughout the research study, especially the potential challenges faced by the researcher and participants. This includes describing the ethical precautions taken to safeguard participants during the period of the research study.

4.1 Philosophical Foundations of the Research Study

The aim of this research study is to examine personal perceptions of ALL experiences in order to identify sociocultural dynamics affecting the ALL process conducted by former adult refugees from Arabic speaking backgrounds in the South Western Sydney region. This required collecting qualitative data from a group of 20 participants from Arabic-speaking backgrounds who resided in areas inhabited mostly by immigrant communities as described in Chapter Two.

As defined in previous chapters, sociocultural dynamics influencing ALL in any social context refer to the group of socially and culturally constructed forces that either enhance or hinder language learning. To capture these dynamics, participants were asked to uncover their personal ALL experiences. Recalling these memories about refugee settlement allowed participants to draw on their own learning experiences.

In order to justify the selection of the methodology employed in this research study, I briefly describe, below, the nature of the philosophies and theoretical perspective underling the methodology of this study. In general, ontology and epistemology are central philosophical prerequisites, which draw the methodological map of any research study. Ontology represents the theory of being, which explores the nature of reality and questions of existence, whether this reality is independent of our knowledge (Higgs, 1998, p. 137). On the other hand, epistemology refers to the theory of knowledge that is concerned with the origin, nature, methods and limits of human knowledge (Crotty, 1998, p. 3). Hence, epistemology is implicitly embedded in the theoretical perspective and consequently in its methodology (Rawnsley, 1998).

In developing the methodological design of this research study, the scheme of epistemologies, theoretical perspectives and methodologies was followed (Crotty, 1998, pp. 4-5). Crotty (1998) distinguished between different frameworks of research based on their grounding in epistemology. A social constructionist epistemology underlies the philosophical foundation of the research study using poststructuralist theory, which defines the nature of knowledge investigated. These choices in turn led to the selection of narrative methodology, as outlined in the figure below:

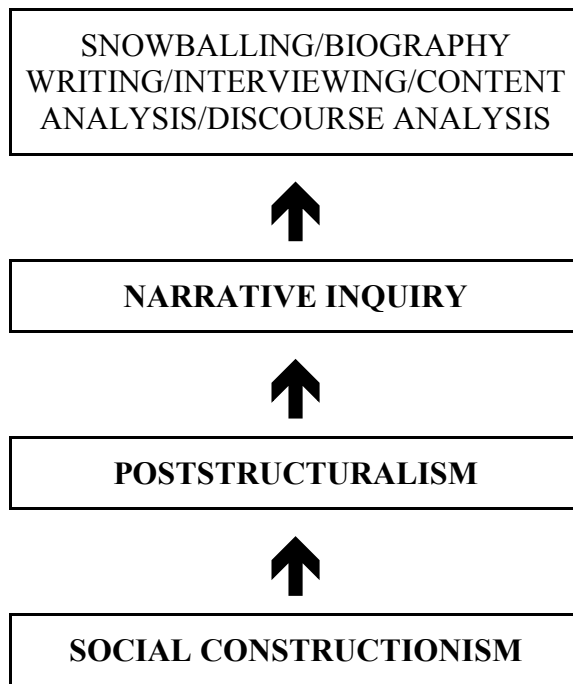


Figure 4.1: Research framework as from Crotty (1998)

Shadish (1995, p. 67) indicates that social constructionism refers to ‘constructing knowledge about reality, not constructing reality itself’. Personal constructions exist in the minds of individuals and the role of the researcher is to elicit, analyse, understand and then reconstruct these participants’ perceptions, actions and social experiences in a way that leads to common consensus and meaningful outcomes (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Carr & Kemmis, 1986). Our own thoughts and experiences as individuals are continually affected by group and public opinion. Social psychologist George Mead (as cited in Warren, 1982) argues that personal perspectives arise out of shared social experiences or common perspective, which may also contain a scientific truth as one of those shared meanings since they all represent understandings, whether they are scientific or not (Crotty, 1998). One critique of constructionism is the dismissal of evidence in assessing theories (Morris,

1999), which turns constructionism into a personal perspective and, in this case, scientific research might become a matter of speculation.

Therefore, the new knowledge, which has emerged from this research study, was originally embedded in the minds of the knowers or former refugees. This kind of data represents constructed and negotiated opinions, which cannot be duplicated through experiments or measured by casual correlations.

Concerning ALL literature, the emergence of new concepts of language and language learning has had a major impact on the kind of methodology used in ALL research. Recent views perceive language as social discourse (language in use), while some others identify language as a semiotic system or a systemic resource for meaning (Halliday & Hasan, 1985). Recent research on the use of language has also seen language as social practice or socially constituted while discourse cannot be seen in isolation from its historical, cultural and social contexts since linguistic relations are also social relations (Fairclough, 2001; Kramsch, 1994). This shift towards viewing linguistic exchanges as contextually-situated discursive practices brings to mind the position of the poststructuralists regarding language, as discussed in Chapter Three, which determines that we are shaped by and through our language use (Weedon, 1987; Norton & Toohey, 2011).

Using poststructuralist theory, this research study conducted a contextual investigation into the relationships between the AL learner and the social context in specific sites of language learning and use. Poststructuralist theory enabled an exploration of these complex and dynamic relationships between the AL learner and the social context because it has a focus on questions of how selves are constituted and how power-knowledge relations shift in the context of different social, cultural

and political contexts (Wright, 2003, p. 36). In this research investigation, this means examining the settlement stages before and after migrating to Australia and how the new settlement context has reconstructed refugees' identities in accessing linguistic and cultural resources.

At a more concrete level, poststructuralism provided this research study with valuable tools, such as the capacity to explore subjectivity, in order to elicit sensitivities, memories, personal experiences and social relationships that shape all aspects of power-knowledge relations. This includes the exploration of the AL learner as an embodied self socially constituted in relation to social institutions and discourses associated with ELL. This could not happen without a focus on the significant and central role of language in the organisation of refugee experience and construction of meaning (Lee, 1992). By drawing on a poststructuralist approach, this research provided a powerful means to demonstrate the relationship between the ways refugees construct their identities and their use of the language to communicate social meanings and values exchanged in society. Meaning, understood as not fixed, but historically and culturally specific (Lupton, 1995), leads to a focus on what 'language learning' means as different institutional discourses change with time and place, even in the context of different Western countries, which have different annual intakes of migrants and refugees.

It is usually known in research that methodological considerations are driven by theoretical understandings of the field; that is, in any study there must be a fit between the theoretical framework, research question and methodological choices (Miller, 1997). As a result, this research study employed a qualitative methodology, which is usually employed by social constructionists and subjectivists as this is

consistent with their ontological and epistemological views of a world that is socially constructed and knowledge is subject to multiple perspectives in order to find out the meaning of social behaviour. Qualitative methodology was used in this research study to interpret the personal perceptions of participants and reproduce the social knowledge embedded in their social experiences, which represent a set of multiple realities that reflect background knowledge of the social context.

Finally, qualitative research aims to explain and understand a specific social situation, group or interaction where researchers enter the participant's social world in order to seek answers to their questions through the meanings provided by informants (Creswell, 2003; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Having said that, the epistemological nature and parameters of this study are consistent with the view that the task of the qualitative researcher is to explore everyday reality as it is perceived by different groups of audiences. Then the researcher reconstructs this social reality to reproduce it again to those whose perspectives are different (Agger, 1991; Warren, 1982).

4.2 Narrative Inquiry and Eliciting Personal Perceptions

Denzin proclaims that the turn to narrative approaches in the social sciences demonstrated a renewed interest in narrative as a method of knowing persons, where the researcher acts as an active participant in a dialogical process (Denzin, 2001, p. 23). Historically, narrative approaches were first used by qualitative researchers during the 1990s in order to investigate human experiences and perceptions (Lawler, 1998).

In a study investigating social context and identity, Piller (2002) provided an ethnographic description of passing practices as a native speaker. She used narrative recounts to explore English and German users' perceptions of ALL experiences. Also, narrative inquiry has become a key feature of ALL research methodologies related to identity (Block, 2007; Holliday, 2009). This increasing interest in narrative inquiry is due to the belief that narratives can reflect human experiences since it is a 'type of discourse practice that describes events, offers opinions, but also modifies and constructs them' (Sole, 2007, p. 208).

In this research study, narrative inquiry aimed to capture participants' memories of settlement experiences and perceptions of ALL through the narrative flow of ideas and events. By using narrative style, participants maintained a chronological flow of events and sense of reflection. Narratives were collected through interviews and biographies written specifically for this research participation (Flowerdew & Miller, 2008, p. 206). This research study has investigated the discursive relations between AL learners and the social context in which they operated in order to identify sociocultural dynamics influencing ALL. Sociocultural dynamics are contextual powers that vary from one context to another and perceived differently by different participants. Such dynamics can be reproduced as subjective reflections and this was only achieved through a focus on language as the most powerful aspect of the semiotics system. In this sense, AL learners are the best narrators of their own experiences, perceptions and feelings.

Accordingly, Pavlenko (2002b) defines narrative inquiry as a qualitative approach to elicit understandings and perceptions. Chase (2008) indicates that during the storytelling event, the narrator is trying to shape and reconstruct the self,

experience and the world through his or her voice and interpretations. However, Pavlenko also states that narratives are not purely individual productions, but they are powerfully shaped by social, cultural and historical conventions, as well as by the relationship between the storyteller and the interlocutor (2002b, pp. 213-215). Narratives produced in this research study provide multiple descriptions of the sociocultural context influencing refugee settlement and ALL experiences.

Hence, any narrative told to a researcher carries, consciously or unconsciously, the features of the discourse to which that participant belongs (Hopkins, 2009, p. 140). The political atmosphere is one of these features that make that discourse. This implies that any storytelling has a political agenda to the audience (Hopkins, 2009, p. 143). Narrative methods can provide direct insights or visions into the ways a particular policy will play out in the lives of those affected (Hopkins, 2009, p. 137). In Chapters Five and Six, it is revealed how participants spent a considerable period of their lifetime searching for safe refuge from wars and political instability. Therefore, their narratives not only focused on their ALL experiences and settlement in the host country but also on their refugee experience and life as a whole, which are partly or mostly political.

4.2.1 Selection and recruitment of participants

The participants selected for the research study are former adult refugees, males and females, from the large Arabic speaking community residing in South Western Sydney suburbs. This enabled different kinds of participants to be included in terms of national backgrounds, gender, age, employment status, education and other demographic characteristics as shown in Table 4.1 below. Settlement experiences of

refugees have more complexity than those of mainstream migrants due to the forced nature of refugee dislocation and migration (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013).

Snowball sampling was the technique employed to recruit 20 participants who took part in data collection. There were 11 participants who only took part in writing biographies; four participants took part in interviewing, while five participants took part in both writing biographies and interviewing. The number of biographies and interviews used for data collection was determined based on data saturation, which was reached when there was adequate information obtained as further coding is no longer feasible (Guest et al., 2006). Although the reason behind conducting interviews was to explain some of the unclear topics and events mentioned in biographies and also search for more potential influential factors, more interviews were not needed since coding started to produce similar categories and the vague issues described in biographies had been explored.

Snowball sampling is an approach that uses recommendations between social networks to find people with the specific range of characteristics that have been determined as being useful for the research project (Bryman, 2004). When using this approach, a few potential respondents are contacted and asked whether they know of anybody with similar characteristics and sampling therefore aims to make use of community knowledge about those who have skills or information in particular areas (Patton, 1990). By using snowballing, I managed to identify a diversity of participants with particular knowledge of settlement conditions and ALL. I used some referrals to search for several potential participants through my personal and professional relationships with some members of the Arabic speaking community in

South Western Sydney suburbs and community organisations, such as Auburn Diversity Services and the Macarthur Diversity Services initiative.

Initial contact through phone calls was made with individuals who were interested in participation in order to provide them with a brief idea about the aim and benefits of the research study and arrange a brief meeting to explain the nature of their participation in the study. Potential participants were also sent my contact details for future correspondence. However, the task of meeting and interviewing participants was not an easy and flexible process due to the fact that they lived in different areas with different circumstances and personal commitments. Therefore, these meetings to obtain their biographies and conduct interviews were arranged at places and times that were convenient to each participant.

Socio-demographic profile of participants

As defined in Chapter Two, the word ‘refugees’ refers to individuals who fled their home countries unwillingly, did not plan their migration and were not able to bring any material resources with them in their migration (Hugo, 2011, p. 1). This study included all refugees who were initially given permission to stay in Australia temporarily or permanently for humanitarian reasons. However, only former refugees who had spent more than two years in Australia were selected to participate in the research study in order to reflect the effect of length of residency on their settlement and ALL.

As shown in Table 4.1, 20 participants took part in the research study. Participants are first generation refugees aged between 25 and 80 years old at the time of their recruitment and include 8 females and 12 males in the sample.

Table 4.1: Demographic profile of research participants

#	Pseudonym	Gender	Home country	Suburb of NSW	AGE	Children	Marital status	Arrival	Current job	Education	Participation activity
1	George	M	Iraq	Fairfield	42	Yes	Married	1998	Interpreter	Australian postgraduate	Writing biography
2	Sideeq	M	Sudan	Revesby	41	Yes	Divorced	2003	Unemployed	O/seas high school	Writing biography
3	Salim	M	Kuwait	Villawood	50	Yes	Married	1999	Casual work	O/seas primary school	Writing biography
4	Sajad	M	Iraq	Lakemba	33	Yes	Married	2001	Mining worker	O/seas high school	Writing biography
5	Ibrahim	M	Algeria	Lakemba	51	Yes	Married	1987	Taxi driver	O/seas high school	Writing biography
6	Raghib	M	Lebanon	Arncliffe	57	Yes	Widowed	1986	School teacher	Australian postgraduate	Writing biography
7	Nouh	M	Sudan	Auburn	36	Yes	Married	2004	Health worker	O/seas Bachelor/TAFE Diploma	Writing biography
8	Nameer	M	Iraq	Croydon	36	Yes	Married	2000	Employment officer	Australian postgraduate	Writing biography/ interview
9	Heitham	M	Palestine	Strathfield	66	Yes	Married	1970	Businessman	O/seas Bachelor	Writing biography/ interview
10	Jafar	M	Syria	Auburn	48	Yes	Married	2000	Baker	Illiterate	Writing biography
11	Ameer	M	Iraq	Guilford	38	Yes	Married	2000	Driving instructor	O/seas Diploma plus TAFE	Writing biography/ interview
12	Muntaha	F	Iraq	Fairfield	36	No	Married	2008	Housewife	O/seas intermediate school	Writing biography
13	Daulat	F	Syria	Auburn	44	Yes	Married	2001	Housewife	Illiterate	Writing biography/ interview
14	Sana	F	Iraq	Mt Annan	82	Yes	Widow	2009	volunteer	O/seas high school	Writing biography
15	Wardah	F	Iraq	Auburn	45	Yes	Married	2010	Unemployed	O/seas intermediate school	Writing biography
16	Muna	F	Iraq	Auburn	46	Yes	Married	2005	Social worker	O/seas Diploma	Writing biography/ interview
17	Khalid	M	Iraq	Blacktown	45	Yes	Married	2001	Truck driver	O/seas Bachelor of Law	Interview
18	Afifa	F	Iraq	Ryde	65	Yes	Widow	2009	Unemployed	O/seas Masters of Nursing	Interview
19	Hanah	F	Palestine	Ashfield	38	No	Divorced	2009	Unemployed	Australian Masters	Interview
20	Mary	F	Syria	Guilford	29	Yes	Married	2001	Childcare worker	Australian high school	Interview

Also, the table shows that participants had different levels of education, family circumstances and employment status at the time. As described in Chapter Two, the majority of Arabic-speaking communities of NSW reside in the Greater Western Sydney region (Figure 2.1, map of Western Sydney region).

All participants arrived in Australia as refugees between 1970 and 2010. Also, participants came originally from the countries of Iraq, Sudan, Kuwait, Algeria, Lebanon, Palestine and Syria. However, I spent considerable time and effort searching for potential participants from other Arabic countries, such as Jordan or the Gulf countries, but did not succeed due to the limitation of time and because not many refugees from these countries reside in Australia as a result of the political stability in these countries.

Finally, it should be mentioned that ‘religion’ of participants was not one of the selection criteria because it is not ethical to exclude some participants based on their religion. Also, the issue of religion has currently been a very hot topic under the current conditions of sectarianism and violence in the Middle East as mentioned earlier. Therefore, some participants could be sensitive if they were asked about their religion or Muslim faction. Religions, other than Islam, represent a minority in the Arab world (Gogonas, 2011). Nevertheless, religion is discussed in Chapters Five, Six and Seven as one of the themes related to ‘identities’ and ‘home language use’. A number of participants mentioned the issue of religion in their narratives, such as Muna and Hanah. Also, there are two participants, George and Afifa, who mentioned that they are Christians from Iraq in the course of their narratives and both used Arabic as a home language in Australian social settings to enhance their first language connections within the Arabic-speaking community. George, in particular,

turned his cultural capital – proficiency in Arabic and English – into economic capital since he has worked as a translator.

4.2.2 Transferability issues and crystallisation

One of the main criticisms against qualitative research is that researchers sometimes do not pay attention to providing an adequate rationale for the interpretation of their research findings (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). However, this research study permitted an in-depth understanding of the meaning making of a particular group of AL learners in a specific situation as adult refugees from Arabic-speaking background.

Another main critique of qualitative research is related to the application of triangulation, which is ‘using more than one source of data to confirm the authenticity of each source’ (O’Leary, 2010, p. 115). Triangulation is widely used in quantitative research to secure an in-depth understanding of the research problem under investigation by applying multiple methods of methodological practices and perspectives (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008). However, qualitative researchers are trying to overcome this issue by using ‘crystallisation’. Crystallisation encourages the use of multiple forms of analysis and genres of representation or writing into a coherent text in order to build a rich and openly partial account of a phenomenon under study (Ellingson, 2008). Thus, crystallisation can be applied to any study that engages a wide range of methods and perspectives. Crystallisation provides readers with a deepened, complex, thoroughly partial, understanding of the topic (Richardson, 2000, p. 934).

Thus, employing a range of data collection and analysis methods enabled this research study to display multiple realities constructed by participants (Ellingson, 2008). Additionally, this composite visualisation of the Australian ALL context is reflected through the vigorous organisation of themes under the three key dynamics of cultural capital, social interaction opportunities and identities that constitute ALL as a socialisation process. For example, educational background in terms of overseas qualifications is considered an aspect of ‘cultural capital’ that can accelerate and support AL learners in their effort to learn the TL. However, the education theme itself is also embedded in the settlement experiences theme in terms of attending language classes and professional courses that provide AL learners with ‘social interaction opportunities’ to use and practise their English.

Furthermore, this study has allowed for a significant level of reflexive consideration of the researcher’s self and multiple roles in designing and conducting the research. So, rather than considering this partiality as a limitation, using crystallisation is an advantage because it sees the world as multi-faceted and reveals multiple points of view about a phenomenon across the methodological continuum (O’Leary, 2010).

4.2.3 Researcher’s positionality

Any research is affected by the researcher’s personal and social positions and a number of decisions made by the researcher may be biased. Although research management is governed and guided by a set of systematic and methodological regulations, it is still the sole task of the researcher to select the field of the study, state the problem under investigation, select data collection methods or measurement tests, make interpretations, draw conclusions and decide what findings are

theoretically significant (O’Leary, 2010, p. 7; Berger, 2013). In fact, it is not possible to separate the self from those activities in which the researcher is closely and unconsciously involved throughout the research process (Sword, 1999, p. 277; Breen, 2007). These potential influences require reflexivity on the part of the researcher and include personal characteristics, life experiences and social beliefs. Reflexivity is recognised as an important strategy in the process of generating knowledge by means of qualitative research, as well as a strategy for quality control. It is of vital importance to understand how research may be influenced by the characteristics and experiences of the researcher (Berger, 2013).

As stated in Chapters One and Two about the motivation behind conducting this research study and how I identified the research problem, it is important to emphasise that I, as a sole researcher, entered this research with different social positions. In addition to my gender as a male, I am also the principal researcher, an ESL teacher, a suburban Sydney resident and a former refugee who speaks Arabic. These multiple positions had an impact on my conduct as a researcher and the decisions I have made throughout the research process since the conduct of value-free research is a myth (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, pp. 15-16).

In fact, these diverse social roles imposed on me the role of an insider based on experience when conducting this research study. When qualitative researchers study a group or a culture they belong to or familiar with, they start the research process as ‘insiders’ rather than ‘outsiders’ (Hewitt-Taylor, 2002). As a former refugee, I am aware of the types of difficulties and dangers refugees go through, as well as the nature of settlement conditions they might face in the host countries. I am also aware of the learning difficulties and social circumstances AL learners from

refugee backgrounds might face when learning the TL and knowing about the host culture.

Bonner and Tolhurst (2002) reported two main advantages of being an insider to the research process: (i) gaining an in-depth understanding of the group's culture; and (ii) having the ability to interact naturally and easily with the group's members. Therefore, acting with multiple identities has provided me with a contextual familiarity with the research problem, the thing that might not be possible for a university researcher who is not an ESL teacher or a former refugee. Also, being a former refugee, Arabic speaker and resident of Western Sydney region enabled me to better communicate with participants and recruit potential participants through accessing different social groups and discourses. In addition, speaking Arabic made it easier for participants to express their perspectives in any language they prefer. Heitham, for example, was switching from Arabic to English and vice versa, it seemed to me that he was using Arabic in casual conversations in order to socialise.

Hence, I attempted to reduce the influence of power relations with participants by avoiding formalities when meeting participants. For example, the participants themselves decided the place and date of meetings. In addition, I gave the space for participants to ask questions and talk freely about other topics, even those unrelated to the subject matter of the interview. In this case, the participant was placed in the status of the 'knower' because s/he is able to describe his or her own ALL experience.

A disadvantage of being an insider I noticed when collecting the data is that there were a few participants who seemed to assume that the researcher knows everything about English language and the learning difficulties they face (Sikes &

Potts, 2008; Smyth & Holian, 2008; Breen, 2007). This could have meant that they assumed that I already knew the answers to the questions. To deal with this issue, especially during the interviews, I used frequent questions to elicit detailed answers from participants who tried to answer briefly or did not want to reflect further on the topic of the question. Using such effective communication strategies helped to illuminate such issues, especially these related to providing brief answers.

4.2.4 Data collection process

Data collection methods, as part of research methods, represent the techniques used to gather research data related to some research questions (Crotty, 1998, p. 3). The two data collection techniques used in this research study, biographies and semi-structured interviews, were not the same in terms of structure, application and ideas communicated by participants. Biographical accounts represented what was of importance to the participants through describing important life events, such as birth, childhood, home country, education, marriage, political instability, forced movement, settlement and building a new life. On the other hand, the interviews represented what was of importance to the researcher through mutual conversations developed through a set of questions regarding settlement and education. In addition, the production of these narratives was affected by the nature of instructions provided about the content of biography and the context of interview between the researcher and participants.

In both techniques, I listened to the ‘voices’ of participants as human beings, as well as former refugees and AL learners. This was achieved through concentrating on the message the narrator wanted to communicate and how he/she communicated that message, including the subject position that he/she adopted (Hopkins, 2009).

The data reported through biographies and interviews show that participants used language not only to describe events and convey messages, but also to explore their own unconsciousness, reconstruct the self or their social world and reflect on past experiences (Chase, 2008).

Written biographies

Biographical methods are generally used to examine formal and informal learning experiences in social settings, such as family, community and professional contexts (Merrill & West, 2009, p. 51). This study utilised individual biographies in order to understand AL learners within a sociocultural and historical frame (Merrill & West, 2009, p. 10). In this sense, a biography or life story refers to the account told by a person with an emphasis upon ‘the ordering into themes or topics that the individual chooses to adopt or omit as s/he tells the story’ (Miller, 2000, p. 19). For this research study, participants were informed of their role as narrators of their own past events and experiences. In fact, participants were treated as narrators with stories to tell and voices to be heard (Chase, 2008, p. 70).

Sixteen participants, comprising of 11 males and five females, were inducted for about 15 minutes before starting to write their personal biographies. The purpose of the induction was to explain the purpose of writing a biography, as well as provide participants with a writing guide. The guide included 13 statements and questions about potential settlement and learning issues that might assist informants to remember significant past events and think critically about their learning experiences (Appendix F). The writing guide also aimed to help participants in maintaining a focus on the learning aspects of the refugee settlement experience during the writing

task. However, some writers, like Sideeq, Meitham and George, went further and described a range of life events and experiences throughout their lives.

During the induction, I discussed with participants what they know about writing a story or a recount and we both agreed on some basic rules about how to write the biography as a form of story-telling. This is despite the fact that educated participants do have certain expectations about what makes a personal recount. However, some completed biographies were not organised in terms of focus and logical flow of events and ideas. This might be due to different levels of literacy. Although all participants were inducted about the purpose of the writing task, some of them neglected this purpose and described different aspects of their personal histories, which broadened the focus of the biography (Hopkins, 2009).

Participants were given the choice to write their biographies in Arabic or English based on the level of their literacy in both languages. Some participants indicated that using Arabic in writing their biographies would offer them the freedom to record their memories and express their ideas. On the other hand, there were two participants, Jaffar and Daulat, who provided their biographies in verbal Arabic because of their illiteracy in Arabic and English. Daulat took part in both stages of data collection, making a biography and undertaking an interview. Therefore, both tasks were conducted verbally for Daulat but the difference is related to the freedom she was allowed to report freely in her biography without interference through questions and requests of clarification as happened in the interview.

Generally speaking, using biographies ensured that participants recalled their settlement events before and after their arrival in Australia and, during this process of memorising this important stage of their lives, they started to evaluate their learning

experiences and the learning difficulties they faced. In their writing, participants focused on different aspects of their refugee experiences, settlement conditions and social life. Several participants completed their biographies soon after the induction. Most participants wrote their biographies at home since they wanted more time to recall past events, reflect on their ALL experiences and plan their writing.

Finally, 16 biographies were collected at different dates from participants and received in different forms. The two verbal biographies were transcribed first before I translated them from Arabic into English. Other biographies were either emailed or received in a hardcopy. There were 10 biographies written in Arabic while the other six were written in English. These biographies written in Arabic were translated into English. Regarding the quality of translation of data and other documents related to the research ethics, it should be noted that all translating and interpreting works were done by the researcher himself. I have well established professional experience in translation and interpreting developed through my previous jobs as an interpreter employed by the Iraqi Government in Iraq during the 1990s. I also worked as a translator for an educational resources company based in Sydney from 2004-2006, which specialised in designing dictionaries and school resources for government and private clients in the Middle East. Also, I have been an ESL teacher in Sydney since 2005 and have worked in delivering the AMEP and LLNP programs.

Qualitative interviews

The semi-structured interview is a useful qualitative data-collection tool to explore personal experiences since it is able to accommodate narratives told by adult learners (Wang, 1999). Semi-structured interviewing was designed in this research study to allow respondents the time and scope to uncover their settlement experiences and

talk about their personal perspectives of ALL. The focus of each interview was determined in advance through designing specific questions, which aimed to gain better understanding of the areas previously mentioned in the biographies written by these participants who agreed to take part in interviewing. Some questions aimed to pursue new perspectives of ALL that might emerge from the learning experiences of these participants who did not take part in biography writing. Other questions or prompts emerged naturally during the course of the interview (DiCicco-Bloom & F. Crabtree, 2006).

There were nine respondents who were provided with Participation Information Sheet 2, which describes the purpose and nature of the interview (Appendix G). As explained earlier, the number of participants in the second stage of data collection was determined by the fact that data analysis started to produce similar categories and themes although narrative events were different.

The content of each interview was different in terms of the number and type of questions discussed in each interview, as stated in Appendix H and this is due to the fact that different AL learners have different settlement experiences before and after reaching the last destination. The number of questions discussed in each interview was between nine and 14 questions including prompts. Only five of the biography writers – Meitham, Daulat, Ameer, Nameer and Muna – agreed to participate in the second stage of data collection. Therefore, four new participants, Khalid, Hanah, Mary and Afaf, were recruited using a snowballing process. So, the final number of the interviewees became nine, comprising of five females and four males.

When conducting interviews, all nine interviewees were informed of the purpose of interviews. Each participant was interviewed for 45-60 minutes in a place agreed on by both parties, such as a community centre or café. All interviews were recorded and saved into a computer drive.

At the beginning of the interview, except for the four participants who did not write biographies, I reflected on the themes and events that emerged from their initial biographies in order to refresh the interviewee's memory and start the interview with emerging themes. Four of the interviews were conducted in Arabic either because of the interviewee's limited English or the willingness to speak Arabic in order to better express the self. Those interviews were transcribed first before I translated them into English.

The use of semi-structured interviews provided me with a greater depth of knowledge since I had the opportunity to enter the social world of participants by knowing about their childhood, education, home countries, refugee conditions and settlement in Australia (Bulpitt & Martin, 2010). Therefore, I was able to access 'areas of reality that would otherwise remain inaccessible such as people's subjective experiences and attitudes' (Perakyla, 2008, p. 351).

As a former refugee, I was able to show my understanding of their settlement and learning experiences. The aim was to ensure a comfortable interviewing environment and turn the interview into a conversational situation. So, respondents were able to talk until they finished a train of thought and moved onto the next question when I felt it was appropriate (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

In this regard, I attempted to reach an acceptable level of understanding and agreement with the interviewee through a discursive conversation in order to achieve

an acceptable level of shared understanding through a contextually bound and mutually created story (Mishler, 1986; Fontana & Frey, 2003). The term ‘contextually bound’ indicates the fact that all parties involved in creating the interview are historically and contextually located. The interviewer as a human being is ‘carrying unavoidable conscious and unconscious motives, desires, feelings and biases’ (Fontana & Frey, 2005, p. 696).

Applying this strategy in creating a constructive culture in conversation was more successful with highly educated participants, such as Nameer, Muna, Raghieb, George, Heitham and Hanah. Such interviews provided the study with thoughtful insights about capital, agency, social exclusion and social learning strategies. In our conversations, I was trying to understand the nature of these factors through their points of view as former educated refugees, AL learners and current English language users. On the other hand, less educated participants were somehow occupied with the events of their settlement and learning rather than reflecting on these events and learning experiences. As a result, more effort was devoted to eliciting answers that involve thoughtful perspectives.

4.2.5 Qualitative data analysis

The nature of research questions and the narrative data required a flexible data analysis approach, which is more concerned with describing the research data in order to interpret meaning and reconstruct reality. This analytical approach used a moderate level of interpretation and abstraction since interpretation is indispensable in conducting qualitative data analysis and uncovering the research findings (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The use of such interpretive-descriptive data analysis created a convincing narrative reality (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). This qualitative data

analysis also followed the sociological approach in analysing qualitative data since this approach looks at the text ‘as a window into human experience’ (Ryan & Bernard, 2003, p. 259). Therefore, the analysis tools aimed to interpret the text as embedded in its social and cultural context in order to acquire trustworthy interpretation. This kind of data analysis was better achieved through using multiple data analysis techniques: content analysis and Discourse analysis, as well as coding, to make sense of the raw data.

Using this flexible data analysis approach assists in transforming the raw narrative data elicited from participants into meaningful concepts that represent sociocultural elements of the ALL process. The analysis consolidated raw data into thematic categories, followed by drawing the conceptual relationships between these categories in order to make ‘assumptions that inform the respondents’ view of the world in general and of the topic in particular’ (Basit, 2010, p. 183; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Assertions have been made for these reoccurring patterns found across both frequent and rare events.

A number of data analysis processes were conducted in order to construct meaning from narrative data. These included reducing data, identifying patterns, looking for valid explanations, sub-dividing the themes to differentiate between them and building conceptual relationships between categories and themes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Figure 4.2 refers to the four levels of data analysis that produced the final five concepts representing ALL influential factors:

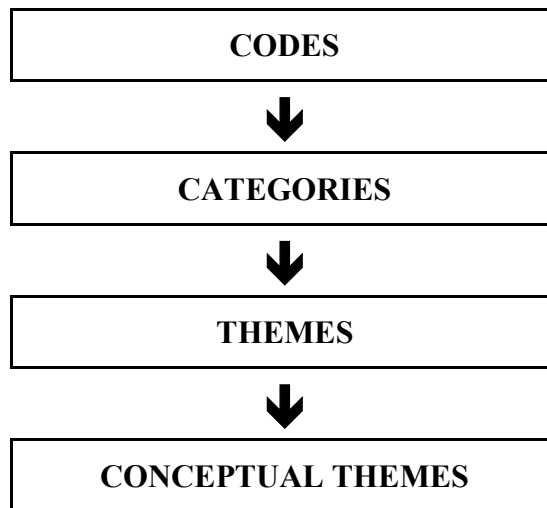


Figure 4.2: Levels of data analysis

Content analysis and Discourse analysis

Although content analysis was used to examine the textual data, it was not adequate to interpret social relations/practices and generate assertions, since the focus of content analysis is on the linguistic text itself rather than looking at the external context surrounding the linguistic text. Thus, content analysis focused on analysing the textual aspects of the data, including meaning, frequency of occurrences and the links to other labels and broader categories. Discourse analysis ensured a pragmatic and contextual meaning to be attached to the textual meaning achieved by content analysis (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

Content analysis is a systematic and replicable data reduction technique for compressing many words of texts into several content categories based on familiar rules of data coding (Stemler, 2001, p. 1). Content analysis is a data analytical technique of classifying data by identifying themes and concepts. It involves the examination of any spoken or written transcribed data by inspecting the meaning and

the frequency of occurrences in the text (Basit, 2010). Thus, content analysis aims to provide knowledge and understanding of the phenomenon under investigation through ‘the subjective interpretation of the content of text data’ (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278).

In application, content analysis interpreted the language of narrative texts in order to derive codes and categories. Initial codes and categories resulted from the coding process were interpreted in the light of the textual units to define the themes related to the forces influencing the ALL process. The content analysis process started with coding the data. Reading the raw data repeatedly was critical to achieving immersion through making sense of the data. At this point, I began to take notes of initial analytical impressions about the content of coded texts. The coded texts were drawn on cardboards. Textual units were copied first, labelled by their codes. Then, codes were developed and linked together into categories within a hierarchical diagram structure. After that, sets of categories, based on their thematic relationships, were developed into broader themes and concepts (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Weber, 1990).

Narratives contain Discourses, which are embedded consciously or unconsciously in any narrative text. All spoken and written texts, such as stories, reports, articles, academic papers and media productions, display Discourses, which define and describe the social context surrounding these texts (Cranny-Francis et al., 2003, p. 95). The term ‘discourse’ refers to instances of language in use and actual speech events whereas ‘Discourse’ refers to the ways of using language: patterns of things that can be spoken about, ways of thinking and ways of behaving in relation to them (Gee, 1999). A Discourse represents an element of social life, which is

dialectally related to other elements of life. Therefore, Discourses are different ways of representing the world at different levels of abstraction (Fairclough, 2003, p. 133).

A Discourse demonstrates how power is distributed in the matrix of social relations that operate around an issue, idea or area of concern. Analysing that Discourse opens the door for exploring the power relations it mobilises (Cranny-Francis et al., 2003, p. 95). In this case, it is the role of meaning-making process to uncover those power relations and politics involved within Discourses (Hopkins, 2009). While content analysis was used in interpreting the immediate meaning of the textual data, Discourse analysis was used at the same time but in a different direction to understand the broader social context that shape the Discourses embedded in the narrative text concerning refugee settlement, adult education, social interactions, access to linguistic resources and group membership in the Australian social context.

In fact, I was looking beyond the text and the event described; what has happened during pre-settlement and settlement stages, why it has happened, how it has influenced ALL and then how AL learners explain these important events in the light of the Australian sociocultural framework of beliefs, attitudes, policies and conventions about how the world works. Therefore, I was mainly interested in the dynamics of the social process that makes ALL happen (Trappes-Lomax, 2004, p. 135).

Accordingly, these valuable personal perspectives and important events reported by participants could not be understood without reference to the external social world where participants operated. This understanding has only been achieved through uncovering the critical issues related to refugee settlement and adult education in Australia as discussed in Chapters One and Two.

During the final stage of data analysis, a group of meaningful themes were constructed. These themes were classified into five broader concepts, which represent the forces influencing the ALL process. They include: (i) cultural capital; (ii) social interaction opportunities; (iii) identities; (iv) psychological dimensions; and (v) linguistic dimensions, as detailed in Tables 5.1 and 6.1, which show their distribution and clusters.

Assigning codes, categories and building themes

The aim of this important process of data analysis is to facilitate the organisation, recovery and interpretation of the raw data (Bryman, 2008; Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Thus, coding served the purpose of making initial judgments about the value and meaning of narrative data where all textual segments, which share common elements, were brought together to build categories (Ryan & Bernard, 2003; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).

Practically, coding, as used in this research study, accomplished two operations: (i) data reduction; and (ii) data complication. In data reduction, I worked on breaking up narrative data, whether biographies or interviews, into smaller meaningful portions in order to tag them with general labels that define their system categories. At the beginning, I started with multiple readings of data to establish familiarity with the data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Basit, 2010). Reading the data had been a continuous task till the end of data analysis. This was followed by writing a brief summary of each participant in order to identify the narratives of participants and separate them from each other. The information included in each summary was socio-demographic details, those recorded in Table 4.2, which shows some coded

data taken from Muna's biography. This defining summary also includes the number of languages spoken and the way by which the participant arrived in Australia.

Separating the narrative data into smaller textual units was based on the subject matter selected as a result of multiple readings. Each new text contains one idea or topic. Therefore, a specific label was given to each text unit to identify the content of that text. However, this initial task of coding raw data is indirectly guided and informed by the research questions investigating sociocultural dynamics affecting ALL (Seidel & Kelle, 1995). This search for sociocultural related elements also included distinguishing psychological and linguistic factors, which are related, in one way or another, to sociocultural dynamics (Ellis, 1999). Examples of the codes used include 'Arabic media', 'migrating to Australia', 'refugee detention', 'AMEP program', 'fear of committing errors' and 'accent', as shown in Table 4.2, below and the complete coding tables for one biography and one interview as attached in Appendices I and J. As indicated earlier, the different meanings of texts selected for coding are related to refugee settlement, social inclusion and education, which inform the research sub-questions concerning cultural assets, meaningful social interaction and access to linguistic/cultural resources. Some of the labels selected to name coded texts were derived from ALL literature, so they were defined as priori codes, such as fear, qualifications, transfer, or gender. Other codes used are empirical because they were created from the emerging data, such as family support, social aspects of age, social learning strategies, or accent intelligibility (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Gibson & Brown, 2009; Seidel & Kelle, 1995).

After all initial codes were reviewed in terms of their correspondence to the meaning of their text units; I examined the meaning of all the codes for similarities

and differences in order to group them into wider categories that are more representative of the coded data. These categories are broader labels than initial codes in terms of meaning, since each category includes a number of codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994). For example, the codes of 'AMEP program' and 'TAFE language program' were grouped into the category of 'formal language instruction in Australia'. The codes of 'overseas EFL training' and 'overseas qualification' were grouped into the category of 'educational credentials', as shown in Table 4.2.

Overall, the categories constructed from classifying initial codes describe a range of topics related to the research sub-questions including: personal drive; language use; cultural change; learning strategies; bilingualism; technology; emotions; moral support; family; transfer; self-study; intelligibility; work; gestures; community; policies; trauma; social activities; literacy; instruction; isolation; age; religion; social exclusion; and discrimination. In fact, this second stage of coding through categorisation was essential to reduce the number of initial codes and also better understand the data through establishing a new level of thinking about the narrative data in the light of the main research question.

During the thematic stage, coding was used again at the data complication level to inspect and expand the data for the purposes of formulating new questions, higher levels of interpretations and thematic identification (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996; Basit, 2010). Data complication aims to think deeply about the data in order to expand the conceptual framework (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996).

Table 4.2: A framework of coded texts

Muna

I am from Baghdad, Iraq and I worked a primary teacher for 19 years. In 2005, I arrived to Australia from Jordan with my husband and three children after we were granted a refugee status. At that time, I felt that I have started a new life, language and culture.

Themes	Categories	Codes	Quotes
Social capital	Language learning mentoring	Language learning guidance by an English speaker	Extract 1: I remember the first time we went to see the city, when my husband asked me and my children not to rely on him in interpreting, buying things or performing other transactions, instead we should do these things ourselves by talking to other people using English. My husband speaks English fluently because he did his masters in Britain.
Social capital	Moral support	Husband's learning support & encouragement	Extract 2: During that time, I received huge support from my husband since he used to encourage me all the time to develop my English through having the courage to talk to other people and initiating conversation with them.
Educational background	Educational credentials	Overseas EFL training Overseas qualification	Extract 3: I had a relatively good level of English when I first arrived to Australia. Extract 4: I completed my Diploma in teaching primary to work as a primary teacher in Baghdad for about nineteen years.
Settlement experiences	Formal language instruction in Australia	AMEP program TAFE language program	Extract 5: I entered the AMEP program after one month of our arrival and I was accepted at level three. Extract 6: I applied to study the 'English for further study' course at TAFE and was accepted after I passed the oral interview and written test.
Anxiety	Anxiety	Fear of committing errors	Extract 7: At the same time, I was afraid of committing grammatical errors.
Lack of Confidence	Lack of confidence	Being afraid to speak English	Extract 8: I was not able to communicate with or talk to other people because I did not feel confident enough to talk.

Identifying themes marks the final phase of coding and the starting point of actual data analysis. In this stage, all categories were classified into broader themes based on shared meanings as shown in Table 4.2 and Appendices I and J. For example, the categories of ‘language learning mentoring’ and ‘moral support’ were classified under the theme of ‘social capital’, as shown in Table 4.2, since both categories refer to the ‘support’ received by family members and friends. Also, the categories of ‘policies’, ‘refugee detention’ and ‘formal language instruction’ were classified into the theme of ‘settlement experiences’, as shown in Appendices I and J, since these categories refer to the different settlement conditions faced by AL learners in the host country.

This final thematic stage of coding produced a total of 23 themes from biographical and interview data, which represent the sociocultural, psychological and linguistic factors involved in ALL, as shown in Tables 5.1 and 6.1 in Chapters Five and Six. Many of these are apriori concepts, whose importance in relation to ALL are well-established in the literature and therefore expected to arise in the data. These apriori concepts included: educational background; multilingualism; cultural knowledge; agency; investment; social capital; cultural identity; social identity; racialisation; resilience; motivation; attitudes; anxiety; confidence; learning strategies; gender roles; lack of grammatical knowledge and language transfer. These concepts are all defined in Chapters One, Two, Three, Five and Six. These concepts were used at the beginning of data analysis to form categories and shape themes in order to organise the narrative data into a meaningful system. However, the data itself helped me later to better understand these concepts. So, my analytical approach clearly started as deductive during the methodology design, but I have realised

recently that it is better to use the inductive approach because deductive approach or existing theories are no longer working at the data analysis stage.

On the other hand, there are also empirical themes, which emerged from the narrative data. These themes include: settlement experiences; home language use; social learning strategies; social aspects of age; and accent intelligibility and unfamiliarity with Australian accent/slang. However, some aspects of these a priori and empirical themes are seen differently by participants and this had added new dimensions for these themes, as discussed in Chapters Five and Six.

4.3 Ethical Considerations

Human research interaction has ethical dimensions and considerations that guide and monitor its behaviour. However, 'ethical conduct' is more than simply doing the right thing since it involves acting in the right spirit out of an abiding respect and concern for other creatures. Qualitative research, in particular, is conducted in a way that is sensitive to the human character and nature of sociocultural contexts in which research interaction occurs (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 488). Qualitative researchers need to think of all the possibilities of recurring ethical dilemmas and problems (Janesick, 1998). At the same time, they should treat their participants with respect and care since ethical behaviour is inseparable from social interactions with research participants, as well as the research data (Glesne, 1999). In this sense, it is usually impossible to predict how many and what type of ethical issues a researcher might face during the course of the research without investigating the possible risks that participants are likely to experience.

Before conducting data collection, I developed sufficient knowledge of the potential issues and problems related to how power relations operate in the research setting, how mishandling of information can lead to embarrassment and accountability and also how to deal with the sensitive issues that might arise during social interactions with participants (Davis, 1995). When meeting potential participants, I openly stated my ethical obligations to protect participants and their privacy, which involved assurances that information obtained during the study regarding participants will not, under any circumstances, be available to others (Davis, 1995). According to these general guidelines, the WSU Human Research Ethics Committee approved the National Ethics Application Form submitted for this research (see Appendix E). As a result, the process of ethics clearance ensured the following procedures and precautions were taken in conducting the fieldwork and the interpretation of results.

First of all, to monitor the conduct and progress of the research study against the research proposal and research ethics, I used to meet with the supervision panel on a regular basis to discuss the conduct and progress of the research. Also, annual progress reports were regularly submitted to the supervision panel and Research Services Office.

Participants were made aware of their rights and that participation in the research was voluntary. They were informed that withdrawal from the research would not have any consequences for them. They were assured that decisions about their participation in the research would not affect any existing or future relationship between participants and the researcher. It was assured that the researcher was not in any kind of dependent relationship with any participant.

Participants were assured during the induction that participation in the research was well planned and would be carefully handled to avoid causing any harm or discomfort to participants. However, to manage any potential distress or discomfort experienced by participants during the course of their participation, I informed them that I would terminate the interview immediately. Participants might choose to seek counselling services from any community or counselling organisations that work with refugees, including those organisations mentioned in the information sheets.

Participants were met on an individual basis to meet the privacy requirements. During the induction, I explained the nature, aim and benefits of the research study. Those who agreed to participate were provided with all the information related to their participation in the research study. Information sheets and forms written in English and Arabic were provided in hard copies, as follows:

- ✓ Research Invitation Letter introducing the study (Appendix B)
- ✓ Participation Information Sheet (Part One) (Appendix C)
- ✓ Research Consent Form (Appendix D)

All participant information sheets and consent forms were reviewed and approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee at Western Sydney University (WSU) (Appendix E). In addition, the content of consent forms and other information regarding participation in the research study were explained and discussed verbally to participants in English and Arabic before the consent forms were signed.

All personal details of participants are considered highly confidential. The information about participants is not identifiable since all real identifiers are to be

removed. Participant identifiers are given pseudonyms, as in Table 4.1, when analysing the data and reporting the results. Additionally, all the data and administration files were physically stored in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office at the university. All electronic copies related to the research data were saved into a computer file to be accessed only by the researcher. Similarly, participants were assured that all transcriptions of data or their written interpretations would be available to them for checking and the researcher would avoid dealing with any sensitive information reported accidentally by the informants.

After participants were selected, I faced the most sensitive issue during the course of the research, which was related to interviewing female participants. It was not possible to meet some female participants from Muslim background due to religious restrictions regarding meeting men in private places. Two of the seven female participants, Daulat and Wardah, preferred to meet where they normally go to attend English conversation classes in a Migrant Resource Centre with the attendance of their social worker who helped me to recruit them at the beginning. Wardah took part in the biography writing stage while Daulat took part in biography writing and interviews. The other five female participants preferred to meet either in their place of residence with the attendance of a family member or at a café.

Another sensitive issue, which could have an impact on my positionality as a researcher, was that some participants did not have enough experience or ideas about how to write a story. Therefore, they requested clear information about the topics they need to talk about in their biographies. In this situation, I tried to help biography writers in a way which was not meant to influence their responses through providing them with a limited set of questions and statements that were designed to stimulate

their memory and reflection. This set aimed to guide their biography writing through focusing on the aspects of their life or settlement experiences that are related to their ALL as shown in Appendix F.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a detailed description of the theoretical framework and methodological design employed in conducting this research study from the time I first thought about the research problem up to discussing the research findings. This chapter represents a rational discussion, as well as a practical and reflective account of the methodological works applied throughout the research project.

The chapter also shows how the methodological design was developed, which started from discussing the nature of knowledge perceived by the research study and moving into the way the research methods were designed and linked to each other for the purposes of dealing with the data collected from participants. Therefore, designing this qualitative research methodology represented a logical and conceptual process that brought all aspects of the research process together.

Social constructionism defined the nature of knowledge expected to emerge through addressing the research problem. Accordingly, it was assumed that sociocultural dynamics are reflected through the multiple perspectives captured from participants through the use of biographies and semi-structured interviews, which were designed to elicit the participants' ALL experiences. As stated by poststructuralists, these multiple perceptions about ALL can also be considered social and cultural aspects of knowledge because they are shaped by the discourse and practices constituting them (Agger, 1991).

The chapter has explored the value of using multiple data analysis techniques in examining and interpreting multiple realities of knowledge and how this enhanced the credibility of the research findings in terms of crystallisation and transferability. Using personal biographies and semi-structured interviews produced thoughtful insights about ALL perceptions. Also, the use of interviews in collecting narrative data minimised the potential negative impact of any assumed relationship between the researcher and participants through my tendency to negotiate meaning and elicit answers when the participant provided limited response. At the same time, the combined use of content analysis and Discourse analysis was fruitful in analysing and conceptualising the themes derived from the multiple perspectives of different settlement discourses in relation to wider dynamics (Agger, 1991).

Finally, ethical issues related to human participation in this research study were identified and addressed, including the issues resulting from being an insider researcher. Chapter Five presents the research findings of the first stage of data collection.

CHAPTER FIVE: BIOGRAPHIES OF REFUGEE SETTLEMENT AND LEARNING

5.0 Introduction

Chapter Five presents the research findings that emerged from the personal biographies written by 16 participants during the first stage of data collection. Participants described their settlement and learning experiences before and during their stay in Australia. Examining personal biographies uncovered five groups of influential factors involved in the ALL process.

These biographical findings show that factors influencing ALL are classified under three broad categories: (i) sociocultural dynamics; (ii) psychological dimensions; and (iii) linguistic dimensions. The main findings, which represent the focus of this research study, show that the dynamic socialisation process of ALL consists of three sociocultural dynamics: cultural capital, social interaction opportunities and identities. Sociocultural dynamics for the purposes of this study refer to the forces generated from social (institutional), cultural and historical contexts based on the understanding that learning, including language learning, is a culturally embedded and socially mediated process (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf, 2000, pp. 79-80). Sociocultural dynamics play a comprehensive and critical role in the ALL experiences lived by former adult refugees, as well as the impact of other psychological and linguistic dimensions. Sociocultural dynamics are involved in a complex network of relationships with psychological and linguistic dimensions present in the same learning setting.

This chapter starts with a conceptual mapping of biographical themes that shows the influential dynamics and dimensions involved in the ALL process. Then, the chapter explores the findings of each of the 16 biographies. The order of presentation in each biography is organised in the same order of events followed in the original biography. Each presentation starts with information about the participant, settlement events and ALL experiences and finally a summary of the influential dynamics and dimensions.

5.1 Conceptual Description of Influential Factors in Additional Language Learning

This section summarises and defines the themes emerging from the data analysis process. It is also important to explain the relationships under which single influences were classified to represent any of the sociocultural, psychological and linguistic clusters that affect ALL.

The biographies reveal five dynamics and dimensions shaping ALL. There are three sociocultural dynamics; cultural capital, social interaction opportunities and identities. These dynamics are also accompanied by psychological dimensions and linguistic dimensions, as summarised in Table 5.1.

The first element of sociocultural dynamics is cultural capital, which was conceptualised by Bourdieu to define those attributes acquired through the membership of a particular social class, group or institution. Therefore, cultural capital represents all forms of knowledge, education, skills, intellect, style of speech and other advantages that a person possesses and they have value in a given society in relation to status and power (Bourdieu, 1973). Based on biographical findings, cultural capital in the Australian social context includes the person's educational

background, multilingual experiences, cultural knowledge of the TL, agency and investment.

Table 5.1: Conceptual organisation of influential factors in ALL (biographies)

Sociocultural dynamics Dimensions				
Cultural capital	Social interaction opportunities	Identities	Psychological dimensions	Linguistic dimensions
Educational background	Settlement experiences	Cultural identity	Resilience	Accent intelligibility
Multilingual experiences	Home language use	Social identity	Motivation	Unfamiliarity with Australian English/slang
Cultural knowledge	Social learning strategies	Gender roles	Attitudes	Grammatical errors
Agency	Social networks (capital)	Social perception of age	Anxiety	Language transfer
Investment			Confidence	
			Learning strategies	

The second dynamic is social interaction opportunities, which represent these social generators that produce collaborative communicative opportunities and situations required for using the TL. Based on biographical data, social interaction opportunities are determined by the nature of settlement experiences, home language use, social learning strategies and social capital. These four generators either maximise or minimise communicative opportunities. According to Vygotsky (1978), learning is developed through social interaction with more knowledgeable or proficient individuals. AL learners need to use the TL with those speakers who are fluent or more proficient in using that language in order to negotiate and develop their learning.

The third dynamic of sociocultural dynamics is identities, which refer to group membership since individuals are identified either by their individual attributes

or category memberships. Group membership reflects a sense of belonging to, or involvement with, a specific group, based on shared values, goals and personal characteristics (such as race, religion, gender or cultural background) (Clayton, 2008, p. 242). The biographical findings display four kinds of identities: (i) cultural identity; (ii) social identity; (iii) gender roles; and (iv) social perception of age.

The findings also show the role of psychological and linguistic dimensions that either facilitate or inhibit ALL and these are clearly established in the ALL literature as discussed in Chapter Three (Ellis, 2008). Psychological dimensions refer to a group of cognitive and emotional effects that influence AL learners through promoting individual differences in language performance between different AL learners (Ellis, 1994). According to Ellis (1997, p. 51), ALL researchers have to focus on the psychology of the ALL process, which is concerned with cognitive processes and emotional conditions involved in language learning and use. The current findings show six psychological dimensions: motivation, attitudes, resilience, learning strategies, anxiety and confidence.

Linguistic dimensions, for the purposes of this research study, refer to all types of cross-linguistic limitations imposed on the AL learner when learning the TL. The performance of the AL learner is affected by the language, or languages that he/she already knows and this is evident in the transfer of linguistic features of the original language to the TL (Mitchell & Myles, 2001, p. 20). Biographical data shows that intelligibility, unfamiliarity with Australian accent/slang, language transfer and grammatical errors have influenced the ALL process of participants.

5.2 Presenting Biographies

This presentation of biographies summarises and analyses ALL experiences of former refugees as impacted by the settlement conditions. The title given to each biography reflects the dominant themes, which occupied the scene of biography. Some biographies are presented in more detail than others because of the wide range of events related to language development and settlement experiences as told by participants. The last three biographies are presented briefly because of the limited content of each biography.

The examination of ALL experiences follows the chronology of events and is based on how these events are related to language learning and education in general (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990). This kind of presentation ensures that all factors influencing ALL are examined within their social, cultural and historical context so they do not lose their contextual significance. Although most influential factors are mentioned frequently in different biographies, the ways they were enacted are different across different ALL learning experiences.

5.2.1 Jafar: The role of education and social interaction

Jafar reported his biography orally in Arabic because he is illiterate in Arabic and has very limited English language skills. Jafar was born in Afghanistan in 1961 and his family migrated to Iraq in 1962. He spoke Arabic as a child and learnt some Dari from his parents. In regard to his first exposure to school, Jafar reported: *'When I became five years old, my father sent me to study with the Mullah. I left the Mullah at the age of nine years old.'* In the Islamic world, Mullahs are community-based teachers nominated by the local community to teach children, regardless of their

teaching experience and qualifications. Mullahs are generally educated in Islamic theology and sacred law but they teach Arabic literacy and the Qur'an to groups of young children, either in the mosque or in a separate classroom environment. They also might be the local Islamic clerics or mosque leaders (Kirk & Winthrop, 2008, p. 876).

According to Jafar, he did not attend any formal primary schooling: *'I didn't go to school so I became illiterate in Arabic and Dari although I speak mainly Arabic.'* As a result, he has a modest education, including being illiterate in Arabic. Also, Jafar did not acquire the essential Arabic reading and writing skills that would enable him to design effective learning strategies or tools in order to facilitate his ELL. For example, he could not use translation from English to Arabic to help him comprehend new vocabulary items. Also, he could not use Arabic to represent or transcribe the pronunciation of English sounds when learning new English words. Learning strategies, in general, refer to special thoughts and behaviours designed and applied by learners to help them comprehend, retain and learn new chunks of information (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990, p. 1). For the purpose of this research, learning strategies are classified as examples of psychological dimensions because of the nature of their formation that is based on a cognitive information processing view of human activity and behaviour (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Such learning strategies might include monitoring performance, memorising, inferring grammar roles from texts and inductive reasoning. ALL research on learning strategies agrees that learning strategies have direct impact on the ALL process (Ellis, 2008).

At the age of 19, Jafar and his family were forced to leave Iraq for Syria for reasons related to visa status. After spending 20 years in Syria, Jafar decided to migrate to the West:

My life became hard because I couldn't acquire Syrian citizenship although I am married to a Syrian citizen. Therefore, I wasn't able to open a bakery or work for myself. So, I decided to travel to a western country in 1999 and I had the opportunity to go to Australia by boat in 2000.

In Australia, Jafar spent six months in a detention centre. Once he was granted a temporary protection visa, Jafar focused on work rather than learning English in order to support himself and his family back in Syria. One year later, his wife and five children had united with him after they entered Australia by boat. In this regard, Jafar reports: *'I went once to ACL (Adult and Community Learning) in Auburn for few days but didn't understand anything so I left.'* He then justifies his withdrawal from language classes by claiming that he *'was already old'*. It is clear that Jafar identifies 'age' as an influencing factor in his ELL because he believes that age restricted his comprehension ability and memory capacity to learn a new language such as English. However, blaming age seems inadequate to justify Jafar's withdrawal from English classes because this withdrawal might be linked to his inability to cope with some learning requirements, such as home study and daily attendance, which, in turn, is caused by his low educational background and limited schooling experience.

In fact, the cognitive developmental perception of age became a subject of great debate after the appearance of the CPH, as discussed in Chapter Three (Ellis, 1994). The proposition is that AL learners, who are exposed to a new language earlier in life, attain higher levels of proficiency than those whose exposure begins in

adolescence or adulthood (Ellis, 2008). However, Singleton believes that talking about a single age factor is unwise (Singleton, 2001, p. 85). Instead, we should direct our attention towards a range of age factors, such as the factors identified in Julie's case of learning Arabic in Chapter Three (Section 3.4.1) and those factors referred to by Jafar as the social belief that the progression of age can restrict memory and comprehension abilities.

Accordingly, Jafar believes that being 'old' is an essential factor behind failing his efforts to develop his English. He grouped himself into the category of 'old people' and, according to his opinion; the 'old' are unable to learn English because of age limitations. In fact, this claim is due to the fact that some participants are strong believers in the common social perception that adults or the elderly learn slowly and with great difficulty (Ellis, 2008). Adult AL learners are sometimes misinformed by stereotypes regarding age and memory loss (Costandi, 2014).

Another factor Jafar mentioned is related to his settlement experiences and the absence of social interaction opportunities that allow him to practise English to communicate in social settings, such as the workplace, classroom or other places that would provide him the opportunity to communicate. Settlement, in general, refers to the process by which newcomers to a country adjust themselves to the new homeland and its culture. At the beginning, new arrivals try to focus their efforts on the search to meet immediate needs, such as housing, learning the language of the host community, employment, socialisation and securing other community and health services. Settlement may represent the experiences of the first few weeks, months or years in a new country, depending on the context in which it is used (Mwarigha, 2002).

Jafar's early settlement experience with employment in Australia was in remote rural areas where he worked and lived, but, unfortunately, did not allow him to communicate in English since his employment was isolated physical labour: *'When I left the camp, I went to work in the farms with my friends because it didn't need any English.'* In fact, Jaffar used to socialise with his Arab and Afghani friends and did not use English regularly. He did not have opportunities to practise his English through communicating with English language speakers because of his first language connections. Norton and Gao argue that 'without opportunities to practice the target language, progress in language learning is compromised' (2008, p. 118). On the other hand, Jaffar did not have a basic knowledge of English that could enable him to initiate a conversation since he left English classes very early. Basic knowledge of grammar, as well as vocabulary, is critical for new AL learners as part of the learner's educational background.

In contrast, when Jafar first lived in the city of Auburn in South Western Sydney, he tried to engage himself with English speakers who were not part of his Arabic-speaking circle in order to make casual conversations that would allow him to use and develop his limited English. Jafar describes this learning experience as follows: *'I learnt to say some sentences in English when I used to go sometimes to the RSL club in Auburn when some people used to speak to me in English.'* This technique of social involvement or socialisation can be considered a social language learning strategy that aims to develop the AL through social participation based on the desire to entertain the self and meet new people.

Social language learning strategies are part of learning strategies because they refer to the way in which language learners attempt to work out the meanings and

uses of words and other aspects of the TL (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). However, social language learning strategies are techniques that are generated from a social context to manipulate social interaction in order to design communicative opportunities for language use. For the purpose of this study, social language learning strategies are classified as one of the mechanisms that generate social interaction opportunities that create authentic learning resources of language use. For example, social learning strategies, such as casual conversations, role-playing, focusing on fluency over accuracy and using social media, are all considered social resources used to practice and learn new words and expressions, as well as knowing how and when to use these words or sentences.

The last important issue Jafar referred to in his biography is related to the impact of home language use. Home language use, for the purposes of this study, refers to the use of heritage language by AL learners and other members of the same immigrant community in order to socialise and perform daily activities within the linguistic boundaries of the TL community. It also includes all social connections performed by the use of heritage language (Eisenclas et al., 2013; Cook, 2001). Jafar lived and worked in Auburn, an area inhabited by a wide range of immigrant communities, including Arab-Australians. Jafar used to do most of his daily transactions through dealing with people who speak Arabic. This is evident in his comments about his daily activities: *'I used to see Arabic doctors and do most of our shopping from Arabic convenience stores so I didn't need English so much to do these things,'* whereas, at home, he said: *'I speak Arabic to my wife and the kids but the kids speak English to each other.'* At work, Jafar mentions: *'After some time, I found a baker job at a Lebanese bakery, where all the workers there used to speak*

Arabic and since that time, I continued working at the Arabic and Lebanese bakeries. Jafar feels that he does not need English extensively on a daily basis because there are some people around him who speak Arabic.

However, Arabic, as a first language, can be used as a resource to develop the learning of the TL, as described by another participant, Daulat, to master some linguistic aspects of the TL. Treating the L1 as a learning resource opens up several ways to use it by AL learners as part of their collaborative learning and strategy design to learn vocabulary, memorise grammatical rules and use bilingual dictionaries (Cook, 2001, p. 402). It is also clearly important in the social life of his family and community.

At the time of data collection, Jafar indicated that he was able to meet his basic daily needs with limited English but still relied on interpreters and other family members to carry out other tasks that require better English language skills. Jafar also gave up on his attempts to pass the computer driving test for obtaining a driving license because he was considered illiterate in English as well as Arabic.

According to the above, the aspects related to the sociocultural dynamics of cultural capital, identities and social interactional opportunities can be identified as having had a significant impact on Jafar's ELL. Cultural capital is represented by Jafar's modest educational background as he is illiterate in Arabic. A second sociocultural influence is related to identity and how Jafar considered 'old age' as an identity barrier that hindered his English language involvement. The third dynamic is reflected in the limited availability of social interactional opportunities during settlement experiences, home language use and social language learning strategies, since Jafar had limited communicative opportunities to use English. In addition to

sociocultural dynamics, there is some impact of psychological dimensions through the incapability of Jafar to create and use learning strategies. This is due to his limited education, which resulted in negative attitudes towards learning and low aptitude.

5.2.2 Muna: The impact of anxiety, social support and confidence

Muna wrote her personal biography in Arabic and sent it by email as an attachment.

Muna is a 46-year-old female former refugee from Iraq who came to Australia in 2005 with her husband and three children. At the time of writing her biography,

Muna worked as an Arabic Women's Social Worker at a Migrant Resource Centre in the South Western Suburbs of Sydney:

I completed my Diploma in teaching primary to work as a primary teacher in Baghdad for about nineteen years ... In Jordan, I was keen to attend forums and gatherings that focus on human rights and mainly women's rights ... In 2005, I arrived in Australia with my husband and three children after we were granted refugee status. At that time, I felt that I had started a new life, language and culture.

Since Muna came to Australia as an educated person with functional English, she possessed significant cultural capital to invest in her ALL. Educational background includes all kinds of formal qualifications or years of schooling the person has completed (Bourdieu, 1973). Indeed, Muna is aware of her cultural capital in stating: *'I had a relatively good level of English when I first arrived to Australia.'*

Ironically, Muna did not have the confidence to communicate with other people: *'I was afraid of committing grammatical errors'* and *'was not able to communicate with or talk to other people because I did not feel confident enough to talk.'* This language anxiety is about exposing her cultural identity as a foreigner and

is a 'label given by social psychologists to feelings of nervousness and unease when learning/using a new language' (Mitchell, Myles & Marsden, 2013, p. 298).

Nevertheless, Muna managed to overcome her lack of confidence with the social support of her husband, who is also an Iraqi citizen. Her husband played the role of language learning mentor and moral supporter through his continuous language learning guidance and encouragement during the first stages of the family's settlement in Australia. This social support that Muna enjoyed throughout her ALL experience represents significant social capital that was used to aide learning:

I remember the first time we went to see the city, when my husband asked me and my children not to rely on him in interpreting, buying things or performing other transactions, instead we should do these things ourselves by talking to other people using English. My husband speaks English fluently because he did his masters in Britain.

Bourdieu defines social capital as 'the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition' (1986, p. 51). Muna experienced the benefits of such social capital through the role of her husband in her ALL and she has the social capacity to grow her social capital through investing more in her social relationships at work and university.

Settlement conditions also played a positive role in developing Muna's English language skills through providing the access to formal language training opportunities. Formal language training covers any type of learning that is intentional, organised and structured and is usually arranged by institutions and guided by a curriculum (Eaton, 2010). Upon her arrival in Australia, Muna enrolled in the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), which is, as indicated in Chapter Two, an English language program funded by the Australian Department of

Immigration and Citizenship that provides free English language courses to eligible migrants and humanitarian entrants (Burns & Joyce, 2007). After completing her language course, Muna '*applied to study English for further study at TAFE (Technical And Further Education) college*'. Muna completed an Advanced Diploma in Community Services and gained a part-time job as a social worker, thus having a successful settlement due to these experiences of education and employment.

In summary, Muna's story revealed two sociocultural dynamics that have had significant impact on her English language development, as well as the psychological dimensions of confidence and anxiety. The first element of this dynamic socialisation process is cultural capital, which is reflected in her educational background as a former primary teacher. Secondly, social interaction opportunities provided Muna with valuable communicative opportunities to use English through positive settlement experiences and social capital, which is reflected through her husband's support and his capacity to speak English.

5.2.3 Ameer: Immigration policies and resilience

Ameer wrote his personal biography in English with few minor errors in grammar and selection of vocabulary. He sent his biography by email as an attachment. Ameer was born in Iraq in 1974 and holds a Diploma of Radiology. His English language skills were functional when he arrived in Australia, which enabled him to meet his daily needs and find a casual job.

I came to Australia in 1999 and stayed in the refugee camp for about nine months. While we had [have] been this longer period there, the Australian government don't [didn't] think about teach us the basic English to help many people to understand and deal with Australian society and don't be [so as not to make it] difficult for them to get a job or any basic life essentials.

The dominant theme in Ameer's biography is his settlement conditions including the policies adopted by the Australian Government towards 'boat arrivals' after 2000, as discussed in Chapter Two. These policies included unlimited detention, temporary residence visas and other restrictions on education and employment. The focus here is on those decisions that influenced Ameer's ELL. Ameer mentioned that he was '*granted temporary protection visa 785 in July 2000*' and he '*found this is the worse visa*'. As a humanitarian protection visa holder, Ameer was allowed to stay in Australia for four years before his need for protection was reviewed by the immigration authorities.

These policies were considered by Ameer as negative settlement experiences that caused a state of social instability, economic stability and limited capacity to access formal learning resources, which influenced his ALL. It also restricted his chances of receiving any free formal education because he was unable to pay fees for private educational institutions. Ameer describes the impact of these visa restrictions:

In this visa I cannot study any English course unless I paid for it and the cheapest one [was] nine dollars per hour. It was very expensive for me because I couldn't find job to assist me to pay for it.

However, Ameer did not give up his learning goals and maintained his resilience through self-study while he was in the detention centre: '*When I been [was] there I tried my best to study English by myself I remember I learnt 60 words meaning and spelling every day.*' After he was granted a four-year residency protection visa, Ameer kept searching for any available learning opportunities, such as free English classes or grants. Resilience is the process of, or capacity for, successful adaptation despite challenging circumstances or conditions (Howard & Johnson, as cited in Martin, 2002, p. 35). This includes the learner's ability to deal efficiently with

educational obstacles, study pressure and stress (Martin, 2002). Ameer's resilience can be seen in his encountering and overcoming a range of difficulties faced during the initial settlement stages in order to assess his overseas qualifications and gain the licence that enables him to work as a sonographer.

Ameer managed to attend free English classes organised by churches and other community organisations that deal with new immigrants and refugees. Luckily, he was offered the opportunity to do an 'English for Further Studies' course online through an open learning TAFE college. After that, Ameer was granted permanent residency five years after his arrival in Australia:

Until I got the permanent visa in 2006 after that I applied for English for academic purpose to help to entre [enter] university to compete [complete] my further study. I completed the course and I am studying in sonography filed [field] in university now.

In summary, sociocultural dynamics have played a major role in Ameer's ALL experience in conjunction with psychological dimensions. Ameer had some knowledge of English when he arrived in Australia, which is linked back to his undergraduate study in Iraq. This is, in fact, a form of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Lack of social interaction opportunities had a significant impact on the development of his English as a result of undesirable settlement experiences. Government immigration policies at that time did not provide Ameer with suitable communicative opportunities, such as free English classes, to learn and practise English through formal language classes and academic literacy courses. On the other hand, psychological dimensions, such as resilience, played a complementary role in Ameer's persistence to continue his attempts in searching for learning opportunities.

5.2.4 Wardah: Past memories and 'old age'

Wardah typed her short biography using non-standard Iraqi Arabic due to her limited schooling. The role of settlement experiences in Wardah's life was quite profound. In her biography, Wardah described how her life was devastated by forced deportation. At that time, when the Iraqi-Iranian war started in 1980, thousands of Iraqi citizens of Iranian origin were deported to the borders between Iraq and Iran for racial and political reasons (Bengio & Litvak, 2011). Wardah's family was one of thousands of families deported to Iran to face very difficult settlement conditions.

I am originally from Iraq. In 1980, my family was displaced from Iraq into Iran by the Saddam regime and I was 13 years old at that time while I was studying year six in primary school. In Iran, I could not continue my schooling because of my family's difficult circumstances as well as my inability to speak the Persian language.

After her husband left for Australia, Wardah described another phase of settlement where again she faced new difficulties in life as a mother by herself:

In 1999, my husband decided to leave Iran since living conditions were very hard for us. So, my husband went to Australia by boat while I stayed in Iran with my four children to struggle the hard life for 10 years.

After arriving in Australia, Wardah experienced great difficulties in coping with the requirements of Australian society: *'Living in Australia made my psychological condition worse because it is a different life and culture.'* Wardah could not speak English effectively to express her needs and solve her daily problems. So, Wardah attended some English language classes: *'Centrelink sent me to study English at ACL but I did not learn anything.'*

Wardah blamed 'old age' in slowing down her ELL. She believed: *'It is very hard to learn English since I cannot concentrate and I always forget what I learnt,*

maybe because my age and the difficult circumstances I lived in since leaving Iraq.'

As a consequence of this belief in being too old, Wardah discouraged herself from learning English and lost motivation to continue her English language classes.

In addition, the condition of identity as an 'old woman' forced Wardah to accompany women from a similar age group. Therefore, having restricted social relationships with only adults or older adult women affected her English language development negatively because of the limited communicative opportunities available to use and practise English.

However, it is worth mentioning that at the time when the data was collected, Wardah was engaging herself in a number of group social activities on a daily basis as a sign of building resilience and an attempt to practise and learn English:

Now, I go to Auburn Diversity Services to meet other women from different backgrounds who speak English and do different group activities; also the Arabic family worker helps me to fill in forms and call Centrelink and helps me pay my bills.

In summary, this biography presents different sociocultural dynamics and psychological dimensions involved in the ALL process. Wardah has different cultural capital and limited educational experience in a formal sense. The second sociocultural dynamic is the inadequacy of social interaction opportunities available to use and learn English because of the settlement conditions experienced by Wardah across her life history leading to limited social capital. Finally, there is the effect of identity, as reflected by the social perception of age. Similarly, psychological dimensions had an undesirable impact on Wardah's learning capacity through low motivation and anxiety.

5.2.5 Daulat: Challenges of illiteracy and motherhood

Daulat narrated her biography orally in Arabic because she is illiterate in Arabic and her English writing was not extensive. Daulat is originally from Syria and she left her home country with her children to follow her husband who fled to Australia for political reasons. They spent two months in Woomera Immigration Centre.

My name is Daulat. I was born in 1968 in Syria. I arrived in Australia in 2002 by boat together with my eldest daughter and other four small boys since we couldn't endure life in Syria after my husband left to go to Australia in 2000 ... I left school when I was eight years old because of my family, therefore, I am illiterate now; unable to read and write Arabic.

After her temporary protection visa was granted, Daulat found herself in charge of preparing her children for a new life in Australia (Ghareeb, Ranard & Tutunji, 2008, p. 14) just as she had done in Syria. Her traditional role, as a mother, is to help her children adapt to a new culture, system, neighbourhood and school. This is in addition to her role as a wife looking after her husband and doing the housework. As a result, she faced great difficulties attending English classes and focusing on her ELL:

I couldn't go to English language classes because I was busy doing housework and looking after my children and husband. In addition to that, I gave birth to one son after I came to Australia and I kept looking after him.

Gender identities influence the ALL process through impacting on the access to ALL resources and opportunities (Gordon, 2004, p. 437). One of the cultural challenges that face migrating families when they settle in a Western country for the first time is the issue of shifting gender roles in terms of work, family responsibilities and education. The family represents the basic unit of Arab and Muslim societies. The traditional Arab family structure gives the male the right of leadership outside the

house in relation to earning income and providing protection to the family while the female carries out local and household duties (Ghareeb, Ronard & Tutunji, 2008). However, the family always faces new challenges in order to adjust to the new society and this requires modifying thinking and changing strategies to cope with new realities to enhance the quality of life of its members (Chamberlayne, 1968, pp. 134-136). Even after many years of settlement in the host country, accelerating social, political and economic changes, such as unemployment and divorce, are posing pressing circumstances on families, which force them to find solutions and maintain social stability.

Daulat's biography also shows that her ALL was influenced by the use of her home language in her Arabic-speaking community, as she declares that *'all my friends were from Arabic background'*. This involvement included different social activities, such as shopping, visiting friends/relatives, parties, religious ceremonies, weddings and trips. This active social participation with the Arabic-speaking community minimised the level of social interaction with members of the wider English speaking community. However, these first language connections also benefited Daulat in her settlement through discovering her community surroundings and enhancing her cultural knowledge about the Australian society and ways of living.

Yet, a careful examination of Daulat's ALL experience shows that her educational background shaped her L2 learning: *'I left school when I was eight years old because of my family; therefore, I am illiterate now; unable to read and write Arabic.'* If Daulat was educated, this would help her guide the learning process by planning her education and being able to use effective learning strategies.

The factors described above slowed the progress of Daulat's ALL and brought some linguistic limitations on her ELL and use. During the first five years of her arrival, these manifested in the difficulties Daulat faced in constructing basic sentences and so she had to communicate using single words and formulaic expressions, as well as gestures: *'My only problem is with conversation since I mostly understand what is said to me but I find it a bit hard to answer since my English words are limited.'*

After six or seven years, Daulat was freed from family responsibilities and things changed:

When my kids grew up and reached high school, I started to attend some of the English language classes run by charity organisations, such as Banin Community Association in Auburn, as I attend once or twice a week according to my free time.

At the same time, Daulat used a number of social learning strategies in order to adjust her social settings and allow her to practise her English, including hosting a home volunteer tutor to develop her English conversation skills, as well as give her the opportunity to practise her English with a native speaker. She explained:

There is a volunteer Australian female retired teacher who comes to my house once a week to teach me English for an hour or so and help me to improve my conversational skills and some basic writing.

At the time of data collection, Daulat mentioned that she was able to perform her daily basic transactions, such as shopping, bank depositing, seeing the doctor and using public transport through using simple sentences. In this regard, she mentioned: *'Now, I can do most of my basic needs like shopping and talking to the doctor, even I am able now to understand the electricity bill.'*

In summary, Daulat described a number of sociocultural dynamics, as well as psychological and linguistic dimensions. These included limited education before coming to Australia coupled with gendered social relations impacting on her opportunities for social interaction. Identity was also present through shifting gender roles across settlement stages. These sociocultural dynamics had negative effects on Daulat's ALL, which resulted in a number of linguistic limitations that added more difficulties to her ALL, although she was working to overcome these with a tutor.

5.2.6 Sideeq: 'I wanted to change my life but life changed me'

Sideeq wrote his biography in Arabic because his written English skills made it difficult for him to write simple texts. Sideeq is originally from Sudan and he arrived in Australia in 2003 with his wife and six children. At the beginning, he felt optimistic about the future after years of war and refugee life in Sudan and Egypt. Sideeq titled his narrative: *'I wanted to change my life but life changed me'* to show how family and social turbulences affected his life across settlement stages. In his biography, Sideeq focused mostly on the psychological issues that followed a work injury and it was not possible to conduct a follow-up interview with him to discuss other social and cultural dynamics involved in his learning experience.

Settlement experiences played an important role in improving Sideeq's English through providing him with educational, employment and socialisation opportunities to practise and learn English. He spent more than a year attending different English language courses. In this regard, Sideeq reports: *'I started learning English through AMES for six months and I was between the best learners in the class as my teacher Beverly used to tell me.'* Sideeq also attended short career courses and was involved in daily social activities which helped to improve his

English. One example of these interactive situations was the casual conversations Sideeq used to have with neighbours: *'I cannot forget our neighbours who were kind to me and my family and always spoke English to me to help me improve my language.'*

After completing a short course in security, Sideeq worked in his first job in Australia as a security guard in a public bar in the CBD (Central Business District) for a few months. Soon after, he was injured during an armed robbery in the public bar while doing his job. This sudden event caused and was followed by, dramatic social turbulences, such as illness, unemployment and divorce, which altogether had a severe impact on Sideeq's life and his family:

After leaving the hospital, my life became worse since I left the hospital jobless and ill. I have not worked for the last three years because I am still suffering from back pain, stress, depression, fear and diabetes.

These unexpected events caused Sideeq to experience psychological issues and post-traumatic stress disorders, such as anxiety, which subsequently led to social isolation. During this isolation, Sideeq hardly communicated in English except for performing his basic needs, such as medical treatment and other daily transactions.

Consequently, these psychological dimensions negatively affected Sideeq's ELL:

This also affected my family and social life since my wife asked for divorce and she managed to get that! ... This left me destroyed and confused as I lost everything including my children ... As a result, I lost confidence in all people around me because this reminded me of the fears that I went through when I was in the middle of the war in my home country.

In summary, Sideeq had initial communicative opportunities in early settlement, but these were severely disrupted by events that left him isolated and unable to function in social situations, leading to personal and familial dislocation. In this narrative, it is

possible to see the significance of the dimensions and dynamics outlined, such as social capital and psychological well-being, on the development of ALL capacities.

5.2.7 Raghib: Cultural capital and personal challenges

Raghib produced his personal biography in Standard English and attached it to an email. He came from Lebanon equipped with significant cultural capital as a bilingual university graduate:

I am 57 years old ... I came from Lebanon to Australia in 1986. I was a high school science teacher. At that time I had a BSc – Chemistry and a BA – History ... In Lebanon, my first language was Arabic and I studied French as a second language since primary school ... I studied English for few weeks with a private tutor but this was interrupted by the events of the civil war at that time ... After I arrived in Australia, I studied English in an Adult Migrant Education College for about three months.

Raghib also went beyond just the mechanics of English in developing social knowledge: *'I usually read about the Australian local news by examining the Sydney Morning Herald and Yahoo websites.'* Cultural knowledge is a form of cultural capital leading to a familiarity with and understanding of 'the culture associated with a language being learnt' (Byram & Grundy, 2002, p. 193). Culture is usually understood as cultural artefacts, values, ideas, ways of living, customs, places, education, habits, behaviours and political/economic systems that characterise a specific group of people or society (Brown, 2007, p. 380). However, cultural knowledge is not only a matter of knowing information about the target culture; it is also about knowing how to engage with that culture and its practices (Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino & Kohler, 2003, p. 8).

Similar to other refugees during their initial settlement, Raghib was advised to study English at an Adult Migrant English Services (AMES) centre and this formal

learning experience lasted for about three months. After that, he relied on his individual efforts through self-study to improve his English language skills. In less than four years after his arrival, Raghieb managed to secure a full time job as a science teacher in a Western Sydney high school:

At the start of 1987, I started teaching Arabic at the Saturday School for Community Languages and later obtained my Casual Teaching Number. I started to do casual teaching in various high schools until I was appointed as a full time science teacher in 1990. Working in high schools gave me the opportunity to improve my English.

He also insisted on continuing his postgraduate studies through completing two Master degrees, one in environmental studies and the other one in business administration, which developed his academic literacy skills. Therefore, settlement experiences for Raghieb provided numerous social interaction opportunities.

Raghieb was also multilingual and was aware of the advantages as he describes learning English as *'not a big problem for me as I believe that knowing French had helped me'*. Multilingualism refers to the acquisition, knowledge or use of two or more languages by an individual. However, a multilingual speaker does not necessarily know all the languages that he/she learnt equally well (Cenoz & Gorter, 2011, p. 401).

Raghieb used his past experience of learning French to learn English in two ways: first, through applying similar learning strategies to the ones he used previously to learn French. And second, through what is linguistically known as language transfer, where Raghieb manipulated the similarities between French and English related to word and meaning forms and borrowed some of these from French to apply them to English. This positive transfer as a linguistic dimension is a type of cross-linguistic influence, which involves the effect of one language (sometimes the

native language) on the acquisition of a TL due to the similarities and differences between the TL and any other language that has been previously acquired or learnt, which makes ALL easier (Odlin, 1989, p. 27). For example, both English and French have the word ‘table’, which sometimes has the same meaning in both languages. In this quotation, Raghieb makes a simple linguistic comparison between English and French:

I personally consider English as an easy to learn language when it is compared to Arabic and French. It has less complicated grammar. The major problem was that English is much less phonetic than Arabic and French.

Raghieb holds critical attitudes towards Australian culture. He believes that ‘*Australia is mixture of groups of people with no real distinctive Australian culture or way of life*’. Gardner (1985, pp. 91-93) argues that attitudes represent an evaluative reaction to some referent, inferred on the basis of the individual’s beliefs and ideas about the referent object. That is, language attitudes are generalised statements that reflect positive or negative feelings towards a specific language and its speaking community and these feelings might reflect the ease or difficulty of ALL. Interestingly, these negative attitudes towards the target culture did not interfere with his ELL as Gardner suggests, but these negative attitudes encouraged him to develop his English through communicating with members of different ethnic groups who live in multicultural Australia.

Closer examination of Raghieb’s attitudes also reveals the role of identity, in particular, cultural identity. Cultural identity references the relationship between the individual and members of a particular ethnic group who are anticipated to share a common history, common language, similar lifestyles and similar ways of understanding the world (Norton, 2006, p. 2). The attitudes mentioned above show

that Raghieb adopts a cosmopolitan view in regard to his cultural identity when he declares that he belongs to ‘*all humans*’ (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013). Raghieb explains that the link between himself and his home language group is relatively equal to the relationship with the TL group:

As I grew older and gained more knowledge through study and reading, I became more aware of the view of Islam where we are all humans where there is no idea for definite countries with boundaries.

Throughout this biography, there is an implicit tendency where Raghieb admires his role as a social agent in achieving his goal to learn English, as well as building his new life in Australia. This is obvious through making learning choices, manipulating personal capabilities and maintaining determination. Agency is considered the capability of individuals to make choices based on their own endeavours and curiosities and then act according to these choices in a way that changes their lives and accumulates their knowledge (Martin, 2004, p. 135). This agentic role is evident when Raghieb says:

I relied mainly on my own effort and study to improve my English’ and ‘I am happy with my current work but always think of some other challenges and possible change if my family situation changes.

In summary, Raghieb’s biography shows a range of dynamics and dimensions that affected his English language learning in Australia. Sociocultural dynamics were influential although psychological and linguistic dimensions played a role through attitudes and language transfer. Cultural capital, as developed by educational background, multilingualism, cultural knowledge and agency, shaped Raghieb’s English language development. Social interaction opportunities through learning and work added to this cultural capital. The other sociocultural element of this learning

socialisation process is cultural identity, which shaped Raghib's attitudes towards the TL and its linguistic community.

5.2.8 Nameer: 'Others think I am still a migrant'

Nameer wrote his biography in English and emailed it as an attachment. Nameer is a 36-year-old male who was born in Iraq but his family was deported to Iran just like in Wardah's story. He came to Australia in 2000 as a refugee by boat. His educational background is explained:

At the age of 5 I came to Iran and started schooling in Farsi one year later. Although I self-taught myself in Arabic I never had formal training in Arabic and all my studies were done in Farsi. I came to Australia in 2000 with a bachelor degree in English Language and Literature (1995-1999) got from an Iranian university.

After Nameer had left the refugee detention centre, he continued his studies in Australia: 'My studies were in English (one-and-a-half years TAFE [Technical And Further Education] studying IT and one year studying Master of Education in university).' These qualifications gave him the opportunity to work in different jobs in community services, teaching English as a L2 and employment services. These positive settlement experiences resulted from being involved in different communicative educational and professional contexts. Whether at the workplace or the classroom, these social interaction opportunities helped Nameer to further develop his English language skills, especially those related with formal aspects of English and academic literacy. He notes this advantage:

I've always worked with Australian businesses where English was a core requirement for doing my job (e.g. employment consultant, ESL teacher, family case worker, counsellor ...).

Despite this successful transition, Nameer does not feel satisfied and happy with the informal part of his English, including slang, due to a lack of familiarity with some aspects of Australian culture, especially when involved in casual conversations:

The biggest hurdle for me in learning English was the cultural aspect. While I feel very confident with my formal English, I still feel uncomfortable to take part in conversations with my colleagues about Aussie football, rugby league, movies, songs and music, pop gossip as I feel I am not interested and have no clue about these things.

Being reluctant to participate in such conversations cannot be interpreted as a lack of language skills since this unwillingness to communicate is due to the lack of his knowledge about the target culture (Liddicoat, Papademetre, Scarino & Kohler, 2003). In fact, culture affects everything people do, say and think. Hofstede (1984, pp. 25-26) considers culture as ‘the collective programming of the mind’, which is passed from one generation to another, but it is changing over time because each generation adds something of its own characteristics. Thus, for Nameer to be able to master the English language and be an effective communicator, he needs linguistic knowledge or competency to produce grammatically correct and semantically appropriate sentences, as well as learning about the culture which produced that language in order to know how language is used. Kramsch (1993, p. 8) sees language not simply as a body of knowledge to be learnt but as a social practice in which we participate.

Nameer attributes his unfamiliarity with colloquial language to social exclusion:

I think my colleagues do not deeply include or relate to me and develop [a] relationship with me as they would develop between each other. Even in my

social life (with neighbours for example) I related to people from different ethnic background[s] more than I do with the native speakers.

Social identity is a factor in how Nameer feels he was treated as a migrant by his colleagues. Social identity is used to group people together based on some shared social values and characteristics (Gumperz, 1982; Norton, 2006). It might be that Nameer's colleagues did not include him in their group because they considered him a member of another cultural group and this social categorisation was based on Nameer's linguistic background as he is not an English native speaker.

In summary, there are three sociocultural dynamics that have affected Nameer's ALL. First, cultural capital played an initial role in providing Nameer with learning strategies and knowledge required for the success of his ELL. This cultural capital is reflected mainly through Nameer's educational background and multilingual experience, although his limited cultural knowledge did not serve his English language development.

Second, social interaction opportunities also played a positive role through settlement experiences that provided Nameer with ideal communicative opportunities for practising and learning English. The other sociocultural dynamic is social identity, which defined the social relationship between Nameer and members of one social institution who blocked him from accessing those cultural assets available to learn how to use English in informal situations.

5.2.9 Ibrahim: The impact of formal language instruction and employment

Ibrahim wrote his personal biography in English and then sent it by email as an attachment. Ibrahim spent two years studying at university but was forced to leave Algeria before completing his degree.

I came to Australia in September 1987 from Algeria; I am a 51 years old man from non-English speaking background. My first languages were Arabic and French ... In 1990 I travelled back to Algeria for a family visit. I stayed there for about nine months without having any connection with the English language.

Arabic is Ibrahim's native language and he also speaks French fluently and has, therefore, accumulated multilingual experience, which helped him later to learn English. It is common for people from Algeria to speak Arabic and French because Algeria was colonised by France from 1830 to 1962. By 1848, it was legally an extension of French territory. Modern Standard Arabic is the official language of Algeria and Algerian Arabic is used by the majority of the population. Colloquial Algerian Arabic is heavily influenced by borrowings from French, Berber and Turkish. Due to its colonial history, many Algerians are bilinguals and French is still widely used in the government, media and educational system (Loyal, 2009).

Immediately after his arrival in Australia as a refugee, Ibrahim attended English classes for three months through the Adult Migrant English Services (AMES). Then he enrolled at a TAFE college for three months to study the 'English for Further Studies' course. However, Ibrahim faced difficulties related to understanding the Australian English dialect, particularly the slang and the accent of broader speakers during the first few years of his residence:

I remember my next door neighbour was an Aussie old fellow with a very strong Australian accent, I couldn't pick up any words he used to say to me

each morning when we cross each other. 'Haz goin' mate' Or 'G'day' his mouth closed without moving his lips or jaw; and he shook his head. I was really struggling to work out the words he used to say every day.

Intelligibility of language refers to the capacity of AL learners to recognise words and other sentence-level elements of utterances (Nelson, 1995, p. 274). Issues of intelligibility emerge mainly in the field of cross-cultural communication. In this regard, many speakers of Australian English usually use a high-rising intonation when they speak. This usage is known as Australian Questioning Intonation (AQI). The use of AQI is to check for the listener's comprehension and comply with the turn-taking mechanism of conversation. This phenomenon was found to be language changes in progress since higher rates of AQI usage were found between teenagers, women and working-class speakers in Sydney (Guy et al., 1986, p. 23). This type of language change related to different English dialects and slangs can cause difficulties in intelligibility for AL learners.

Accent, as it applies to this study, refers to a distinctive way of pronouncing a language by its speakers and sometimes it is associated with a particular area, country or social class. Different English speaking countries have different accents or ways of pronouncing English. Nowadays, we can distinguish between British English, American English, South African English or Australian English, since they are considered different varieties of English (Hewings, 2007, p. 8). The length of residency and different settlement experiences could provide Ibrahim with more exposure to the Australian culture, as well as enhance the comprehensibility of Australian English and its accent (Smith & Bisazza, 1982).

Later, Ibrahim worked in a number of jobs, such as car washer, hotel steward, machine operator and taxi driver. Ibrahim made use of these work related social

interaction opportunities to learn more about Australian English/slang and also practise what he learnt from previous English classes. For example, he describes driving a taxi cab as ‘*another opportunity to learn Australian slang, the culture and obviously the language*’. Ibrahim remembers one work situation and how it added to his knowledge of Australian culture:

I recall one day, I picked up an old Aussie man [and] when we got to his place, he said ‘What’s d’ damage??’ I looked at him and I said ‘where’s d’ damage in my cab??’ So he said, showing me his index and thumb rubbing them together [the world sign for money] MONEY, MONEY, then I laughed and I told him the price of the fare.

Similarly, other factory jobs also helped Ibrahim to develop his English reading, writing, listening and speaking skills. These jobs required effective communication skills, such as understanding written instructions and reporting. Below, Ibrahim describes one job in a Kingsgrove factory:

My work involved the manufacturing of industrial air-conditioning in accordance with plans and that needed the ability to understand and read [English] drawings of each figure. So this job was a great help in the improvement of my reading.

In summary, Ibrahim has the advantage of accumulating cultural capital due to his educational background and multilingual experiences, although his ALL was affected by limited cultural knowledge. Also, having quality social interaction opportunities through positive settlement experiences helped Ibrahim to overcome his linguistic and cultural issues. However, his ALL was negatively affected by linguistic limitations that resulted from accent intelligibility and unfamiliarity with Australian English/slang.

5.2.10 Heitham: 'I am really Australian'

Heitham is a 66-year-old male who was born in the West Bank. When he first arrived in Australia, Heitham spoke Arabic and Serbian, as well as having basic knowledge of English. In writing his biography, he preferred to use written Arabic rather than English because he was able to express himself better through using Arabic (personal communication):

I was born in 1945 in Palestine. After I completed my undergraduate studies in Physiotherapy from Serbia, I wanted to go back to my home country but unfortunately the rest of Palestine including the West Bank had been occupied by Israel in 1967. Therefore, I decided to settle outside the Middle East but I did not know where exactly to go.

Heitham first visited Brazil where he learnt some Portuguese but later decided to settle in Australia after travelling across the Middle East looking for safe refuge. He describes his social situation when he first arrived in Australia as follows: '*When I arrived to Australia in 1970, I was young, educated and somehow able to speak English which made me feel positive about the future.*' As a result of this confidence, he worked in a number of jobs although he was not able to find a job in physiotherapy. Currently, he is a businessman and his work requires travelling overseas to import goods to Australia. These different settlement experiences through overseas study and work provided valuable social interaction opportunities to learn and use English.

Heitham's ALL experience draws on his cultural capital, including his knowledge of English and multilingual experiences of Serbian and Portuguese. Also, Heitham used a number of social learning strategies in order to engage himself in social situations with the people around him: '*The easiest way to learn English is to*

mix and interact with the rest of the population through work, shopping and watching TV as well as learning correct pronunciation from your own kids.'

Leisure is an effective social learning strategy that requires social interaction where language learners use entertaining activities to promote ALL. Heitham describes how leisure is beneficial for ALL by indicating: *'I used to watch Australian TV, especially news, sport, talk shows and some other programs, such as Four Corners and Hey Hey [It's] Saturday since such programs are informative.'*

Since Heitham became more fluent in English, he started to feel included with the rest of the Australian community: *'I can do lots of things with English and I feel I am really Australian now since I have been living here for a long time as I am 66 years old now.'* This attempt to culturally identify the self with the TL group is not a sudden decision but an outcome of a long-term process of cultural familiarity with the Australian society created by long-term residency and lost connections with the home country. This involvement with the TL group does not happen without the help of language as a social practice to construct meaning and develop social relationships.

The above findings related to cultural identity helped to accumulate positive attitudes towards the English speaking community, its culture and language. This is clearly evident when Heitham indicated:

Australia is a beautiful country, Australian people are very kind and generous and the government is responsible who looks after its people, especially those in needs through the government's social security system.

In summary, cultural capital was an active dynamic in ALL since Heitham came to Australia as an educated person with extensive multilingual experiences.

Experiencing diverse settlement conditions and engaging in different social activities, from working in a post-office to running a private business, allowed Heitham to access a variety of interactional opportunities. This social engagement was further enhanced by confidence, positive attitudes and increased familiarity with the Australian community (cultural identity) as a result of long residence.

5.2.11 Sajad: Anxiety and first language connections

Sajad arrived in Australia as a refugee by boat in 2001. He wrote his biography in handwritten English. Sajad knew some English when he first arrived in Australia. His family fled Iraq to neighbouring Syria to avoid the arrest of his father for political reasons by the regime at that time:

My name is Sajad Al Yaqoubi, I am 33 years old, I came from Iraq to Australia since 2001 by boat. I have finished high school at home. When I came to Australia my English was not well, I spoke some sentences in broken English, if some one [someone] spoke to me I couldn't understand him at all.

In Australia, Sajad attended English classes on a few occasions but withdrew several times because he worked full-time and did not have enough time to attend. Sajad's minimal level of English was due to his past unstable settlement experiences, which prevented him from receiving any kind of schooling or language education for a number of years. Also, he was more focused on work when he arrived in Australia rather than learning English. Sajad describes his language difficulties as follows:

I faced some difficulte [difficulty] when people talk to me it was very hard to understand them because they used words I did not understand what they meant specialy [especially] if they ask questions I could not answer because the words I knew very limited.

These linguistic dimensions are due to accent intelligibility, a lack of grammatical knowledge and limited vocabulary. These kinds of linguistic knowledge would have

helped Sajad to comprehend what is said and how to respond by building sentences. The incapacity to communicate in English led Sajad to have difficulty in engaging in interactional situations that might expose his low level of English:

In that time I was very embarrassed of some situations because of my English, I had to talk to the others to treat with them to organise some treatments like going to the bank to open a new account or enquiries or for looking for accommodation or looking for a job by searching internet.

During the first few years of his residency in Australia, Sajad was working hard at improving his English language skills through self-study, especially speaking and listening. He used to ask friends about the best ways to learn English and buy English learning books, as well as borrowing language resources from the local library.

The amount of effort and emotion Sajad devoted to his ELL is better explained through the sociolinguistic concept of investment, rather than the psychological concept of motivation because of the dynamic and fluid nature of this construct (Mitchell, Myles & Marsden, 2013, p. 280). Norton (2000) introduced the term ‘investment’ to describe the socially and historically constructed relationship of the learner to the TL. This dynamic relationship shows the amount of emotion that AL learners attach to the new language and its learning process, as well as the amount of energy they invest in practising the TL. In other words, AL learners try to assign cultural significance, economic value and communicative objectives for their ALL.

At that time, Sajad thought that studying grammar and vocabulary at home was the best way to enable him to link words together and speak, as he explains: *‘So I tried to develop my English, I started to study English grammar at home. I started*

to study the first thing the verbs and the English grammar.’ In fact, learning basic grammar and new vocabulary is important but it is not sufficient for language use since Sajad’s effort in this direction did not yield the expected outcomes.

Another sociocultural dynamic which hindered Sajad’s effort to practise and develop his English language skills is related to the availability of social interaction opportunities and the use of Arabic as the home language within the boundaries of Arabic-speaking communities where most members use Arabic in their private circles. Sajad has lived in different suburbs of NSW, such as Auburn, Guilford and Lakemba, for many years, where a high proportion of residents came from Arabic-speaking background as described in Chapter Two. He also dealt and worked with people from Arabic-speaking background due to his limited English and urgent need for work, as he reports:

When I arrived to Australia in the beginning I lived with Iraqi community for five years and I worked with Arab people so my English was not improved because I spoke Arabic at work and at home.

Later, Sajad realised that the only way to use English and communicate effectively was to learn from English language speakers themselves and through getting involved in various communicative situations. Sajad revealed: *‘I was curious to make conversations and asking questions ... It felt easy to communicate with people.’* Also, Sajad used to write down in English in a diary, and *‘If I wanted to go to the bank or any department I write the questions and the enquiries in a piece of paper in that way I could talk to people.’*

When Sajad’s English improved and he became able to communicate using sentences, he started travelling around Australia looking for jobs. Travelling and working in remote rural areas, whether in agriculture or mining, helped Sajad to

engage in different settlement conditions where he needed to use English on a daily basis. Sajad describes the impact of these interactional opportunities:

I started to seek for a job by my self [myself] to work with people who do not speak Arabic language, then I worked with many different companies and I met a lot of people from different cantries [countries] and cultures.

Being professionally qualified and having a good level of English enabled Sajad to get a job in an aluminium refinery in Mackay, Northern Queensland. Living and working in such a remote area of Australia encouraged Sajad to further improve his English skills through engaging in communicative situations with other workers. Currently, Sajad works for a mining company in Western Australia where he feels more confident with his English and focuses at the moment on developing his future career paths:

Finally I found a job in mining site and I have done many introductions inside the mining and I worked many different jobs in mining, driving a track [truck], a forklift and doing general construction. Now I have no problem with speaking English with my work mates and all the staff.

In summary, Sajad faced a number of linguistic difficulties during the initial stage of his settlement in Australia, which led to feelings of anxiety when using English and engaging in any communicative situations. However, developing cultural capital by investing in his ELL provided social and emotional drive for Sajad to continue his purposeful learning (Norton, 2000). Similarly, manipulating positive settlement conditions and creating communicative situations were effective in developing ALL through using English in its social contexts.

5.2.12 Sana: Life journey of settlement, friendship and passion for languages

Sana wrote her biography in Arabic because it was easier for her to express her ideas.

Sana left Iraq more than 30 years ago with her husband and young children to settle first in Lebanon, then England and finally Spain. After the death of her husband, she came to Australia in 2009 to reunite with the rest of her family. Apart from Arabic as her native language, Sana speaks Spanish:

I first learnt English at primary school since English is considered as the first foreign language in Iraq. My eldest brother was the reason why I loved learning English at that young age since he was fond of learning languages as he used to speak English, French and German fluently. He used to guide me on how to learn the correct pronunciation and grammar since the school only provides the basics of English. At home and during the school holidays, I used to do exercise to learn the basics, such as reading and writing numbers, letters and some words, therefore, I used to gain good marks at school exams.

These multilingual experiences resulted from learning Spanish in Spain and English in England, as well as learning the basics of English since childhood, represent the cultural capital that motivated and supported Sana's ELL later in Australia. Also, she has always been fond of learning languages and the opportunities to meet people:

I am very proud that life taught me a lot and my life was full of events and memories. My readings and social interactions with different kinds of people had a great effect on myself. My life full of friendships and intimate relationships

Sana built a network of social relationships with people from different backgrounds during her movement from one country to another. The urgent need for final settlement and safety forced Sana to move across different countries searching for a new and peaceful life. Throughout her journey, language, especially English, has

been a linguistic tool by which Sana communicates her meanings and emotions, as well as negotiating her ideas.

Sana is very familiar with Western culture since she lived in Europe for a long time. This is a significant cultural capital embedded in her cultural knowledge: *'My continuous visits into Europe helped me to integrate within the western community and understand their lifestyles and this happened through English.'* This cultural knowledge, acquired through Sana's previous settlement experiences, helped her to understand the cultural conditions and social conventions under which English is used effectively within different social situations.

After we lived in England for 10 years, we moved to Spain where we lived for 12 years there and the first problem was to speak Spanish. So, I enrolled in one of the schools that teach Spanish for foreigners and this was a good step in that direction.

When learning Spanish, Sana used a number of social learning strategies, such as learning vocabulary related with the kitchen and watching television, in order to make her learning more tangible and practical. She used similar learning strategies again in improving her English in Australia:

Because I am a house keeper, I focused first on learning everything related with the kitchen, cooking and food. Other learning things I used to do to help me learn Spanish were listening to the radio, watching TV and also trying to apply what I learnt into my everyday interactions with people. Also, my friend, the dictionary, was very helpful. So, I am not saying that my Spanish was good but at least I was able to use it to achieve my basic needs.

Throughout her biography, Sana acknowledges the role of her agency and resilience in her ALL experience. This is reflected through her capacity to learn from life experiences and self-determination to achieve her goals in life:

Life has been my only school. It is my strong determination and aspiration that enabled me to reach my goals in life including educating myself and

discovering the world around me and this would not happen without the help of language.

In summary, resilience, as a psychological construction, has had widespread influence on Sana's effort to learn English. At the same time, cultural capital has played an important role in her ALL experience; through establishing the cultural assets of Sana's ALL. Multilingual experiences and knowledge of Western culture, as well as personal efforts made to learn, contributed greatly towards the development of Sana's English language. Social interaction opportunities, reflected through rich settlement experiences and building social capital, played another important role in enhancing Sana's ALL.

5.2.13 George: Linguistic knowledge and accent intelligibility

George wrote his biography in English and sent it back as hardcopy. George is a 42-year-old male who was born in Iraq. He is from the Christian religion minority. George speaks Arabic and Assyrian, as first language. Assyrian is one of the ancient Semitic Akkadian languages used in ancient Mesopotamia (Yildiz, 2000). Assyrian language has no existing literacy system because it was dominated by Arabic in Iraq (Yildiz, 2000, p. 41), but it has a core value as a heritage and religious language (Gogonas, 2011).

When I was first enrolled in a private primary school, Al-Tafani Primary School, in 1975, English classes were part of the school curriculum and I started learning Basic English since year 1. In my tertiary studies, I did a bachelor degree in music and the only subject I studied in English was musical theories in the first year, rules of Harmony in the second year, counterpoint in the third year and Basic English in the fourth year.

Before coming to Australia in 1998 as a refugee, George stayed in Turkey and then Greece for nearly two years waiting for his asylum application to be approved by

Australian immigration authorities. During his stay in these two countries, George went through different settlement conditions, which generated a range of social interaction opportunities. English was the only tool of communication he used after leaving Iraq. George used English because he did not want to learn either Turkish or Greek due to the fact that he wanted to join the rest of his family in Australia. This kind of planned and intentional investment helped to develop his English significantly in the following years:

My only language of communication in Turkey was English but it was very difficult or impossible to communicate with Turkish people in English while I was in Turkey because the vast majority of Turkish people there were not able to speak English at all. Four months later, I left Turkey for Greece where I lived one year and then came to Australia. It was a little bit easier to communicate in English with Greek people.

At the beginning, George completed Certificate III in Spoken and Written English Language Skills before completing a Certificate in English for Further Studies at a TAFE college. Then he completed a professional course in computer applications skills. These courses helped George to continue his studies at the postgraduate level and complete a Diploma in Special Education and Master of Interpreting. After that, George worked in a number of jobs, such as teacher's aide, learning support officer and translator. All these educational and professional experiences widely enhanced George's professional and academic English skills through the quality of social interactional opportunities offered for using and practising English:

This encouraged me to study at the University of Western Sydney doing Master of Interpreting and Translation. This course played a significant role in helping me gain new language skills and be more aware of communication ways that differ from [one] community to another.

On the other hand, George believes that his first language connections are one of the factors that affected his ELL. George lives in the city of Fairfield, which is part of Sydney Western region as described in Chapter Two (WSROC, 2011). He suggests that: *‘Living in an area most of its residents are from the same ethnic background is one of the main reasons that delay the improvement of English skills of a person.’* In fact, the use of home language can also benefit ALL by using it to enhance social relationships and designing learning strategies as shown earlier. In this regard, George tells an interesting story he heard from one of his clients when he was working as an Arabic language tutor about the role of home language:

An Australian woman contacted me and asked me to give her some tuition in Arabic. When I met her at Fairfield library and asked her why she wanted to learn Arabic, she said that she works as an optometrist assistant and the vast majority of her customers are from Iraq who cannot speak English and she wanted to learn Iraqi Arabic dialect to communicate with them in Iraqi Arabic.

On the other hand, George created a variety of social learning strategies in order to construct an English speaking environment for using English. Home-study, memorising vocabulary, watching TV and volunteer work are some of the activities used by George to practise English. These strategies enabled him to enhance social interaction opportunities and improve his spoken English. George believes:

‘Watching TV and listening to radio is very good ear practice/training to gain listening skills, especially for those who do not communicate a lot in English.’ He also mentioned his role in this process of context creation: *‘I engaged myself in many different real life situations as I am a social person.’* Hence, the focus here is on the process of social engagement through initiating casual conversations with other English speakers. The aim behind the use of social learning strategies is to be in

contact with the new language on a daily basis because he believes: *'The most important thing is that we need to speak the language every day.'*

One of the findings in regard to heritage language as a core value is that George learnt English as the TL and he has also maintained Arabic as his first language although Arabic does not represent a core value as a religious language. In fact, these findings disagree with those of Gogonas (2011) although Gogonas' research investigated second generation migrants. In George's case, there is no shift from Arabic to English due to the status of Assyrian as a religious language. This is because Arabic represents a significant cultural capital for George, which can be turned into a financial value due to the fact that George works as an Arabic tutor and translator (Bourdieu, 1977; Fishman, 1991).

The last issue George described in his biography is related to accent intelligibility and unfamiliarity with English language and slang. Although George came to Australia in 1998 and has had wide exposure to Australian social context through his educational and professional experiences, he faced difficulties in understanding the Australian accent:

I encountered some difficulties in communication and understanding the Australian accent. Another problem is that I still have some difficulties in understanding the Australian accent.

To sum up, cultural capital played an important role in George's ALL. His educational background provided him with the knowledge to support and accelerate his ELL. This is in addition to investing his cultural and linguistic assets, as well as his personal effort, in ALL for future material and symbolic returns. The other sociocultural dynamic is social interaction opportunities that played a main role in developing George's English language skills through rich settlement experiences and

the use of social learning strategies. Also, cultural identity did not have a direct impact on the shift from Arabic, as first language, to English in favour of the religious language, Assyrian, as a core value. Finally, linguistic dimensions had a negative impact on George's comprehension and listening skills due to unfamiliarity with Australian English/slang and accent.

The next three sections summarise the findings of the remaining biographies due to their brief content. These three biographies present similar sociocultural dynamics and psychological and linguistic dimensions, compared to those described earlier in the previous 13 biographies. However, the events described in these three biographies are different since different participants went through different settlement conditions and ALL experiences.

5.2.14 Muntaha: First language connections and formal learning

Muntaha is a 36-year-old female who lives in the city of Fairfield. She wrote her biography in Arabic because of her limited English writing skills. She spoke Arabic only when she first arrived in Australia.

My name is Muntaha and I am originally from Iraq. I arrived to Australia in 2008 and I live now in Sydney with my husband. So, since I choose to live in Australia, then I must learn English. Although, I completed year 9 in Iraq but I used to face difficulties related with speaking and listening skills.

During the first few years in Australia, she found it difficult to engage in conversations with English language speakers because of the linguistic diversity of the population of Fairfield, as described in Chapter Two. Muntaha noticed that people speak different languages in the streets of Fairfield, similar to a multilingual

environment: *'When I go outside, I hear people speaking different languages such as Chinese, Farsi, Vietnamese and etc.'*

Similarly, Muntaha also described how the use of her home language of Arabic at home with friends minimised the chances of having communicative opportunities with English language speakers. Therefore, the role of social interaction opportunities as a sociocultural dynamic is evident here:

In Australia, I completed all my learning hours with ACL and also got extra hours to complete with MTC from Centrelink. I can say now that my English has improved slightly but not good enough and this is due to the fact that I am not mixing or interacting with Australians since most of my friends are Arabs and we always speak Arabic. At home, I speak Arabic to my husband and watch Arabic T.V.

However, Muntaha continued to develop her English gradually by relying on investment as a self-mechanism to improve her English. She realised the symbolic and materialistic benefits she can gain through focusing her effort on learning English, as indicated in the following quote: *'I am still trying to improve my English to rely on myself rather than an interpreter, so I am going to study English at TAFE soon.'* Hence, the role of cultural capital is still present in Muntaha's ALL experience despite her limited educational background, since she has been accumulating her linguistic capital through formal learning.

As a result, in Muntaha's ALL experience, it is clear that sociocultural dynamics have played the central role in influencing her ALL. Despite the limited social interaction opportunities available for Muntaha, the establishment of cultural capital has played a positive role in this learning process.

5.2.15 Nouh: Overseas language instruction and linguistic limitations

This biography was written in English. Nouh lives in Auburn. He speaks Arabic and learnt the basics of English before coming to Australia as part of his educational background as a university graduate, which represents valuable cultural capital that supported his ALL at the very beginning.

I was born in Darfur, Sudan in 1977. I came to Australia in 2004 as a refugee. I had relatively good English when I came to Australia as I learnt from my father, the school and my friends who used to visit Sudan from the United States and Britain. Also, I finished my undergraduate studies in health sciences from Sudan and I had a dream to study for master degree in science but could not do that in Sudan.

In Australia, Nouh faced linguistic difficulties in understanding the Australian dialect. He believes that the Australian dialect '*is completely different from British and American dialects*'. However, his settlement experiences, enhanced by studying for a Diploma in Social Work and then employment, created valuable social interaction opportunities that minimised the impact of linguistic limitations and developed his English language skills.

On the other hand, Nouh had been facing an ongoing issue related to his first language connections with his community groups of family and friends. He was using English only when he ventured outside these groups. In this regard, Nouh reports: '*Another important factor is that most of my friends are from non-English speaking background and we always talk Arabic. We all speak Arabic at home.*' Arabic here plays a positive role in socialisation and settlement but the limited interactional opportunities available to communicate in English had a negative impact on Nouh's ALL.

Thus, in this biography, Nouh's ALL was influenced mainly by cultural capital and social interaction opportunities. This role of sociocultural dynamics was also accompanied by some linguistic difficulties related to accent intelligibility and unfamiliarity with Australian English, which delayed the development of Nouh's listening and speaking skills since they took some time to be accustomed to. Nouh managed to develop his English further through full-time work and socialisation.

5.2.16 Salim: Group categorisation and employment

Salim was 50 years old when he wrote his biography. He was born in Kuwait. Salim used Arabic to write his biography because of his limited English writing skills. He speaks only Arabic and had no knowledge of any other language when he first arrived in Australia in 1999 on a boat:

My name is Salim AlSultan. I was born in Kuwait in 1962. I completed year 10 in school. During the first Gulf War, I was forced to leave Kuwait with my family to the borders with Iraq before had been transferred to Iraq by the International Red Cross in 1992. In Kuwait, I worked as a police officer for ten years but, in Iraq, I worked as a truck driver for some time. Because of the harsh economic conditions and dictatorship in Iraq, I travelled to neighbouring Jordan in 1999. Because I could not get employment and residency status in Jordan, I decided to go to Australia at the same year.

Salim enrolled in English classes but stopped attending after a short time. In his statement, below, Salim blames his limited comprehension and memory capacities for delaying his ELL. This also might be due to his limited knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary, which can influence comprehension:

I studied at ACL for about two months before quitting because I did not learn much, maybe because of my limited comprehension. But, I managed to learn some English from the street and a little bit from working in buying then selling second hand cars, as my son used to help me with financial transactions. Also, I worked as a security guard for some time but this did not improve my English because there were no people in my workplace to talk to. Then I left employment for health reasons.

As indicated in Chapter Three, there is a strong possibility that adult AL learners face more difficulties when learning another language compared to young learners (Ellis, 1994). This issue can be further explained through the concept of group categorisation since Salim is recognised as part of the ‘old’ group rather than the ‘young’. Salim refers to the role of communicative opportunities he was offered during his private work in selling used cars, in improving the level of his spoken English. However, these interactional opportunities were very limited when he worked in a different job. In this regard, older adult AL learners have less opportunities for social interaction and practising the TL than younger learners in most social contexts, such as schools, sport fields and clubs, which are sometimes not easily accessible to older learners (Marinova-Todd et al., 2000). Therefore, young learners have more social opportunities to develop social relationships.

In the previous quotation, Salim also indicated briefly the role of his son in developing his spoken English who acted as a resource of linguistic feedback and vocabulary. The son was helping in aiding his father’s English use in the critical moments of earning a living for the family. This is a form of social capital demonstrated through language learning mentoring (Cruz, 2008).

Yet, Salim realises the role of social interaction in developing his English through socialisation and positive settlement conditions; therefore, he shows his desire to learn more about English and Australian culture:

Learning English is very important here to be able to work and interact with other people. I hope I can improve my English since it is not good now; I need to interact with people. I want to learn more about the Australian people because I think they are mostly good, helpful and they respect others but also I like my culture and traditions.

In summary, although Salim did not accumulate cultural capital, he managed to relatively develop his spoken English by engaging in a variety of social interaction opportunities through employment. This is despite the fact that he could not access quality linguistic resources as a result of group categorisation.

5.3 Conclusion

The findings presented in this chapter define a range of sociocultural dynamics, psychological dimensions and linguistic dimensions that influenced the ALL process of 16 former refugees. The sociocultural dynamics of cultural capital, social interaction opportunities and identities have been shown to emerge from particular social contexts.

Sociocultural dynamics directly reset the language learning setting in a way that either promotes or constrains ALL. Initially, AL learners use their long-term accumulated cultural capital to accelerate and support their ALL if they can. Throughout the ALL process, AL learners create and use social interaction opportunities that allow them to use their English in order to learn when and how to use the TL. At the same time, AL learners are required to negotiate and change identities in order to access different social groups that display linguistic and cultural resources.

On the other hand, sociocultural dynamics have an indirect impact on ALL through generating psychological conditions that directly influence AL learners' position towards the learning process. Language use and learning activities can cause specific emotions that shape attitudes, motivation, investment, or anxiety, which in

turn affect ALL. Ultimately, these psychological conditions change as a result of the success or failure of the ALL process.

In addition, facing linguistic difficulties, while learning the TL, may force the AL learner to develop emotions towards the TL and the ALL process. Herdina and Jessner (2002) state that ALL is affected by a range of individual factors of a psychosocial nature and these psychological factors are considered as individual characteristics that influence the willingness to learn.

Finally, Chapter Six will present and explore the findings of the second stage of the data collection process, which involved interviewing nine participants. Some of those participants took part in writing biographies while the rest were recruited for the purpose of interviewing.

CHAPTER SIX: INTERVIEWS EXAMINING ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE LEARNING EXPERIENCES

6.0 Introduction

Chapter Six presents the findings of the narrative interviews conducted with nine former refugee participants to gain a description of their ALL experiences. In general, these interviews aimed to further explore the nature of sociocultural dynamics influencing ALL. Some of the interviews were designed to seek explanations for the issues that emerged from the biographies since five of the nine participants who were interviewed had previously written biographies. For the other four participants, the interviews focused on exploring their ALL experiences.

Narrative events and themes reported during the interviews produce new ways of looking at sociocultural dynamics since these were constructed by different learning experiences. Interview findings clearly show that ALL experiences of former Arabic-speaking adult refugees have been affected by a variety of sociocultural dynamics, psychological dimensions and linguistic dimensions. As defined in Chapter Five, sociocultural dynamics refer to the forces shaped by social, cultural and historical contexts that either enhance or hinder the learning of an additional language based on the understanding that learning is culturally embedded and a socially mediated process (Lantolf, 2000, pp. 79-80).

6.1 Conceptual Description of Influential Factors in Additional Language Learning

Interview data shows three key sociocultural dynamics that govern the ALL process, as classified in Table 6.1. Cultural capital, as described in Chapter Five, refers to those attributes acquired through the membership of a particular social group (Bourdieu, 1973). Within this framework, cultural capital covers the person's educational background, multilingual experiences, cultural knowledge and investment.

Table 6.1: Conceptual organisation of influential factors in ALL (interviews)

Sociocultural dynamics Dimensions				
Cultural capital	Social interaction opportunities	Identities	Psychological dimensions	Linguistic dimensions
Educational background	Settlement experiences	Cultural	Resilience	Accent intelligibility
Multilingual experiences	Home language use	Social	Motivation	Unfamiliarity with Australian English/slang
Cultural knowledge	Social learning strategies	Gender	Attitudes	English/slang
Investment	Social networks	Social perception of age	Anxiety	Lack of grammatical knowledge
		Racialisation		

The second dynamic is social interaction opportunities, which represent the collaborative and communicative opportunities generated by settlement experiences, home language use, social learning strategies and social capital. As defined in Chapter Five, these social interaction opportunities initiate and facilitate real communication, which can improve learning through social interaction with more knowledgeable or proficient individuals (Vygotsky, 1978).

The last of these dynamics is related to identities. Identity is simply defined as the membership of a specific group as all individuals are identified either by their individual attributes or by category membership. In other words, identity reflects a sense of belonging to a specific social group based on common values and personal attributes, such as age, gender or cultural background (Clayton, 2008, p. 242). The interview findings display five forms of identities: cultural, social, racial, gendered and age.

The findings also show a significant role of psychological dimensions in ALL (Spolsky, 1989). There are four psychological dimensions: (i) resilience; (ii) motivation; (iii) attitudes; and (iv) anxiety. Similarly, the findings also show the effect of linguistic dimensions in ALL. Linguistic dimensions refer to all types of cross-linguistic influences involved in learning another language based on the fact that the learner's performance in the TL is affected by the language that he/she already knows (Torrijos, 2009). The linguistic dimensions shown by the interview findings relate to accent intelligibility or unfamiliarity with Australian English/slang and lack of grammatical knowledge.

6.2 Presentation of Interviews

The interview findings are presented in a specific order where the five participants (Muna, Ameer, Daulat, Nameer and Heitham) who wrote biographies are presented first. As stated in Chapter Four, these five interviews focused on investigating, at a deeper level, themes of importance in their biographies. Therefore, questions varied from one participant to another, but they all focused on the nature of the ALL process as shown in the Interview Questions Sheet (Appendix H). The following four interviews (Khalid, Hanah, Mary and Afifa) with participants who did not write

biographies included general questions about refugee conditions and settlement, as well as factors influencing their ELL experiences.

6.2.1 Muna

As reported in her biography, Muna developed her English language skills later through formal and informal English language training. During the interview, which was conducted in English at her workplace, Muna complained about the frequent use of Arabic at work as an Arabic social worker since this minimised the level of her social interaction with English language speakers including her work colleagues:

In regard to work, I think I am confused or somewhere in the middle since my job as Arabic women worker requires me to be in continuous contact with Arabic speakers and this has a negative impact on my English language development.

Muna experienced linguistic limitations with her use of English when she started her first job in Australia and this was demonstrated through grammatical errors and accent intelligibility. In particular, she faced difficulties in comprehending the speech of English native speakers because of the way they pronounce words (Davies, 2005). Another reason behind this issue is that Muna was not familiar with Australian English/slang due to the fact that she was familiar with the British variety of English, which is taught in Iraq. In fact, Muna did not face the same difficulties when interacting with those speakers who use English as a L2 because they speak English with a foreign accent at a slower speed. As described in the previous chapter, accent refers to a distinctive way of pronouncing a language by its speakers and sometimes it is associated with a particular area, country or social class (Hewings, 2007, p. 8):

One of the difficulties I faced in learning English was writing because in Iraqi schools, the focus was on conversation not on grammar and writing. The other difficulty was the Australian accent which differs from one person

to another. I don't find this difficulty when I speak English with someone from different [language] speaking background.

The conversational nature of the interview enabled Muna to reflect further on the relationship between ALL and her ethnicity. Muna still remembers a number of classroom incidents during her university studies in Australia where she was either denied access to participate in group work or some native English speaking students politely rejected her offer to enter their group:

Because of my accent and also my middle age and maybe also because of my scarf, it becomes hard to get students to participate with me when we do group work. When the teacher puts me on the head of the group, some other students avoid being in my group, so all other groups consist of four students except my group consists of three, even the third member who is Australian [born] was trying to be in another group but she couldn't.

This explicit denial of group membership goes beyond the practices related to social identity and group categorisation into racialisation. The process of racialisation refers to racial categorisation, which is 'a dialectical process by which meaning is attributed to particular biological features of human beings, as a result of which individuals may be assigned to a general category of persons that reproduces itself biologically' (Miles & Brown, 2003, p. 102). This process of racialisation was based on cultural symbols, such as accent and headscarf. Many refugee visa holders identified particular situations in which they felt cultural exclusion at a wider community level. Most of them faced experiences of racism, prejudice or cultural misunderstanding in their contacts with Australian citizens from other cultural backgrounds. While some of these incidents were gender-specific, men and women felt that aspects of their culture were devalued by other Australians. These incidents of prejudice and cultural misunderstanding most often arose in relation to the hijab (Mansouri et al, 2006, p. 399).

In fact, race itself is not substantiated by biological or genetic evidence (Kubota & Lin, 2006). As Goldberg (1993, p. 67) states, the percentage of human genes that determines the supposedly racial difference is 0.5% only. Therefore, human beings possess a far larger amount of genes in common than they do genes that are supposed to differentiate them racially. Such evidence indicates that the concept of race is socially constructed and the traditional idea of race was initially used for establishing personal judgment of human categorisation based on biological or physical characteristics. Nowadays, racial difference ‘has increasingly been replaced by the notion of cultural difference’ (Kubota & Lin, 2006, p. 476). This means that people are still classified into racial groups based on their cultural practices and social experiences. Religion, for example, as part of culture, is a more recent subject of racialisation, as in the case of Muna’s headscarf, which signifies her cultural background. Muslim women who wear the headscarf seem to be targeted for increasing acts of racism since the first Gulf War and again after 9/11 (Poynting, 2009, p. 380). In this regard, Muna encountered a number of racial incidents, which made her feel that she is a subject of racial discrimination. These incidents indicate that the relationship between Muna and the TL community has not been positive all the time:

Sometimes I feel some people discriminate against me. I remember when I first came to Australia, I used to hear some words forwarded to me and I didn’t know their meanings but when I go back home and ask my kids, they told me that that these were insults! Another incident, when I was wearing a dress with long sleeves and some young boys started making fun of me because I was wearing these clothes in summer. My daughter wanted to reply in anger but I stopped her.

The relationship between racialisation as an identity categorisation and ALL can be grasped through racism. Racism represents both discourse and social practice that

construct and maintain unequal relations of power between the Self as superior and the Other as inferior (Kubota & Lin, 2006). In fact, these racist discourses circulate through discourses embedded in the Australian media and have increasing effects on the public. This makes targeted people feel uncomfortable, excluded and illegitimate (Quayle & Sonn, 2009). Accordingly, these unequal power relations cause cultural and language miscommunication, which can hinder ALL. Hence, racism deprives AL learners from valuable ALL opportunities through leading to social isolation and denying them access to linguistic and cultural resources.

Muna also listed age as a potential factor that contributed to her exclusion from the mainstream of students. She thinks that she might be perceived as a middle-aged student compared to the rest of the class who are in their early twenties doing their undergraduate studies. This kind of group categorisation is based on social perception of age, which is here considered an identity marker (see Chapter Five). This is consistent with the view that differences in age reflect differences in the context of learning more than the capacity to learn (Marinova-Todd et al., 2000). In addition, Wang (1999) suggests that many adult AL learners hold personal views of the relationship between age and ALL, which are mainly based on social beliefs.

Nevertheless, Muna dismissed all these acts of social marginalisation and continued her study and work. As a reaction to these social occurrences, Muna developed psychological techniques of resilience in order to resist and overcome any obstacles that may stop her from achieving her life goals. Resilience, as defined in Chapter Five, is the process of, or capacity for, successful adaptation in spite of challenging social and personal circumstances, which also includes the learner's

ability or capacity to deal efficiently with educational difficulties and stress (Howard & Johnson, as cited in Martin, 2002, p. 35):

I think the significant thing here in the middle of all these challenges; I managed to use all these difficulties and negative criticism and turned them into a potential drive or energy inside me through my determination that I must do something positive to myself in Australia and to prove to others that a woman wearing a scarf is a human being and still can do something regardless of all the stereotyping against her.

In summary, this interview explored in-depth all the issues and events Muna indicated briefly in her initial biography. Social interaction opportunities, as demonstrated through home language use and identities, as reflected by racialisation and social perception of age, dominated the sociocultural landscape surrounding the ALL process lived by Muna. Psychological dimensions, which came as a reaction to the process of racialisation, were reflected through developing resilience to continue ELL. Linguistic dimensions, which are related to accent intelligibility and unfamiliarity with Australian English/slang, also affected Muna's ALL at one stage.

6.2.2 Ameer

In his biography, Ameer focused on how his settlement experiences affected his ELL because of harsh policies adopted by the Australian Government against boat arrivals. During the interview, which was conducted in his house using English, Ameer talked about these policies and other sociocultural dynamics that influenced his ALL at the time.

Ameer also talked about his educational background as he completed a Diploma of Medical Imaging in Iraq where he acquired basic knowledge of English grammar and vocabulary: *'Most of the subjects in my diploma were in English because they contained medical terms in English like physics, anatomy and*

radiography except two minor subjects were in Arabic. ' Ameer used this basic knowledge of English to meet his social needs during his initial settlement stage in Australia.

On the other hand, Ameer did not develop sufficient cultural knowledge about the Australian people and their ways of life. He has lived in South Western Sydney where the population is largely immigrant communities. Therefore, his contact with English native speakers was limited and this affected his understanding of the Australian culture:

I am not very much familiar or close to the Australian community and culture since I live in South Western suburbs and these are mostly inhabited by migrants not like the city or the north where most of the people there are Australians [Australian born population].

Social interaction opportunities have played a critical role in developing Ameer's English as a result of helpful settlement experiences. For example, living inside a detention centre where he was required to use and develop his limited English to meet his basic needs. Employing these communicative opportunities and developing social learning strategies enabled Ameer to improve his conversational skills through communicating with other inmates and detention staff:

I used to work in the camp as interpreter to help some officers for the people who doesn't [don't] speak English in the refugee camp and I used to help some of the security officers to translate for other people who doesn't [don't] speak English.

Settlement experiences, as defined in Chapter Five, represent social practices and understandings that newcomers face during their attempts to adjust themselves to the host country (Mwarigha, 2002). These social experiences create a range of social interaction opportunities in different social settings, such as the workplace or the

classroom, for using the TL. New arrivals need to manipulate these formal and informal learning opportunities to develop their ALL otherwise their progress in language learning is uncertain (Norton & Gao, 2008, p. 118).

After Ameer was granted his temporary protection visa, he continued having contacts with his Arabic-speaking community. Ameer used Arabic to communicate with members of his home community and also perform most of his daily transactions, such as shopping and job searching. Although this language and cultural separation from the TL community affected his ALL through missing out on possible social interaction opportunities, Ameer benefited from his Arabic speaking connections in gaining cultural knowledge about the host society:

I think we are the Iraqi community, we are different from the Australian culture and we think we haven't we are not mixed with the wider Australian community or culture since the Iraqi community always isolates itself but from my experience I feel that Australians got some kind of racial discrimination when things are related to work.

When Ameer was asked about his English language challenges, he responded with the following: *'Writing ... I don't have the problem with listening. I understand other people. Speaking [is] not too bad; I got a problem with grammar and the writing.'*

These linguistic limitations are due to a lack of grammatical knowledge and writing conventions about how to structure a text. However, these issues with writing did not discourage Ameer from writing his biography in English.

To conclude, Ameer described two sociocultural dynamics, which affected his ALL: (i) cultural capital, as demonstrated through educational background and cultural knowledge; and (ii) social interaction opportunities, as influenced by settlement experiences and home language use. He also mentioned issues related to

linguistic dimensions that influenced his ALL process, namely a lack of grammatical knowledge.

6.2.3 Daulat

Daulat was interviewed in her house with the attendance of her husband. The interview was conducted in Arabic. In this interview, Daulat explored in more details the topics she mentioned in her biography. Daulat began by confirming that investment is the key factor behind her desire to learn English: *'However, the main reason why I want to learn English is my will and desire to learn English; not only to speak but also to read and write.'* This kind of investment is purposeful and based on her social need to explore her immediate environment:

A person not speaking English is like a blind person who doesn't know what it is going on around him. Even at home, if I didn't understand English, I wouldn't be able to understand what my children are doing or talking about.

Investment describes the socially and historically constructed relationship of the AL learner to the TL (see Chapter 5). This dynamic relationship shows the kind of emotions that AL learners assign to the language they are learning and also the amount of effort they invest in learning that language since AL learners are aware of the cultural, economic and social advantages (capital) they will gain (Norton, 2000).

One of the sociocultural dynamics that helped to improve Daulat's English was social interaction opportunities developed through social capital. Daulat was active in establishing a network of friendships and connections. According to Bourdieu, social capital represents the combined resources or assets that result from the possession of a network of formal and informal social relationships (Bourdieu, as

cited in Karabel & Halsey, 1977, p. 51). Through these social relationships, Daulat managed to obtain learning support and communicative opportunities:

My volunteer teacher and friend is one reason in improving my English since we speak English when we meet and she doesn't speak Arabic anyway. Even in the conversation classes run by Banin organisation, the teacher always asks us to speak English not Arabic.

Friends and family members, even volunteers, play a visible role in improving the language skills of AL learners. This outcome is achieved by providing social support to learners through encouraging them to continue learning and investing in the TL. Also, a family member or friend who is fluent in the TL can play the role of a language learning mentor who is able to guide the AL learner and provide valuable feedback. Some studies reveal that mentoring, as a kind of social learning support, can be a source of determination to overcome learning obstacles (De La Cruz, 2008). Studies on the academic success of Latino undergraduate students who learnt English as a L2 reveal that intervention practices, such as academic and language learning mentoring, can yield effective outcomes in terms of language proficiency and academic achievement (De La Cruz, 2008, p. 34).

Daulat also talked about the effect of her Arabic illiteracy on her ELL. In Daulat's opinion, Arabic literacy could be used as a learning strategy or tool to facilitate her ELL through helping her to memorise the alphabet, pronounce new words and use bilingual dictionaries:

Being illiterate in Arabic affects the learning of reading and writing skills. I am happy with my speaking and listening skills as I am able to perform most of the tasks and satisfy my needs. When I studied at ACL, it was hard to read the alphabet because I couldn't represent them in Arabic for the first time so I can remember them later so it was hard for me at the beginning to differentiate these letters from each other; for example when the teacher was working with me to say the letter 'a' by repeating it, I wasn't able to know which symbol she was talking about, so I asked her to finger point to the

letter and this is because I am not able to represent that symbol in Arabic so I can connect between the letter and its sound. The same thing applies to words and sentences as I am not able to memorise the meaning of the words I learn for the first time because I don't write their meaning in Arabic! So it's hard to remember their meaning next time. If I knew Arabic, I would use the dictionary and feel no need to ask other people or my kids about the meaning of words. Many women with me in the class with low level of English, but their English is improving because they are able to read and write in Arabic and this helps them to use Arabic in learning English by writing the meaning of words and representing their pronunciation.

To summarise, Daulat mainly identified the influence of two sociocultural dynamics on her ALL. The first one is social interaction opportunities that are generated by social capital through social networking that enabled her to arrange for a home volunteer tutor to practise her conversational skills. The second dynamic is related to cultural capital, investment accumulates cultural assets through learning another language. Within this framework of cultural capital, Daulat also reflected deeply on her lack of education and how this delayed her English language development. It is interesting here to note the intersection of social and cultural capitals in Daulat's ALL experience as both developed social and cultural resources critical for ALL (Bourdieu, 1986).

6.2.4 Nameer

The interview with Nameer was conducted in English in a café. It focussed on obtaining clarification about some of the issues mentioned in the biography. Nameer talked about his social interaction in the workplace and his colleagues' unwillingness to engage him in their social activities. He acknowledged that there were several social and cultural barriers at that time, which made it difficult for him to communicate effectively with his colleagues:

When I say that I am not included, I mean that I am not considered or treated at the same level as native speakers. For example, the level of informal

interaction between my work colleagues, who are native speakers, is different from the level of informal interaction when I have a conversation with them and I can feel this issue.

One of these barriers is the native fluency of English, as Nameer believes that speaking like a native speaker is the only condition that determines the level of access to any social group regardless of his/her cultural background. Nameer expressed the following views when he was asked to clarify a previous statement from his initial biography that he was not accepted by his colleagues to be included in their private meetings and daily gossip:

.... a native speaking is the condition which decides whether you are included or not. I feel that if I were a native speaker, I would be included more. For example, I have two female colleagues; one of them is originally Greek but she was born here, while the other one was born in Brazil and came to Australia when she was very young, but both of them are native speakers and I don't see any differences when they deal with others! Also, with those two colleagues, I still feel not included but the degree of inclusion, here, is more or different.

Nameer refers to a native fluency of English as the main requirement to participate effectively with his work colleagues or the TL group. The level of his fluency in English was used by his colleagues, between other racial features, as a marker of his cultural background as the Other. This recognition of being an outsider is part of racial categorisation on behalf of English native speakers. However, this racialisation was not accompanied by an act of racism since social exclusion or denial of access is partial and might not be a deliberate practice by Nameer's colleagues and neighbours. It is important to mention here that racialisation does not necessarily lead to racism when a negative view of the Other as inferior is produced (Kubota & Lin, 2006). According to Goldberg (1993), racism as an outcome of racialisation

‘excludes racially defined others, or promotes, or secures, or sustains such exclusion’
(p. 101).

The effect of racial categorisation in Nameer’s case of English language development led to language and cultural miscommunication. The long-term effects of miscommunication deprived Nameer of learning about the Australian culture:

It somehow affects my knowledge of the Australian culture or my cultural exposure. Also, this makes me unhappy because I feel that they don’t treat me as they treat each other; they treat me in a formal way which means that they will not be honest with me since they don’t tell me what they really feel or think because of the barriers between us. So, I think that this social barrier causes a language barrier.

Yet, Nameer demands recognition as a legitimate English language speaker by allowing him full membership into his colleagues’ group. In this case, language represents a prior condition for acquiring identity while group identity itself is essential for accessing linguistic and cultural resources.

In addition to the focus on developing his English, Nameer realised that he should also develop his knowledge of the target culture. Cultural knowledge is essential for AL development because it shows AL learners how and when to use the new language. In this regard, culture represents:

... An integrated body of the total set of meanings available to a community: its semiotic potential. Any meaning system is part of this resource. The semiotic potential includes ways of doing, ways of being and ways of saying.
(Halliday & Hasan, 1985, p. 99)

To achieve his goal in searching for useful cultural resources, Nameer employed a number of social learning strategies, such as watching specific Australian television programs, in order to enhance his knowledge of the Australian culture. As described

in Chapter Five, social learning strategies are the social techniques employed to design communicative opportunities:

I think mostly from newspapers, friends and especially TV and even not all TV programs are useful for this purpose. I think that reality shows are good sources of cultural knowledge, such as Big Brother which takes you inside the Australian homes through the behaviours of those young people. Or Home and Away since all these programs have social content. So, I think these TV shows are very helpful.

In summary, Nameer focused on describing the nature of his relationship with members of the host community and how it affected his access to linguistic and cultural resources. The interview reveals three sociocultural dynamics: cultural capital is reflected through cultural knowledge; identity is present through social exclusion when Nameer was denied access to the TL group; and finally social interaction opportunities where social learning strategies were designed to explore the target culture.

6.2.5 Heitham

This interview was conducted in the participant's house. Heitham participated in the initial stage of biography writing. It was agreed that the interview would be conducted in Arabic. During the interview, Heitham recalled some of his life memories and events in Australia, especially those related to settlement and English language learning. First of all, Heitham made several comments about his multilingual skills, which he mentioned briefly in his biography: *'I speak Serbian and also when I went to Brazil, I learnt some Portuguese and this helped me to learn English because I already have some language experience.'*

Yet, Heitham faced some linguistic difficulties during the first few years of his settlement in Australia. These linguistic limitations were reflected through his

unfamiliarity with Australian English and slang bearing in mind that Heitham lived in Europe before and his previous English language instruction was in British Standard English. Also, in Australia, he found some disparity between Australian Standard English and its slang and between the formal and informal aspects of Australian English in terms of usage (Davies, 2005):

The English language I learnt was different from the English spoken here by the Australian people due to the fact that people here use the common language. In terms of reading and writing, there was no difference since it is the same. Also, Australian slang was the only difficulty I faced since people were able to understand what I say but I was not able to understand some of what they say, this is because they were using words I never heard of before.

The conversational nature of the interview helped Heitham to recall more settlement experiences, which helped to improve his English language skills: *'I worked first in hospitals and then moved to work in the Post Office as a mail officer and this was a government job which requires good English.'* Working in an English speaking environment was crucial in developing Heitham's English language skills:

The things that improved my English is (are) working with Australian people since I found myself enforced [forced] to understand English if I'm working with Australian people or other groups.

Based on these settlement experiences, it is clear that the interactional nature of the workplace helped to construct a wide range of social interaction opportunities that encourage the use of English for the purposes of applying work instructions, negotiating ideas and solving problems. Similarly, this continuous use of English, especially in the workplace, helped Heitham to overcome the issue of misunderstanding resulting from the use of Australian slang.

In general, Heitham's ALL process was interrupted by linguistic limitations related to understanding Australian English and slang. At the same time, he

accumulated cultural capital that changed the course of his ALL process through his multilingual experiences. The interview also revealed the role of social interaction opportunities in enhancing English language use through working in different jobs.

6.2.6 Khalid

This interview with Khalid was conducted in Arabic in his house. Khalid was born in Iraq in 1968. He came to Australia by boat in 2001 and spent about 14 months in a detention centre. Currently, he is a truck driver and lives with his Australian born wife and three children in Blacktown. Khalid has a Bachelor of Law from Iraq. This level of education demonstrates a familiarity with learning and schooling conventions in general, such as the continuous use of learning tools and strategies, but Khalid did not manipulate these characteristics in attending English classes when he first arrived in Australia:

My knowledge of English depended merely on my schooling days where we used to study English at school. When I left Iraq in 1997, my English wasn't good. I stayed in Jordan and Syria for two years before coming to Australia, so I didn't study any English since I left Iraq.

The first encounter Khalid had with English language in Australia was through his long stay in the detention centre. This kind of settlement experience provided him with opportunities to use and practise his limited English with staff and other refugees in the detention facility:

My English wasn't good when I arrived to Australia. In the detention centre, I attended the English lessons organised by some Iraqi detainees who have good level of English. But, these lessons were not run formally or regularly and not equipped. I spent one year and two months in the detention centre where I used to do some casual work in the kitchen and this helped to improve my spoken English a little bit since we used to speak English to the Australian staff in the kitchen.

After Khalid was granted a temporary protection visa to reside in Australia for four years, he lived in Sydney and started to look for work. Although he was entitled to receive free English language instruction through the AMEP program, Khalid did not attend any English classes:

After I left the camp, we were sent to Melbourne where I stayed for 21 days before coming to Sydney to work here. I didn't go to English classes because I needed money urgently to help myself and my family back in Iraq, so I didn't pay attention to English classes at that time.

Neglecting formal language learning opportunities deprived Khalid of receiving proper English language instruction. Instead, Khalid focused on employment that helped him to earn a living but also offer him informal language learning opportunities. As a result of these socially influenced choices, Khalid managed to develop his English speaking and listening skills more than his reading and writing skills:

I worked in car washing and then I worked in a Lebanese bakery. I learnt some English in these two jobs since the people there were speaking English, so that helped me to go out and do my needs by myself.

However, not joining English language classes led to lower levels of English reading and writing skills. This caused a number of linguistic difficulties for Khalid in understanding texts, such as forms and letters and also in writing grammatically correct sentences. At the time of the interview, Khalid was able to perform basic reading and writing tasks, such as filling in short forms and reading road signs:

My speaking is good now but not very fluent since I am able to communicate and meet my needs, with reading I think it's about 60 per cent while writing still not good about 30 per cent. At the moment, I fill in the short forms since I can read the questions then answer, but with difficult forms, I give them to my wife to do since she is a native speaker. At work, I know all the vocabulary related with my job as truck driver and in delivery, including the slang words.

One of the important events in Khalid's life in Australia was marriage. His wife, Katherine, who was born in Australia, played a critical and positive role in his ALL as a language learning mentor through providing learning guidance and language support. Having a language learning mentor represents a valuable social capital that has been used by Khalid to enhance his ELL and aid his language use. Katherine has provided Khalid with guidance and support in language learning, such as providing learning advice, increasing vocabulary, correcting pronunciation and providing feedback on grammatical errors. At the same time, this language learning mentoring created more social interaction opportunities for Khalid to negotiate meaning with his wife:

Yes, yes, she helps me a lot with speaking, listening and some slang words. She always teaches me how to speak and increase my vocabulary. For example, when we listen or watch the news, I ask her about the words which I didn't understand so she explains their meanings.

Finally, Khalid believes that cultural knowledge is important in enhancing the ALL process. Learning about the lifestyle, laws, norms and customs of target culture helps to understand the behaviour of individuals and how language is used in different social contexts. In this regard, his wife has played a significant role in increasing Khalid's knowledge of the Australian culture:

You need to learn their traditions and way of life if you want to live here so you can understand them. My wife taught me many of the acceptable and unacceptable behaviours here; for example, it's ok or acceptable if guests or friends bring some food with them when we invite for lunch or dinner or a party. Also, some of my wife's relatives didn't talk to me, so I interpreted this unwelcomed behaviour as racism but my wife told me this happened because they don't know me and they felt shy to talk to me. Some of the behaviours in the Australian culture might be different or the opposite in my original culture.

As a result, there are two sociocultural dynamics that deeply affected Khalid's ELL. The first dynamic is cultural capital, which was enhanced by cultural knowledge. The second dynamic is related to social interaction opportunities, which were made available through settlement experiences and social capital. In addition to sociocultural dynamics, linguistic dimensions were also present in Khalid's ALL.

6.2.7 Hanah

This interview was conducted in English in a Migrant Resource Centre in Auburn. Hanah came to Australia in 2009 as a student, but then obtained temporary refugee status in 2011. At the time of the interview, Hanah lived in the suburb of Ashfield, Sydney. She completed two years of an English program as preparation for academic studies:

My name is Hanah Taha and my age is 38 years old. I was born in Iraq but I am originally Palestinian. I graduated from the faculty of agriculture in 1998. I worked as an agronomist with the ministry of environment in Iraq. I came to Australia through a special scholarship granted by the Australian government to study for Master degree in Animal Production. When I arrived here, I was put in level two, so I studied two years to finish the course and that course was to prepare me for university study.

Yet, completing a formal English language course designed to prepare international students for study at university does not mean that AL learners are able to communicate effectively and deal with everyday social situations, such as the workplace, online shopping, obtaining a driving licence and other social activities. This broad variety of social situations requires more than knowledge of grammar and vocabulary, as discussed in Nameer's interview. Hanah explains:

Now my English good and much better than before; I can read, write and also speak but still I want to learn more and improve my English better than now. There are two Phd students in my group, who are originally Mexican,

Speak like native speakers, I want my English to be the same. Till now, I have grammatical and spelling mistakes and mistakes in sentence structure.

Although she acknowledges that her knowledge of English grammar is necessary to build her sentences, Hanah wants her English to be fluent like her colleagues and this requires the learning of cultural customs and social conventions related to English language that allow her to use English appropriately. Extra social interaction opportunities are required to develop her spoken English and increase her knowledge of the Australian culture:

With speaking, I think I need more practice; to talk to other people since sometimes I stop talking because I can't express myself anymore in English; maybe because I have limited vocabulary and also I stop to think about the structure of the sentence. Sometimes, I would like to participate in the conversation but don't know the words to use.

At the same time, Hanah has had continuous social contacts with Arabic-speaking friends and flatmates inside and outside the campus. This social involvement with members of the Arabic-speaking community minimised the possibility of social interaction with English language speakers, which represents a valuable source of linguistic and cultural knowledge:

After coming home, I used to watch Australian TV because I didn't have internet or anything. During the weekends, sometimes I go out for fun or shopping with my friends from the Iraqi group and we speak Arabic. So, I rarely spoke English outside the classroom. We used to speak English with other international students during the language lesson but outside each student goes to stay with his language group; whether Chinese or Arabic or Mexican or Columbian. For me, I used to speak to Arabic students only. I think speaking Arabic most of the time affected my learning of English especially speaking.

Moreover, the previous quote also reveals the role of group membership and how the mechanism of cultural identity can determine with whom AL learners can talk and socialise. Hanah indicated that she was more involved with her Arabic-speaking

friends and colleagues than other international students. Cultural identity, according to Norton, is defined as ‘the relationship between individuals and members of a group who share a common history, a common language and similar ways of understanding the world’ (1997, p. 410). Generally speaking, migrants, especially refugees, tend to connect to their communities of origin for a number of reasons. One of them is the feeling of being more accepted by their home language or ethnic group. Humanitarian settlers are known to be better connected to their local communities than the wider Australian society and this indicates a strong attachment to local communities where they live (Hugo, 2011).

However, Hanah tried to cross these cultural bridges by talking to classmates from other cultural backgrounds, such as Chinese or Brazilians, as quoted earlier, as English is the only means of communication. Hanah also indicated that even if she left her home language group and engaged with a different group, this would make her a target for criticism made by some members of her Arabic-speaking group:

I am happy and not happy. Happy because my level of English is much better than before and not happy because I didn't work hard at the beginning of my arrival here; I should try not speak Arabic much with my flatmates and other friends from the Iraqi group. I should spend more time on home study. But I think it was hard to do that and separate myself from the Iraqi group, which consists of 40 students with seven of them are females, because some of them will start talking about me and make stories about why I left them. They might describe me as deserting our culture and have another culture!

In addition to being rejected by her cultural group for attempting to leave their group, Hanah also faced a different kind of refusal, based on social identity, from some members of the TL group when she was trying to access their group. Hanah tried to approach some Australian English native speakers through opening casual conversations but she did not receive any welcoming signs to establish social

relationships. Therefore, she thinks that she was not accepted because of her foreign accent and English:

I tried to build relationships with some Australian students through opening conversations with general questions but it was hard because some Australians, especially women, don't try to extend the conversation; they just answer my questions. I think they are not interested to develop a relationship with someone who speaks broken English or has a foreign accent. This was what I felt. I had an opportunity one day at the mosque to talk to an Australian woman, who converted to Islam and she politely drove me home. After that I contacted her many times to develop our relationship through meetings outside or home visits but she apologised few times that she is busy, so I give up calling her.

The last issue Hanah reported, which influenced her ELL, is the lack of cultural knowledge about Australian culture. Hanah explains how this plays out in her PhD group:

Sometimes, my supervisor gathers all his Phd and Master students, some of them are international students, for a short chat to talk about different topics, such as sport or art or news, but I hardly participate because I don't have enough information about the topic they were talking about or because I am not familiar with the Australian culture yet.

To conclude, Hanah described three sociocultural dynamics that influenced her ALL, as well as linguistic dimensions. Cultural capital is manifested by her university qualifications and the English language training she received in Iraq and Australia. However, limited cultural knowledge and linguistic capital slowed down the development of her English spoken skills. The second sociocultural dynamic is social interaction opportunities as these communicative opportunities were decreased at times due to social involvement with the home language group and limited social contact with the TL group. The third dynamic is related to identities and how they generate conflicting relations with her ethnic group and the TL community, which minimised Hanah's social participation.

6.2.8 Mary

This interview was conducted in English in a café. Mary arrived in Australia with her mother and four young brothers by boat in 2001 when she was 16 years old. She was born in Syria. Her father had already come to Australia in 1999 as a refugee and was granted a temporary visa for four years. Although Mary was young when she arrived, she still remembers the day when they were put in the refugee detention centre in Woomera in the state of South Australia:

On 21 March 2001, we arrived in Australia. We thought we would see my father on our arrival BUT we were sent to Camp Woomera instead. It was the hardest experience in our lives. My mum as an illiterate and me only knows the English alphabet and my four little brothers. It was a very challenging experience! It was at camp that I decided to study very hard and learn the English language.

Mary's settlement in Australia was therefore an unpleasant, unexpected and harsh experience being sent to a detention centre in the middle of a desert. Mary and her family did not know any English to communicate with the centre's staff to meet their daily needs. This is why Mary decided to learn English and overcome any difficulties. Having this resilience is evident throughout the history of Mary's ALL experience. Therefore, Mary focused her efforts inside and outside the immigration centre on learning English since it was the only way to understand the people around her.

By learning English, Mary wanted to help herself and her family to settle in Australia where life is different from the one her family faced in her home country, Syria:

Learning English made my life so much easier. I am able to help my children, brothers and family to learn and love the English language. I love learning more because as much as we learn the sea is still full to learn more.

After Mary was granted residency status, she enrolled in high school in Merrylands, one of Sydney's South Western suburbs, to study ESL and mainstream curriculum subjects. The school was an ideal environment for Mary to learn and practise English with teachers and students alike and a positive settlement experience that enriched Mary's ELL with a variety of social interaction opportunities to learn English and explore the Australian culture.

Having a successful learning experience at the school also reflected positively on Mary's attitudes towards the school, English language itself and the Australian community. Research on the relationship between attitudes and ALL suggests that positive attitudes towards the TL and its speakers play an important role in ALL, especially if these attitudes are accompanied by active participation or personal effort (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003, as cited in Mitchell, Myles & Marsden, 2013, p. 22):

I think English is a great language, but it is challenging to learn. I loved Australian school. It was very different to Arabic school; the teachers were very considerate which played a major role to my learning.

After Mary married, she became more occupied with her household duties and had difficulty in striking a balance between her studies and her new roles as a wife and mother. These new roles, being gender-related, forced Mary to leave high school and focus on her young family:

I enjoyed every day of school for 4 terms, but I had to drop out as I was pregnant and after giving birth to my baby boy I tried to study by correspondence at OTEN [Open Training and Education Network], but it was challenging as a young mother at the time to finish Year 12 so I had to drop out.

Gender identities influence ALL through affecting the access to learning resources and opportunities (Gordon, 2004, p. 437). Shifting gender roles with regard to work,

family leadership and education is a real issue facing immigrant families during their settlement in the host country (Ghareeb, Ronard & Tutunji, 2008). Hence, Mary was aware of these traditional roles and cultural expectations although she arrived in Australia at a young age.

After five years, Mary tried again to study in order to gain a professional qualification to help her find a job. However, she faced a difficult task when shifting her attention back to education and learning. Mary received moral and learning support from her family and English speaking friends. This kind of moral support represented valuable social capital that Mary used during hard times:

In 2009, I hesitated to apply for my Diploma as my son in Year 1 and my baby girl was only one year old. I was scared that I would drop out as I did in my Year 10. But having great friends and family on my side I was able to conquer my fear and finish my Diploma in Children Services.

This statement also shows that one of the factors that prevented Mary from making a decision to continue her education after a long period of disconnection is her fear or anxiety from the failure to continue her education because of her family responsibilities. Anxiety describes feelings of nervousness and discomfort when someone faces a new experience or task during learning or using a new language (Mitchell, Myles & Marsden, 2013, p. 298).

Mary also mentioned the role of her English speaking friends who provided her with all kinds of moral support and language learning mentoring. Two of her friends played a major role in helping Mary to improve her English and increase her cultural knowledge about the Australian community and lifestyle. This knowledge of the target culture was critical for Mary to advance her ELL to a higher level:

Meeting the Australian wives of my husband's friends who became my best friends and learning to communicate with them all the time had the biggest impact on my English and my life, though sometimes hard to understand some Australian ways of life.

Finally, it is important to mention that Mary started learning English once she arrived in Australia when she was 16 years old. The difference here between Mary's ALL experience and other participants in this research study is related to age since Mary started learning English at an earlier age, which was not the case for the others. Hence, when Mary started high school, she was treated as a young learner, not as an adult. This means that Mary was exposed to a wide range of communicative opportunities where she was forced to use and develop her English. Learning English at an earlier age helped Mary to develop effective English language skills. However, reading and writing skills were less developed compared to other speaking and listening skills because Mary left school before completing the higher school certificate.

Generally speaking, Mary's interview showed a range of sociocultural dynamics and psychological dimensions that influenced her ALL. Cultural capital increased through her access to an Australian high school and social relationships with her native English speaking friends. Also, her own investment to improve her knowledge about English enhanced her cultural capital as a future symbolic credit to be turned into real values. Mary manipulated her settlement experiences through her access to education and increased social capital through her social networks with friends in order to enrich her social interaction opportunities. Identities also played a role in supporting Mary's ELL. Mary had the opportunity to access linguistic and cultural resources through the youth and school groups. In addition to sociocultural dynamics, there was the influence of psychological dimensions, such as resilience,

attitudes and anxiety, which played contradicting roles in supporting and restricting Mary's ALL.

6.2.9 Afifa

Afifa is a 65-year-old woman from Iraq who was granted permanent residency in Australia in 2007 as a refugee due to her Christian background. Afifa holds a Masters degree in nursing and worked as a nurse, followed by work as a university lecturer in Iraq. She has a son and a daughter who live in Sweden, as well as one married daughter who lives in Sydney. Afifa lives by herself in a small flat in the city of Ryde in NSW. This interview was conducted in English in Northmead public library. When Afifa was asked about her level of English when she first arrived in Australia, she acknowledged the role of her educational background: *'It is medium. I am (was) studying English before from (in) Iraq because ... um ... I mean learnt some English because I studied nursing in Iraq and I take specialist in midwifery also.'*

Upon her arrival, Afifa attended English classes. As an initial settlement experience, these classes were beneficial and enhanced Afifa's English language skills, especially her spoken English. In response to the question as to whether she received any language training upon her arrival, she replied:

But when I came here in ACL, they told me my English is medium, they put me in the level three class. I study full hour [full-time] ... my full hour [full-time] ... 510 hour and I am now ... It is better than before.

At the same time, Afifa experienced real difficulties in understanding the speech of Australian English speakers due to their accent and Afifa's unfamiliarity with Australian English and slang. In addition, Afifa's grammatical knowledge was not at a level that allowed her to build full sentences that were grammatically accurate.

These linguistic dimensions played a major role in slowing down Afifa's English language development:

The difficulty of English because the pronunciation ... it is difficult ... it is not like the English when we study. They not pronounce some letters like 'worer' 'water', I don't know before. Because ... for this reason ... I mean ... They are very fast in their speech so sometimes it is hard for me to understand them, for example, yesterday I get a call from this (woman) and she was talking fast, I told her 'take it easy ... speak slowly, I understand what you are saying'.

To enhance her ELL, Afifa applied a number of social learning strategies to help her use and practise her English:

Ok, I am trying to read more and watch movies. I like reading stories and magazines and use the dictionary to know the meaning of difficult words. I always borrow magazines from my neighbour. I also come to Auburn Diversity Services to learn how to use the computer.

In this regard, it is important to mention that Afifa indicated during our conversation after the interview that she has a limited network of relationships in Australia outside of her daughter's family, a neighbour and old classmates. Therefore, she always tries to extend these relationships in order to improve her English:

My neighbour speaks English ... to my neighbour I speak English. And when I speak with them from the first till now, they said to me you are improved in English now because you going to English classes.

To conclude, there are two sociocultural dynamics influencing Afifa's ALL process. The first dynamic is cultural capital, as demonstrated through Afifa's educational background. Afifa gained basic knowledge of English from her past university studies and also became familiar with the learning environment. The second sociocultural dynamic is social interaction opportunities produced by settlement experiences and social learning strategies. Social capital did not exist because Afifa

did not have effective social networks that would support her ALL. In addition to sociocultural dynamics, we also noticed the influence of linguistic dimensions reflected through accent intelligibility, unfamiliarity with Australian English/slang and the lack of grammatical knowledge.

6.3 Conclusion

Chapter Six has presented the findings emerging from the interview data of nine participants. Although these interview findings show the same range of sociocultural dynamics, as well as other psychological and linguistic dimensions, identified in Chapter Five, the findings show different ALL experiences due to different settlement conditions. The interview findings reveal that cultural capital, social interaction opportunities and identities are the key sociocultural dynamics influencing adult ALL in the Australian social context.

Different ALL experiences show diverse types of sociocultural dynamics in the learning field. All new participants, Hanah, Mary, Afifa and Khalid, went through different settlement conditions and accordingly faced different learning challenges. Moreover, all participants adopted different personal approaches towards language learning based on the cultural assets they accumulated and what efforts, agency and emotions they invested or adopted during the course of their learning. For Hanah, it was a kind of struggle to develop her linguistic and cultural knowledge and also to face the pressure of her home language group in order not to leave the group. Afifa was doing her best to extend her social network of relationships in order to practise her English. Finally, Khalid needed to find ways to develop his reading and writing skills to fill the gap in his ELL that he missed out as a result of his withdrawal from English language classes.

In the next chapter, these findings will be examined theoretically to explore the nature of sociocultural dynamics and their critical role in the ALL process. This will lead to the new knowledge that this research has found and how the study also supports or discounts current knowledge in the field.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION: SOCIOCULTURAL DYNAMICS IN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE LEARNING

7.0 Introduction

Chapter Seven discusses the main findings of the research study in light of current theories concerned with the impact of sociocultural dynamics on ALL. The discussion starts with my own research journey, followed by my argument about the value of the research study. The body of the chapter focuses on discussing the main findings of the study.

Cultural capital, social interaction opportunities and identities are presented as the key sociocultural dynamics affecting the ALL process as lived by Arabic-speaking former adult refugees who participated in this study. The influence of sociocultural dynamics differs between different AL learners since participants have different learning experiences shaped by different settlement conditions. The research findings produce new ways of looking at the role of sociocultural dynamics in ALL since this view of the ALL landscape is elicited from the participants' personal perspectives.

The chapter, firstly, explores the nature of cultural capital and how it relates to ALL in this study based on Bourdieu's concept of 'capital' (1986). Then, it tries to ground the impact of social interaction opportunities on ALL in the general developmental theoretical framework provided by Vygotsky (1987). Finally, It reflects on the relationship between social, cultural, racial, aged and gendered identities and ALL (Norton, 2000).

7.1 My Research Journey: From Uncertainty to My Own Reality

In Chapter Two, I discussed the primary motivation behind the decision to conduct this research study, which came from my professional experience as an ESL teacher and head teacher at an English language centre in the South Western Sydney region. As part of my job, I was required to deal with the learning difficulties faced by my adult AL learners who came to Australia as refugees and migrants. After conducting my own informal inquiry, I realised that the roots of many of these learning issues are related to dynamics outside the classroom setting. Many students talked about factors related to their social background while others talked about psychological and linguistic limitations. However, collecting information about these learning issues did not satisfy my curiosity. My thought at that time was that this is a problem that requires a systematic and comprehensive investigation to fully understand the nature of the contextual factors affecting ALL.

After reading widely in the field, I came to realise that ALL researchers have paid less attention to examining the relationship between the AL learner and the wider social context. As an ESL teacher, I know that adult AL learners spend part of their day in the language classroom, while they spend the rest of the day performing a range of other social activities, such as shopping, travelling, working and socialising. Yet, the learner, the language classroom and the ALL process are also under the influence of a larger social context.

Informed by poststructuralism, Bourdieu's cultural capital and Vygotsky's perspective on social interaction, I view ALL now as a collaborative social practice where AL learners interact with other users of the TL and also with the physical

world around them in order to become competent users of the TL. It is a dynamic socialisation process, which is embedded in its social, cultural and historical context. This view provides new ways of framing the relationship between the social context and the ALL process (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 291).

7.2 Importance of the Research Study

This research study is important because it is an attempt to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the nature and role of sociocultural dynamics in ALL. The study provides multiple insights of ALL as a socialisation process since the research examines the ALL process through listening to the voices of AL learners. This theoretical framework shows the wide range of sociocultural dynamics involved in ALL that can help researchers in predicting the nature of the social context of their research. In the light of my professional experience as an ESL, these research outcomes can assist ESL teachers in understanding the nature of the relationship between the AL learner and the social context and the influence of this on the performance of AL learners.

Generally speaking, this study supports the ALL literature in that ALL is affected by a wide range of social, psychological and linguistic factors (Ellis, 2008). However, ALL researchers have focussed either on studying a single factor in isolation from other factors, such as age, transfer, anxiety, employment, social inclusion and religion (Gogonas, 2011; Mansouri et al., 2006), or examining correlations between interrelated factors, such as the relationship between cultural distance, attitudes and motivation (Gardner, 1985; Colic-Peisker, 2005; Bongaerts et al., 1997; Bogaards, 1996). In such research, the focus was on particular effective factors, neglecting the possibility of the occurrence of other factors which are present

at the same social context. Some ALL researchers viewed AL learners, based on different socio-psychological theories, as social recipients of input and producers of output (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 292).

However, this research study is different as sociocultural dynamics have been investigated collectively and not isolated from each other. This approach acknowledges that ALL occurs within a larger social context in which the interaction between the learner and the ALL process is affected by other social interactions and cultural settings (Liddicoat et al., 2003; Vygotsky, 1978).

ALL cannot be achieved if it happens only in the classroom by studying grammar, vocabulary and literacy skills. Language learning is different from learning a curriculum subject, such as science or history, which is based on a limited learning setting and explicit instruction. As Grenfell (1994, p. 58) argues:

Language is not something that we access like a baggage of information, taking out the bits and pieces to suit our needs at a particular instant. It is rather the means by which we create sense: of our world, of and for ourselves.

As explored in Chapters Five and Six, participants such as Sajad, Sana, Nameer, Heitham, George, Ibrahim and Muna, performed much better in their ALL and achieved better outcomes during and after their settlement when they realised the range of benefits they will gain from learning English and the effective ways to learn it. Language is a social activity and cultural tool, which is better learnt through social interaction inside the classroom and outside in the wider social world (Liddicoat et al., 2003; Everett, 2012).

This focus on the social learning context, formal and informal, made it possible to identify the variety of sociocultural dynamics involved in the ALL

process. Thus, the study identified three broad sociocultural dynamics: (i) cultural capital; (ii) social interaction opportunities; and (iii) identities. These sociocultural dynamics can explain the nature of the relationship between the AL learner and the surrounding social context and by examining the nature of this interactive relationship in any given learning setting, sociocultural dynamics that promote or delay ALL can be defined.

7.3 Nature of Sociocultural Dynamics

AL learners use and develop their cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986), which is shaped by their agency to invest in their ALL. These learners use social interaction in order to learn how and when the TL is used (Vygotsky, 1978). Throughout the ALL process, AL learners use the TL to conceptualise the self and the social world around them. They continually reconstruct their identities (Norton & Gao, 2008) that govern their access to social groups and linguistic/cultural resources. Sociocultural dynamics also may interfere with each other as in Nameer's situation when his ability to negotiate identities coincided with the capacity to use communicative opportunities to access linguistic and cultural resources.

Figure 7.1, below, is a conceptual map of these influential sociocultural dynamics. ALL requires manipulating symbolic assets to support learning or becoming a TL user in a field by using the TL (Vygotsky, 1987). These shared communicative opportunities generate meaningful messages about the linguistic, social and cultural content of the TL.

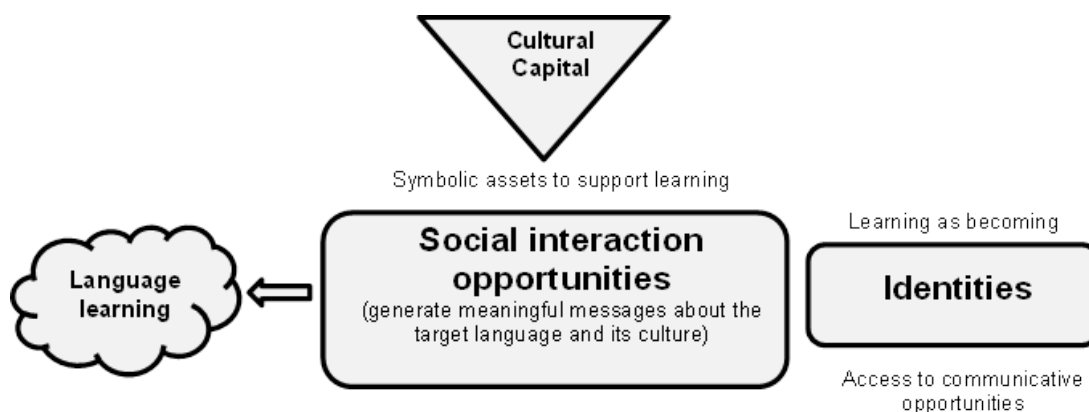


Figure 7.1: Conceptual mapping of influential sociocultural dynamics in ALL

This initial part of the section reflects on the nature of cultural capital in order to examine its findings in the light of existing theories. A number of participants in this study entered the ALL process equipped with different forms of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986), which they accumulated before and during their settlement in Australia. These variable forms of long-life knowledge and experience were used later to support and facilitate their ELL. The principal position of the study is that the possession of all types of knowledge, including those generated from life experiences, supports and accelerates ALL. Learning the language of the country of settlement provides access to the cultural capital of the host country, which is very important for education and settlement in general (p. 410). These forms of cultural capital acquired by the research participants include education, multilingual experiences, cultural knowledge and acquiring the capacity and skills to control and invest these resources in ALL (Bourdieu, 1973).

The concept of cultural capital was originally used to examine the differences in linguistic abilities between learners and to provide a social rationale for these differences. It was used to refer to those attributes, which are acquired through

membership of a particular social group and that differences in linguistic abilities between learners are due to the different social backgrounds of learners (Bourdieu, 1973). In this research study, different AL learners used their long-life experiences, knowledge and skills which they acquired as a result of their membership of different social institutions and groups, such as family, school and profession, as a cultural resource to support their ELL (Bourdieu, 1977). Different participants, as former refugees, came from different social backgrounds and some participants, such as Raghieb, Muna, Heitham and Nameer, arrived in Australia with significant cultural capital, mainly university qualifications, professional skills and multilingual abilities. These forms of cultural capital provided participants with valuable learning tools and cultural resources to accelerate their ELL, such as learning strategies, schooling experiences, problem solving skills and study skills.

In this regard, although English proficiency was different from one participant to another, George, Raghieb, Nouh, Nameer, Heitham, Ameer, Muna and Hanah relied heavily on their cultural capital to support their ELL. These participants invested in their ALL not only for short-term settlement needs but for future educational and professional goals. English was not only considered an urgent social need but also an effective tool for obtaining educational credentials and achieving long-term life prospects. Therefore, these participants managed not only to develop their functional English and literacy, but also their academic skills.

On the other hand, participants such as Sideeq, Salim, Jafar, Muntaha, Daulat and Wardah faced different challenges during their ELL because of limited education and language learning experiences. Jafar and Daulat, in particular, were illiterate in their mother tongue and this significantly affected the development of their English

reading and writing skills. These differences between AL learners in language performance or abilities can be interpreted in terms of cultural capital as Bourdieu (1973) explains. This relationship between cultural capital and ALL is further demonstrated through the comparison between Sajad's ALL experience and that of Jaffar although both went through different settlement conditions. Sajad entered the ALL process with moderate schooling experience and basic knowledge of English while Jaffar was illiterate and had limited exposure to learning resources. In addition, Sajad invested in his ELL through home study and designing social learning strategies in order to use English.

Participants also used their agency and resilience to overcome settlement and learning difficulties in order to develop and continue their ALL. It is agency that explains how learning may sometimes take place in spite of unfavourable conditions, as seen with Sana, Mary and Sajad who wanted to have control over their ALL despite experiencing unpleasant events (Bremer et al., 1996, p. 220). The social world is seen as fractured and destabilised by the possibilities enforced by individual agency, resilience and creativity to face discriminatory social practices and other unfavourable circumstances (Norton Peirce, 1995). Agency suggests self-regulation of learning where learners can play a critical role in self-development through realising that they have control over their learning (Lindgren & McDaniel, 2012, p. 346).

Moreover, agency also includes the habitus of refugees, as a system of dispositions and positive attitudes towards the TL, its learning and speaking community. Developing this set of dispositions towards the ALL process was essential for participants to build their agency and become in charge of their ALL in

the same way they were in charge of their refugee journey and settlement. Mary and Sana, for example, developed a habitus or system of dispositions when they realised the importance of the TL and learning in their new life. Therefore, this system of dispositions towards the ALL justifies the investment of time, money and effort to increase cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 495).

Based on this agency, participants such as Raghieb, George, Muna, Sana, Sajad and Nameer took charge of their ALL at an early stage of their refugee journey and settlement since they realised that ALL is a valuable and symbolic investment that will yield its benefits in the future. For this purpose, a number of participants decided to increase their existing conceptual and historical basics of prior cultural capital in order to support their ELL (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 50). Although the basics of cultural capital were established during the pre-settlement period, especially educational background and multilingual experiences, AL learners continued developing their cultural capital during the post-settlement period and, in particular, the aspects related to developing cultural knowledge and agency. Longer time of residence allows for accumulation of cultural capital through enhancing work experience, gaining new qualifications and the learning of culturally-specific rules of social interaction in the different social activities and occasions, as in the case of Raghieb and Nameer (Colic-Peisker, 2011).

Increasing cultural capital may take different forms; this includes developing objectified cultural capital through accessing learning materials such as books, videos, internet and magazines to mediate language learning. Also, some participants at one stage undertook formal studies to increase their institutionalised cultural capital through gaining institutional credentials, as in the case of Raghieb, Muna and

Mary (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 51). Working on developing these aspects of cultural capital is enhanced further by everyday received knowledge through social interaction with the outer world to develop embodied cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 48).

Developing cultural knowledge, in particular, is critical for ALL as demonstrated by different participants' narratives where unfamiliarity with the culture of the host society impedes communication. Cultural capital also consists of the understanding and familiarity with the dominant culture in the society, including the ability to understand and use 'educated' language (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 494). A dynamic approach to culture will view culture as sets of variable social practices and conventions where people engage in order to live and which are continually created and re-created by participants in social interaction. These cultural practices and values build a contextual framework that people use to govern communication and guide their behaviours. In order to learn about the target culture, it is necessary to engage with the linguistic and non-linguistic practices of the culture and gain insights into the ways of living (Liddicoat et al., 2003, p. 7). Therefore, cultural knowledge is not a matter of knowing information about the new culture; it is about knowing how to engage with the culture.

This cultural engagement can only happen through being exposed to the social practices and conventions of the target culture, which are produced and re-produced in and by social interaction. Social interaction opportunities are essential for ALL to happen because they offer AL learners the genuine communicative space that shows them when and how the TL is to be used. They allow AL learners to use and experience the TL in its real settings as a developmental process (Vygotsky, 1978).

The research study shows that production of social interaction opportunities is governed by the quality of settlement experiences, home language use, social learning strategies and developing social capital.

In Chapter Five, Sajad's effort to learn English by studying grammar and vocabulary at home was not sufficient to know how to communicate and develop his proficiency in English. Without interlocutors and social situations, it wasn't possible to perform communicative functions (Kamp & Stokhof, 2008, p. 104). Therefore, Sajad created a new social strategy to learn through writing sentences at home in order to use them at the bank to explain his bank transactions: *'If I wanted to go to the bank or any department I write the questions and the enquiries in a piece of paper; in that way I could talk to people.'* This was the critical move in Sajad's ALL when he started to interact with people and work in remote areas; then, he learnt to communicate effectively. Different settlement experiences and social learning strategies provided communicative opportunities to use the TL:

Finally I found a job in mining site and I have done many introductions inside the mining and I worked many different jobs in mining, driving a track, a forklift and doing general construction. Now I have no problem with speaking English with my work mates and all the staff.

Sajad's learning experience and others reflect the fundamental proposition of the sociocultural view of cognitive development that individuals acquire knowledge as a result of an interaction between the human mind and external world (Vygotsky, 1978). This acquired knowledge will become internalised as individual functions, which induces language development (Kao, 2010, p. 117). That is, the learner becomes able to use these forms and functions of language in the form of oral interaction (Vygotsky, 1987; Eun & Lim, 2009). Thus, the shared notion between

sociocultural theory and this study is that social interaction is critical for achieving language learning.

In her biography, Muntaha explained how the absence of social interaction with English language speakers delayed her ELL although she completed all her allocated English language tuition. On the contrary, Mary enjoyed the privilege of having quality social interaction opportunities ranging from studying at high school to socialising with native English-speaking friends. During the communication process, social interaction strengthens the pragmatic knowledge of the TL, which links between the form of the word and its meaning. Pragmatics simply refers to the field of linguistics concerned with determining the meaning of a language text in its real context (Eun & Lim, 2009, p. 19). Hence, mastering the grammar and lexicon of a language is not sufficient unless it is accompanied by knowing how and when to use certain linguistic forms appropriately to convey certain meanings under certain social conditions (Eun & Lim, 2009).

This linkage between sign and meaning and the value of this to language learning is further demonstrated in the situation that Ibrahim faced during his taxi driving job as he narrated in his biography. In that occasion, Ibrahim learnt an unusual and different meaning for the word ‘damage’ as ‘taxi fare’, which he did not learn from language classes. Therefore, adult AL learners advance their capacity to learn meaningful speech in other ways, such as through observing and engaging in social interaction opportunities with proficient speakers of English where they become exposed to natural models of the language (Vygotsky, 1987). In this regard, some participants designed a variety of social learning strategies in order to get involved in meaningful communicative opportunities; Daulat, for example, used to

host a volunteer teacher to help her develop her spoken English and receive constructive feedback to encourage her speaking English.

Developing social networks in order to initiate social interaction for learning purposes is a kind of mediation. According to Kozulin (1990), there are three major types of mediation: material, symbolic and human aided. Material mediation is demonstrated through the use of tangible tools, such as picture cards to aid memorising. For example, Sajad, Sana and Raghieb used a range of different material tools to mediate their cognitive processes. These tools included internet, dictionaries and textbooks, which were used to facilitate memory and comprehension functions. Symbolic mediation is through the use of figurative systems, such as silently repeating the words to be remembered. The kind and quality of the internal operations or learning strategies used to mediate language learning sometimes rely on the learner's previous learning and schooling experiences. George, for example, was frequently using new ways or strategies of repetition and reflection in order to comprehend grammatical rules and memorise new vocabulary. However, the third type of mediation and the most important is human aided mediation, which is reflected through the use of another person, such as a teacher, relative or friend to support learning.

An individual's learning ability depends primarily on mediation, which refers to learning support or scaffolds that are made available for language learners. These scaffolds may include reminders, examples, models, illustrations, explanations, questioning and elaborations, as well as encouragement. They are designed to move the learning forward in the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). In this sense, mediation is the process where socially meaningful activities convert

unmediated natural behaviour into higher mental processes through the use of supporting tools (Minick, 1987). The concept of mediation causes the transfer from the social to the individual or from basic functions to complex cognitive ones.

Hence, mediation can be applied to adult ALL since learning, in general, is a socially mediated process where individuals learn how to use the psychological tool of language in the various social situations for the purposes of problem solving (Mitchell & Myles, 2004). During different stages of their ALL, some participants faced challenging situations where they could not advance their language development because their learning tools stopped to mediate their language learning further. Sajad did not benefit much from his home study in speaking fluently and performing his daily activities. Hanah also could not use the linguistic knowledge from her academic English course effectively in building relationships with English speakers. At the end, these participants and others realised that social interaction is the most effective tool that is able to mediate their ELL because it has the characteristics and potential to activate learning. Face-to-face interactions provide AL learners with opportunities to orally produce language, engage in negotiations and to receive feedback (Ellis, 2003).

Mary, Daulat and Muna were successful in engaging family members and friends to aid and support their English use and learning through making them act as language learning mentors and interlocutors. Thus, human mediators can play a major role in enhancing ALL through selecting, designing or amending the learning opportunities available in the immediate environment (William & Burden, 2009, p. 40). In this case, human mediators acted as performance models for AL learners to follow when they tried to communicate in real social situations. In these social

interactions, AL learners transfer the key linguistic elements from the conversation into their mental faculties for cognitive processing, as stated by Vygotsky (1987).

This kind of spontaneous human mediation is of great value to AL learners for two reasons. Firstly, they are not under any kind of pressure to respond immediately since AL learners do not feel any anxiety that may affect the flow of their speech. Norton and Gao (2008, p. 118) indicate that learners are more likely to speak when the target community is free of pressure and supportive, since students may struggle to speak under conditions of marginalisation and restrictions. Secondly, this voluntary human mediation can motivate AL learners to interact in order to exchange information and ideas since mediation is based on interpersonal semiotic interaction (Vygotsky, 1978).

To access social interaction opportunities, AL learners are required to negotiate their self-positioning in a way that allows them to enter different social groups that use the TL to represent their groups and culture. In fact, the notion of identity becomes more complex for refugees, whose lives in the host society are often characterised by ‘positions of liminality and marginality’ (Krulfeld & Camino, 1994, p. ix), and this can cause a state of confusion or even loss of identity. This complexity of refugee identities is formed not only by internal feelings, beliefs and cultural traditions, but also by other external factors, such as dislocation, resettlement conditions, migration policies, cultural difference, language change and the economic, political and social conditions of the host country (Holt, 2007; Reid & Al Khalil, 2013). As a result, former refugee AL learners over time undergo a complicated process of identity reformulation (Griffiths, 2001).

In this study, identities are cultural, social, racial, aged and gendered. Identities are defined as the positions taken by the subject as self-representations; therefore, they are always constructed across divisions between the positions of the subject and the Other, which can never be identical. This suggests that identities are constructed as temporary attachments to the subject positions governed by discursive practices. Discourses construct subject positions through their rules of formations and modalities of power (Hall, 1996, p. 6; Davies & Harre, 1990), which force AL learners to negotiate identities and group membership based on these power relations. Therefore, this study shows that there are two ways in which identities relate to the ALL process.

First, using another language when living in the target community requires constant reconstructing of identities on behalf of AL learners. Guiora states that ALL in all of its aspects requires the individual, to a certain extent, to take on a new identity (1972, p. 145). Thus, identity that is developed through language use is central to subject positioning. Second, identity differences with the TL group require AL learners to negotiate access to interactional opportunities, which in turn develops the TL. These different self-positions can either allow or prevent AL learners from accessing these social groups (Pavlenko, 2000).

Concerning reproducing identities, using the TL means acquiring new linguistic, social and cultural conventions, which will have an impact on the learner's self-positioning and personal standing. These changes are described by Pavlenko (1998) as a transformation of self through discourses and for discursive assimilation in which one's voice is heard by others. According to this study, participants not only learnt the linguistic aspects of English, they also learnt the social and cultural

conventions or rules that show them how and when to use English. Understanding these social conventions and cultural practices of English and its speaking community brings AL learners closer to the target culture to the extent that they may adopt similar self-positions to these of the members of the target culture.

Participants' self-positions according to this study are continually influenced by the target culture and the attitudes it generates towards the TL and its speaking community and this cannot happen without the constant use of language. Mary's learning experience when her social identity was reshaped by her English-speaking native friends and positive schooling is one example. It also reveals how contact at a younger age (16 years) gave her the time to explore Australian culture and learn English through experiencing a wide range of interactional opportunities, such as schooling. This change in Mary's social identity is reflected through her positive attitudes towards English and the Australian society. On the contrary, Wardah who arrived in Australia at an older age (42 years) did not have this range of interactional opportunities to learn English and explore the Australian culture. This also had an effect on her limited social network, which includes mainly Arabic-speaking relatives and friends.

Nameer's relationship with his neighbour suggests that identity is constructed by language through the contribution of both communicators in constructing the language text, which displays how the self and the social world are constructed. This identity construction process requires balanced power relations in order to contribute equally in making meaning since identity is socially constructed (Norton, 2006, p. 2), while institutional and community practices can determine under which conditions

AL learners communicate. So, identity construction must be explained with respect to the larger social processes that are marked by relations of power.

Being a student, mother, taxi driver, teacher, social worker, businessman or volunteer represents valuable interactional opportunities and multiple discourses in which AL learners adopt new roles and self-positions. Hence, these adopted identities influence language development in the same way language can shape the construction of identities within these discourses as discussed in the next section. For example, Heitham considered himself a legitimate citizen and member of the English speaking group based on his new identity, shaped by his English language development:

At the moment, I am retired but I always try to improve my personal skills and educate myself. I learnt how to use the internet from my kids and do other online tasks such as writing emails in English. In general, I can do everything with English and I feel I am really Australian now since I have been living here for a long time as I am 66 years old now.

Participants such as Heitham, Nameer, Muna, Sana and George believe that they have the right to claim the legitimacy of being part of the English-speaking community and its Australian culture based on their language performance and adaptation to the target culture. In general, former refugees have played different social roles and contributed greatly to their local communities within the wider Australian society (Hugo, 2011) and this group reveals this in their everyday struggles to find space to learn and engage with the host community. They learnt English, obtained qualifications, developed careers, built businesses, became volunteers and established families.

Thus, language and identity affect each other in similar ways within discourses. As discussed in Chapter Three, the relationship between language and

identity is also explored by scholars in the poststructuralist domain; language is seen as a site of identity construction where identities are constructed by and in discourses, which are in turn produced by language (Norton, 1997). Norton Peirce (1995) writes that ‘it is through language that a person negotiates a sense of self within and across different sites at different points in time’ (p. 13). It is a mutual relationship between language and identity where language reconstructs identity through negotiating and expressing the sense of self while language itself is developed through this process of meaning negotiation as a language use.

In this regard, a number of participants described themselves as Australians but with an Arab cultural background since they believe it is difficult to give up that part of their past where they lived and accumulated great memories. However, this type of self-positioning enhanced their ALL and cultural understanding except with those cultural values and practices that disagree or clash with their original culture. These multiple positions are characterised by ‘‘strategic hybridity’’ (Noble et al., 1999, p. 39), which is the opposite of being locked in between two cultures since it involves appropriating elements of both the original culture and the target culture in creative and flexible ways that allow shifting according to circumstances. This sense of multiple loyalties and attachments is a common phenomenon in all social contexts, especially for those individuals living in multilingual societies like Australia who find themselves in constant tension between self-chosen identities and new identities trying to position them differently (Pavlenko, 2000). This is evident in George’s

ALL experience:

I have been living in Australia since 1999 and, during this period, I learnt many good things, especially living in harmony with people of different backgrounds and applying a mixture of positive aspects from Australian and Arabic cultures will be in the best interests of the person. In other words, I still belong to my original roots with adapting to some Australian traditions.

Some other participants showed more flexibility with modifying their existing identities in order to establish bridges of continuity with the Other. These participants adopted a kind of cosmopolitan view of identity (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013) believing that people belong to the same human group as soon as they contribute to the society around them. Sana, as an example, has colourful life experiences; she still enjoys doing volunteer work for her local community and her photos appear frequently in local newspapers describing her new initiatives and passion for Arabic cuisine. Sana strongly believes that she belongs to humanity regardless of where she lives, whether in Iraq, Lebanon, Spain, England or Australia. She always refers to her past life experiences as '*living memories*', especially her childhood days in Iraq.

Sana's biography reveals that language and identity have a mutual and productive relationship. Being able to learn English and communicate with people from different cultural backgrounds had a positive influence on Sana's life, vision of the world and self-positioning. Similarly, these continually constructed identities helped to explore different cultural realms and social conventions, which enhanced Sana's ELL.

I am very proud that life taught me a lot and my life was full of events and live memories. My readings and social interactions with different kinds of people had a great effect on myself. Educating myself paved my way to help other people. Finally, I will say that the success I achieved in my long life journey would not happen without being able to speak the language of the people I lived with.

Generally speaking, participants, as former refugees, have faced the challenges of reshaping and positioning the self through redefining essential concepts in their lives, such as security, belonging, social relationships, happiness and freedom (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013; Yuval-Davis et al., 2006; Davies & Harre, 1990). Living in a new

country is not only a matter of adjusting to a new culture and learning a different language, but also about how to position the self amid new sociocultural changes (Sobe, 2009). This process of reconstructing the self after traumatic refugee experiences and uncertainty will lead to reshaping the person's identity where he/she can start to redefine the concept of belonging in order to reproduce refugees as human subjects, agents and models of resilience (Reid & Al Khalil, 2013; Ignatieff, 1994 as in Antonsich, 2010).

The second way in which identities relate to the ALL process is when identities are used to access social groups and learning resources. This section will deal with how cultural, social, racial, aged and gendered identities were reshaped to negotiate self-positioning and group membership. Using a poststructuralist approach provided a solid conceptual framework by which this study examined how identities of AL learners can mediate access to social groups and interactional opportunities. Similar to Pavlenko's study (2000), the interactional resources include linguistic resources that encompass educational practices, such as ESL classes, discursive practices, such as literacy, material resources, such as bilingual texts and dictionaries and most importantly, interactive situations, which come as a result of socialisation (Pavlenko, 2000, p. 91).

Being identified as a traditional member of a different social or cultural group makes it difficult to access the TL group. This, in turn, will affect the capacity to learn the TL because AL learners are unable to access and make use of available interactional opportunities that contain a variety of powerful linguistic and sociocultural resources (Norton Peirce, 1995). For example, Miller mentions that

some speakers of the TL may refuse to talk or interact with AL learners because they see them as incompetent communicators (1999, p. 157).

If the relationship between AL learners and larger social institutions, such as schools, sport clubs or the workplace, is collaborative, then AL learners will be able to make use of linguistic and sociocultural assets hold by the TL group, which reflect the common culture of that society. These resources are embedded in social interaction and contain information about how and when to use the TL. For example, Nameer was not given full access to the TL group's outdoor activities and gossip which made him feel relatively disconnected from his colleagues. Nameer was excluded from the inner circle of his work colleagues, where he could gain knowledge about the politics of social relationships in and out of the workplace.

Gender, as a form of social identity, also affects access to language learning resources (Gordon, 2004). In general, gender roles in any society are socially constructed and, therefore, they are different in different societies and cultures. In some societies, there are significant gendered barriers to educational participation and employment. Host societies often offer different gender roles for men and women. However, this process is still determined by power relations between women and men (Hatoss & Huijser, 2010). Men, as the traditional holders of power in many societies, are required to negotiate their power with women in order to shift roles inside and outside the house. As reported in Chapters Five and Six, Daulat chose to stay home and look after her young children. After a number of years, with her husband's approval, she attended English language classes. Thus, family structure and power relations affect the capacity of AL learners to access linguistic resources.

Pennycook argues that power relations are at the heart of questions of discourse, disparity and difference, which operate through all domains of life (2001, p. 27).

Another form of social identity is social categorisation based on age. Older adult language learners are sometimes disadvantaged because they can be classified as 'old adults' based on their age and this will influence their access to interactional opportunities. This group identification was seen with Muna when doing group activities at her university lectures where she was identified as an 'old adult' by some younger female students. This social categorisation based on age made some younger students try to belong to other groups rather than Muna's. This case was different with Mary who entered high school at the age of 16 since she was swiftly categorised as a member of the young people group. This positive identity classification gave her access to a range of social groups where she used English to communicate and negotiate her self-positions.

However, the findings show that it is not only the TL group that attempts to enforce an identity change on AL learners, but also the home language group, which represents a language minority within the host community since it pressures its members to stay within the group and maintain its culture. For example, Hanah's initial plan was to leave her Arabic-speaking group and become more open with the rest of the English speaking community inside and outside the university campus. However, unbalanced power relations between Hanah and her home language group forced her at the end to stay within the group, even if it was temporarily, despite her resistance. Hence, power relations played a key role in mediating Hanah's access to new groups (Norton Peirce, 1995).

The final form of social identification is related to the process of racialisation. In this process, the AL learner is perceived as the Other who may not be allowed to gain membership to the TL group because of his/her biological characteristics or cultural background (Miles & Brown, 2003). Racism is a discourse that reproduces and maintains unequal power relations between the Self as superior and the Other as inferior (Kubota & Lin, 2006). The concept of 'race' is now overwhelmingly accepted as a social construction as opposed to biological fact (Jackson & Penrose, 1993). Yet, individuals within this discourse use subjective measures to keep the Other outside the group. In this regard, the process of racialisation, which Muna was subjected to, was based on cultural symbols, as well as biological markers:

I give you another example from the university where I study now, because of my accent and also my middle age and maybe also because of my scarf, it becomes hard to get students to participate with me when we do group work. When the teacher puts me on the head of the group, some other students avoid being in my group.

In a similar vein, Miller's (2000) ethnographic study of ESL students in an Australian high school demonstrates that access to interactional opportunities may also be mediated by 'race'. It showed that white and fair-haired Bosnian ESL students were able to access a range of English speaking discourses. For example, they quickly managed to establish friendships with English speaking students, while dark-haired Chinese-speaking students remained isolated from the school mainstream. Therefore, Chinese students felt discriminated against because they considered that neither their peers nor their teachers acknowledge their legitimacy as L2 users of English in the same way that they acknowledge the legitimacy of their European immigrant classmates who physically resemble stereotypical Australians (Miller, 2000, p. 87).

7.4 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the main findings of this study concerning the relationship between the AL learner and the ALL process within the broader social context. The social context generates a wide range of forces that influence the ALL process, as well as the AL learner. Understanding the nature of social interaction opportunities, the mechanisms of identity construction and the relationship between cultural capital and ALL is central to understanding this dynamic relationship between the AL learner and the ALL process.

AL learners are required to manipulate available communicative opportunities needed for using and practising the TL. It is through social interaction where AL learners can access the linguistic and cultural resources of the TL. Throughout the ALL process, AL learners manipulate their cultural capital in order to support and accelerate their ALL. During social interactions, AL learners use the TL to express themselves and reflect their self-positions in an attempt to enter new social groups and access valuable sociocultural resources as determined by power relations.

In actual language use, it is not only the linguistic text that creates and conveys meaning, but the text itself immersed in its social and cultural context that creates meaning and makes sense for the audience. Cultural practices and social conventions are embodied in how people talk, behave and interact with each other. This dynamic process of creating and interpreting meaning occurs within a sociocultural framework that governs the process of meaning making. Learning an additional language entails learning the culture that produced that language.

Accordingly, AL learners who know some of the TL, including grammar and vocabulary, but know little about its culture and social conventions will not be able

to communicate effectively in real life situations, as the narratives in this study revealed. AL learners need to know how and when to use the TL to create and interpret meaning; not just how to produce accurate linguistic forms. Also, cultural knowledge is not merely a set of descriptive facts about ways of behaving and living inside the target community; it needs to be experienced and practised before it can be adopted (Crozet & Liddicoat, 2000, p. 17). This sociocultural view of the relationship between the AL learner and the ALL process sees language not as sets of grammatical rules and vocabulary to be memorised and used routinely, but a social activity that needs to be explored and practised on daily basis.

In Chapter Eight, the research questions, significance of the research findings and methods, as well as future directions for research will be explored, followed by the research limitations. The conclusion draws a holistic picture of the story of the research.

CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION

8.0 Introduction

The purpose of Chapter Eight is to summarise the aims, methods and research findings of the study. The chapter reflects on the significance of the research findings, including recommendations for future research and policy practices. The chapter has also discussed the limitations of the study, especially these resulting from the relationship between the researcher and participants.

As outlined in Chapters One and Two, this study aimed to identify sociocultural dynamics influencing the ALL process experienced by former adult refugees from Arabic speaking backgrounds. The inability to use English is a critical obstacle to participation in the wider community and may contribute to experiences of social isolation, stress and a lack of confidence in the self to operate actively within the wider community (Hugo, 2011, p. 242).

One of the objectives of this study is to acknowledge the voices of refugees and convey their messages to the public. It is meant to personalise refugees' political issues and explain their situation in the middle of the current political debate about stopping boat refugees and claims of the negative impact of increasing numbers of migrants on job opportunities and the environment in Australia (Cullen, 2012; Hugo, 2011).

Language was traditionally seen as a decontextualised communication system by socio-psychological approaches before it had been distinguished as an ethnic identity marker. In sociocultural theory, language is viewed as a symbolic tool of

mediation (Lantolf, 2006). However, this social and cognitive trend in ALL research and language education, in general, has become more concerned with the social and cultural aspects of language learning. Poststructuralist approaches view language as a social practice, which is constructed by social interaction (Pavlenko, 2002).

However, this study argues that adult AL learners understand their ALL, not simply as a rigid and decontextualised one, but as a dynamic and contextualised process. ALL is an interactive and shared process that requires the participation of other interlocutors and manipulation of communicative situations in order to set the appropriate conditions of language use and learning. Language is about exchanging meanings and solving problems and without interlocutors or social situations it is not possible to perform these functions (Kamp & Stokhof, 2008, p. 104).

8.1 Summary of Aim, Methods and Findings

This study aimed to gain multiple perspectives of sociocultural dynamics influencing the ALL process. Recalling memories and constructing personal perspectives of refugee settlement and ALL allowed participants to draw on and evaluate their own ALL experiences, as well as identify the important events that occurred during refugee and settlement periods. The study argued that identifying the forces and conditions that influence adult ALL has become a pressing issue because of the social and cultural challenges brought by globalisation and increasing numbers of adult learners around the world (Bellingham, 2000, p. 27).

Investigating the main trends in ALL research shows that there has been an increasing tendency in ALL literature for recognising the important role of sociocultural dynamics in shaping the ALL process, as discussed in Chapter Three.

These sociocultural dynamics investigated by the research were embedded in the participants' ALL experiences, which were reproduced through subjective reflections. Therefore, using narrative inquiry to stimulate understandings and perceptions from participants has proven useful (Chase, 2008; Creswell, 2003). Written biographies and semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from 20 participants. In the data analysis process, coding, content analysis and Discourse analysis were used on different stages to organise and analyse the data.

'Sociocultural dynamics affecting the ALL process of Arabic-speaking adult refugees in Australian learning settings' makes an important contribution to knowledge in the fields of adult English language learning and migrant settlement in Australia. The ELL experiences of adult refugees settling in Australia are under-researched area. At the same time, it is highly beneficial to explore the language learning and settlement experiences of this group, particularly against the background of a predominance of Arabic-speaking residents in South Western Sydney region.

Hence, narrative inquiry explored effectively the links between subjective experiences and the wider world (Hopkins, 2009, p. 137). ALL experiences were embedded with a range of sociocultural themes. These experiences also showed the complex relationships between sociocultural dynamics and other psychological and linguistic dimensions.

In answering the main research question: *'What are the sociocultural dynamics affecting the ALL process of Arabic-speaking adult refugees in Australian learning settings?'* this study defined sociocultural dynamics as the forces and conditions which are constructed by the social, cultural and historical context where

the ALL process occurs (Lantolf, 2000; Ellis, 2008). In addition, the three secondary research questions were answered to inform the main question.

The first question was about the role of cultural assets in supporting ALL. This was answered by using the analytical concept of ‘cultural capital’ as one of the three sociocultural dynamics revealed by this study. Cultural capital was constructed in terms of five themes: educational background, multilingual experiences, cultural knowledge, agency and investment. Cultural capital supports and accelerates ALL because it builds learning experiences and establishes familiarity with and understanding of, the target culture. This, as Bourdieu (1973) theorised, leads to possession of different types of knowledge. So, this concept of cultural capital can provide a feasible framework for understanding the role of life-long accumulated education and learning experiences in ALL.

The second question was about how meaningful social interaction benefits ALL. Social interaction opportunities offered the answer through explaining the mechanism of social interaction between AL learners and the TL community. Social interaction opportunities provide a natural and communicative space that shows when and how the TL is used. They generate meaningful messages about the linguistic, social and cultural content of the TL that enable AL learners to understand how language is structured and used. These findings show that social interaction opportunities are generated by settlement experiences, the use of home language or first language connections, designing of social learning strategies and social capital. In short, social interaction opportunities are critical for ALL since social interaction represents the core of the ALL process. Vygotsky argues that the distinctive feature of human speech is generalised meaning; that is, human speech is meaningful and the

purpose of human communication or language is to convey meanings and ideas (1987).

The relationship between social interaction and ALL demonstrates that language is inseparable from culture and ALL is a matter of acquiring the culture that produced that language. Culture is a dynamic construct, which creates and is created by every attempt to interact with other people. It is a process that is experienced and reflected through language (Crozet & Liddicoat, 2000, p. 3). Knowing about the target culture is part of ALL since culture represents a set of shared ideas, practices, customs, values, heritage and artefacts that characterise national, ethnic or other groups, as well as orient their behaviour (Mulholland, 1991, pp. 11-12; Baumann, 2004, pp. 12-14).

The last secondary question was concerned with how social inclusion and exclusion practices govern the access into linguistic and cultural resources. The concept of identity formed the answer for this question. Identity change represents a continuous and dynamic process of being and becoming that accompanies ALL. Identities, in general, refer to multiple and changeable subject positions (Weedon, 1987), which are embedded in every social activity (Widdicombe, 1998, p. 191). Identity emerged in this research in five forms: (i) cultural; (ii) social; (iii) racial; (iv) gendered; and (v) aged. Throughout the ALL process, AL learners use the TL to conceptualise the self and the social world around them, whereas this process of negotiating identities uses and develops the language itself. Also, AL learners continually reproduce their identities that govern their access to new social groups, which represent valuable linguistic, social and cultural resources.

Learning the TL and practising its cultural values influenced the learner's self-positioning and personal standing to a certain extent, which forced AL learners to negotiate and reconstruct new identities. As a result, identity is constructed in and by social interaction and language becomes central to subject positioning. On the other hand, identity differences with the TL group require AL learners to negotiate their identities in order to access social groups and manipulate linguistic resources. Different identities or disputed self-positioning can prevent AL learners from accessing the TL group and its resources.

Generally speaking, ALL requires natural learning settings where AL learners can use the TL freely in order to apply what they have learnt and become familiar with what it is available in daily social situations. It is not only cognition that determines the nature of the social world, but also the world of human relationships and social artefacts that influence how we regulate our cognitive processes (Lantolf, 2000, p. 79). The language acquisition device is not located in the head of the learner, but is situated in the dialogic interaction that develops between individuals engaged in social activities (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 1995, p. 110).

Finally, the participants' accounts are a powerful reminder of the diversity of experiences faced by refugees. Yet, many are moving and reveal genuine triumph over adversity and trauma. For many, their most successful interactions in English were with other non-native speakers of English and the difficulty in developing relationships with English speaking Australians, even at work, is a valuable finding of the thesis. Thus, a number of participants needed to create such communicative opportunities to engage in meaningful social interactions.

8.2 Significance of the Research Findings

This research study explored the nature of the dynamic relationship between the AL learner and the ALL process within the parameters of the social context. The complexity of this relationship is reflected through the wide range of themes that underline each of the three dynamics. Sociocultural dynamics also influence each other, as well as other psychological and linguistic dimensions. Analysing any language learning process cannot be truthful without understanding the nature of the social, cultural and historical context that contains that process.

This study illustrates the importance of social interactions within a supportive community, of the role of other language users in language socialisation, of the negotiation of identity and social identification in a range of social situations and of cultural capital accumulated via prior education, linguistic knowledge, cultural knowledge, social experience and agency. The study also acknowledges the diverse and valuable roles played by former refugees and immigrants in Australian society and their resilience in the face of settlement difficulties, trauma, racism, poor education, harsh policies and so on.

English plays a vital role in the life of refugees who search for settlement and building a new life in the host country. Today, with this kind of human development and ever-changing mobility, there is no basis for the claim that the TL is acquired merely as a result of the interaction between the cognition and the limited classroom setting since both entities are situated in a wider social context. Rob Batstone (2010) argues that a proper treatment of language development requires inclusion of both cognitive and social elements and that neither can be divorced from the other if we want to reach a comprehensive understanding of ALL. This new space of social

possibilities generated by the social context has opened the door for a wide range of contextual influences on ALL. Thus, AL learners are continually influenced by what is happening in the outer world with regard to cultural principles and social changes.

8.3 Limitations of the Study

As with any research, these research findings should be considered within the context of limitations. It is important to recognise that this sociocultural paradigm, despite its ‘sociocultural’ label, does not seek to explain how AL learners acquire the cultural values of the TL, but rather how knowledge of the TL is internalised through experiences of a sociocultural nature (Ellis, 2008, pp. 517-518).

A common criticism of qualitative research is that it is not able to generalise findings. In fact, this is a strength because it allows for a full understanding of what is specific to a particular group and individuals of that group. Others can build on these findings by accumulating sufficient genuine and descriptive evidence about the similarity between the researched context and the target context to which the theoretical implications are to be transferred (Davis, 1995). This study’s findings will be useful to others in similar social contexts with similar research questions (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 252).

Hence, the nature of the study carries two types of constraints on the capacity to transfer its findings. First, this study investigates ALL within a unique local context, but as discussed in the previous section, this may not represent a disadvantage due to the fact that the locality of focus provides a better understanding of the phenomena. The second constraint relates to the population of the study since selected participants have unique individual characteristics associated with their

language learning experiences, national backgrounds, educational status, settlement experiences, proficiency in English, gender, religion and other characteristics.

Nonetheless, a detailed account of the focus of study, the researcher's role and the basis for selecting participants were provided. Data collection and analysis tools were reported and justified in order to provide a truthful description of the methods used in the research study (Creswell, 2003). As a result, the rich descriptive data resulted from the current research project can assist ALL researchers, educators, policymakers and interested readers to make their own judgments about any possible transferability of these findings and implications to other milieu (Guba & Lincoln, as cited in Bryman, 2004; Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Another common criticism of qualitative research is centred on subjectivity and the relationship with participants in terms of power relations and social positioning. In this regard, Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) argue that these biases can blur the sociological gaze, caused by status, social positioning, or power relations. In this study, my position as a researcher could have influenced the answers of some respondents because they wanted to please me or they felt they belonged to a lower social status than my status as a researcher who might be assumed to be more knowledgeable. To avoid being placed in such situations, I tried to explain to participants that they know more about their own ALL and settlement experiences and I was meeting them to learn from them.

Further, there might be some respondents who felt that they adopt similar self-positions to mine, in terms of attitudes to the TL language and its culture, due to the fact that I originated from the same Arabic-speaking background, as well as being a L2 speaker of English. Although these similar group memberships influenced the

nature of the assumed formal relationship with participants, these shared ethnic and cultural similarities, in fact, helped me to get closer to the social world of participants.

Concerning research methods, applying crystallisation rather than triangulation provided this study with credibility in terms of the multiple subject-positioning of the participants within the parameters of the research settings, as well as the limitations of the theoretical design (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Davies & Harre, 1990). The temporal boundaries of the actual research project took three years in accordance with the regulations set by WSU.

Participants were selected from the Western Sydney region because of the high density of refugees and immigrants living in these areas. The study population involved spatial borders, which included 20 participants, comprising of eight females and 12 males. The exact gender balance of participants was difficult to achieve for a range of demographic and cultural constraints, especially for the female group. Participants speak different Arabic dialects and came from different Arab countries.

Finally, using only written biographies at the beginning of data collection did not enable some participants to reveal detailed description of their settlement conditions and ELL experiences. This is due to their relatively limited English and unfamiliarity with the writing conventions of stories. Also, there were two participants who were illiterate in their original language Arabic, as well as English, which made them report their biographies orally. Therefore, the decision to employ semi-structured interviews in exploring language learning experiences was critical since the interviews enabled me to collect valuable data through focusing on the gaps in information not covered in biographies. Also, the nature of this kind of

interviewing helped me to communicate better with participants and elicit useful information about their lived experiences (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 47).

8.4 Recommendations for Future Research

Globalisation has moved education and ALL into a new realm that is inspired by advancements in communications, an integrated world economy and online learning (Altbach, Reisberg & Rumbley, 2009). In line with these universal changes, language has not only become a means of communication and socialisation, but also a power that enables its users to negotiate entry to social groups, access learning resources, use technology and address everyday issues (Watson-Gegeo, 1988).

It is hoped that this study will raise further questions for qualitative researchers concerning the relationship between the AL learner, the ALL process and the social context in the light of increasing global mobility of populations and the diversity of origins, social needs and circumstances. The role of social interaction in ALL has long been established. At the same time, many poststructuralist scholars have criticised interactionist approaches for their lack of sensitivity to social contexts and overestimated generalisation across different learner groups (Pavlenko, 2002, p. 286), as well as associating access to interactional opportunities with motivation (Norton Peirce, 1995). These theoretical weaknesses came as a result of insisting on investigating interaction in language classrooms rather than in the wider natural settings where spontaneous interaction in the TL is critical (Miller, 1999; Norton Peirce, 1995). Furthermore, ALL researchers should examine the social context or the field of learning when investigating sociocultural dynamics even if the purpose of the study is to investigate or collect data about a specific social factor or phenomenon. This open research focus will allow researchers to examine that social

or individual factor in its social context rather than in isolation, which will provide better and unique data.

Although the main focus of this study was on identifying sociocultural dynamics that impact ALL, it is important to acknowledge that other psychological and linguistic dimensions affecting ALL are not the subject of the study. However, further research is required to explore the relationship between sociocultural dynamics and psychological dimensions.

8.5 Recommendations for Future Policies and Learning Practices

In today's world, adult AL learners are facing persistent social and cultural challenges where they are required to learn to interact not only with other human beings, but also with smart machines such as smartphones, passport-check scanners and ticket vending machines and social media. The growing presence of information and communication technologies in day-to-day life has profoundly changed the so-called 'old habits' that characterised our society. Currently, we live in a world mediated by computers, diffused at all levels of society (Gorbis, 2011).

The study recognises that ongoing learning and social support for former refugees on behalf of governments and communities needed even after former refugees make the transition from refugees to new citizens. It is essential to maintain the current funds, whether in the state or national budget, allocated to refugee settlement and ELL programs. Government support should continue even beyond the initial settlement stage, which may last for several years, since some former refugees may still have learning and social needs to be addressed as a result of their long refugee journey and difficult settlement circumstances, as it is seen with participants

such as Wardah, Jafar and Afifa. Funding should also include humanitarian and community organisations that support and provide volunteer services to former refugees and new arrivals. New government funding is still required to support extra ELL and settlement programs. This may include designing and administering new initiatives that encourage employers to train and employ former refugees in order to engage them in the labour market and the community as a whole. Such initiatives will help those disadvantaged individuals to develop their English since engaging in the workplace enables AL learners to access valuable interactional opportunities and learning resources.

In addition, designing future ESL pedagogy should be based on an interactive consultation process with all stakeholders involved in adult refugee education in order to ensure that the rationale, framework, objectives and content of the curriculum are in line with recent developments in ALL research and to meet the learners' social needs in the Australian social context. ESL service providers may design plans for engaging English speaking volunteers who are willing to act as 'teacher's aides' or 'buddies' inside and outside the classroom to enrich the ALL experience of learners through providing interactional opportunities and language resources. Language, as a symbolic tool, allows individuals to collaborate with others in order to shape their world according to their goals (Lantolf & Appel, 1994).

It is important that the scope of culture learning begins to address the ways in which culture learning will be practised by learners (Liddicoat et al, 2003, p. 8). Carr (1999) argues that AL learners need to become interculturally competent players, as well as sensitive observers, since the role of culture learning is to provide a framework for productive dialogue between old and new understandings. In this

regard, the role of the teacher is essential in the ALL process. ESL teachers should be aware of individual differences in language abilities between their learners. These individual differences are due to interrelated sociocultural dynamics and teachers should deal wisely with them.

This study shows that AL learners have little control of the conditions and circumstances set by the social context, but they have the agency and capability to adapt themselves to these circumstances (Bourdieu, 1973). They also have the capacity to adjust their learning settings and make decisions about their learning (Pittaway, 2004). Therefore, teachers should show their students how to become in charge of their ALL inside and outside the classroom. This may include guiding them on how to manipulate linguistic resources, as well as accessing interactional opportunities outside the classroom. Teachers also should emphasise the value of creating social learning strategies in designing interactional opportunities.

Language is a social activity that we need to learn and master in order to use it effectively (Lantolf, 2006). To achieve this, AL learners should be encouraged to develop their English language skills through performing real contact assignments outside the classroom. Such contact assignments may include voluntary community work, joining sport or social clubs and attending short courses such as first aid or traffic controlling (Springer & Collins, 2008).

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APPENDIX A: AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT'S DISCUSSION ON REFUGEES AND NEW ENGLISH LITERACY TESTS

AM - Liberal backbencher noisy cog in Coalition wheel

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[ABC Online](#)

AM - Liberal backbencher noisy cog in Coalition wheel

[This is the print version of story <http://www.abc.net.au/am/content/2007/s1872239.htm>]

AM - Thursday, 15 March, 2007 08:04:00

Reporter: Daniel Hoare

TONY EASTLEY: With the Federal Government and the Prime Minister sliding further behind Labor in the polls, a recalcitrant backbench is the last thing that John Howard needs.

But Liberal backbencher, Petro Georgiou, is again proving a formidable voice of dissent, this time on his opposition to the Government's proposed changes to citizenship laws.

Mr Georgiou says new English literacy tests are so difficult that many native-born Australians wouldn't pass them.

But the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Kevin Andrews, says the tests are a reasonable requirement for anyone wanting to become a citizen.

Daniel Hoare reports.

DANIEL HOARE: With a history of vocal opposition to a number of his own party's policies in recent years, Petro Georgiou would seem an unlikely candidate for an annual Christmas card from Prime Minister John Howard.

And at a time when Labor is surging ahead in the polls, many Liberals might now question Mr Georgiou's decision to attack a major Government policy so close to an election.

Speaking as a guest of the Italian Assistance Association in Melbourne last night, Petro Georgiou described the Federal Government's proposed changes to citizenship laws as draconian and backward looking.

PETRO GEORGIU: What is involved, even if it is not intended, is a fundamental political and social regression that will erect unreasonable and unnecessary barriers to citizenship unprecedented in this country.

DANIEL HOARE: With his former boss, the former prime minister Malcolm Fraser in the audience, Liberal backbencher Petro Georgiou slammed the proposed English test for citizenship as unduly harsh.

PETRO GEORGIU: What the new test represents is a fundamental shift from requiring basic English speaking ability, assessed in an interview, to a test of literacy.

DANIEL HOARE: Also there to support Petro Georgiou last night was his backbench colleague,

<http://www.abc.net.au/cgi-bin/common/printfriendly.pl?http://www.abc.net.au/am/content/2007/...> 15/03/2007

Bruce Baird, who, while not wanting to speak to *AM* on tape, was prepared to admit he may accompany Mr Georgiou in his bid to lobby colleagues to oppose citizenship changes.

Mr Georgiou says the English tests under the proposed changes would be hard enough for native Australians to pass, let alone those born overseas.

PETRO GEORGIU: For a test of citizenship to be a real incentive for migrants to learn English, it cannot demand a level of proficiency surpassing that of a million and a half Australians who have English as their mother tongue.

What is being currently described as an incentive to learn English will actually be a punishment for those of low literacy who happen to be born overseas and who actually want to become Australian citizens.

DANIEL HOARE: Petro Georgiou says rather than introducing tougher English tests as a requirement for citizenship, the Government should look at new ways to improve the English skills of migrants.

He recommends the Government appoint a small group of eminent Australians to examine why many long-term migrants aren't able to grasp the language effectively.

But the Minister for Immigration and Citizenship, Kevin Andrews, says it's important that all new citizens have a good grasp of the English language.

KEVIN ANDREWS: When people come to Australia they come to Australia because they see this as a land for opportunity.

And surely part of our responsibility to them is to ensure that they understand and can use English, not to say that people shouldn't be able to use their native tongues.

That's been a great additional advantage to Australia, but surely being able to use English is important for anybody in this country.

TONY EASTLEY: Immigration and Citizenship Minister Kevin Andrews ending that report from Daniel Hoare.

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APPENDIX B: RESEARCH INVITATION LETTER



RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS WANTED

Good Day,

Have you got a story to tell about your experience with learning English in Australia?

Are you originally a refugee of Arabic-speaking background and aged 20 years or over?

If yes, then please tell me your experience, whether it is successful or not since it might be valuable to other adult additional language learners in Australia.

My name is Ahmad Alkhalil, a PhD student from the School of Education in University of Western Sydney. Currently I am conducting a research investigating the social and cultural dynamics affecting the additional language learning process of Arabic-speaking adult refugees in Australian social settings.

This research project needs both male and female participants. There are two stages in this research project. Your participation in the first stage will involve the completion of an initial forty minute written biography. If you are willing to continue your involvement in the second stage of the study, a one hour open-ended interview will be conducted. The interview could be audio-recorded; however this will be dependent upon participant's consent.

Privacy and confidentiality are assured and no individuals will be identified in the final thesis report. The researcher will be the only person to have access to the information collected.

If you would like to participate in this research project or have any questions about the study, please call me on (0421205891) or alternatively text me your name and phone number and I will call you back.

Thank you and I appreciate your time to read this invitation

Ahmad Alkhalil

PhD student / School of Education/UWS

Research Invitation Letter (Arabic translation)



بحث دكتوراه يحتاج متطوعين

هل لديك أي تجارب شخصية مع تعلم اللغة الأنكليزية في أستراليا و تود أن تخبر الآخرين عنها؟

هل انت من خلفية عربية و جنت الى إستراليا كلاجئ و عمرك الآن أربعة و عشرين سنة أو أكثر؟

إذا كان جوابك بالإيجاب فأتمنى منك أن تشاركني هذه التجارب سواء كانت هذه الخبرات ناجحة أو العكس لأن هذه التجارب عن تعلم الأنكليزية ربما تكون نافعة للمهاجرين أو اللاجئيين البالغين الذين يتعلمون الأنكليزية في أستراليا.

أسمى (أحمد راضي الخليل) طالب دكتوراه من جامعة ويسترن سيدني- كلية التعليم أو School of Education و حاليا أقوم بأجراء بحثي الذي يحقق في الظواهر الاجتماعية و الثقافية المؤثرة على عملية تعلم اللغة الأنكليزية لللاجئين البالغين من أصول عربية في المجتمع الأسترالي. البحث يحتاج الى مشاركين من كلا الجنسين ذكور و إناث.

تتكون هذه الدراسة من مرحلتين حيث تتضمن المرحلة الأولى كتابة أو سرد تجربتك الشخصية حول تعلم الأنكليزية و هذا قد يستغرق حوالي أربعين دقيقة. و في حالة رغبتك الاستمرار بالمشاركة في هذا البحث فإن المرحلة الثانية ستتطلب إجراء مقابلة شخصية معك قد تستغرق حوالي الساعة. إن هذه المقابلة قد تسجل صوتيا لحفظ المعلومات و لكن هذا الأجراء سيتطلب موافقتك المسبقة و المكتوبة.

إن أي معلومات تقدمها من خلال هذا البحث سيتم التعامل معها بمنتهى السرية و التكتم و لن تكون هناك أي أسماء أو معلومات شخصية قد تدل على هوية أصحابها أو الأشخاص الآخرين موجودة في النسخة النهائية للبحث حيث سيكون الباحث هو الشخص الوحيد الذي بإمكانه الدخول على هذه المعلومات.

و أخيرا إذا كنت ترغب المشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية أو إذا كانت لديك أي أسئلة حول البحث أرجو منك الاتصال بي على الرقم الآتي: 0421205891 أو بمقتورك إرسال أسمك و رقم هاتفك إلى برسالة نصية و سوف أقوم بعدها بالاتصال بك مباشرة.

شكرا جزيلا لقراءتك هذه الدعوة و أتمنى لك حظا سعيدا في حياتك

أحمد راضي الخليل

School of Education

University of Western Sydney

APPENDIX C: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET 1



Human Research Ethics Committee
Office of Research Services

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET-1-

Project title: *H9239-Sociocultural dynamics affecting the additional language learning process of Arabic-speaking adult refugees in Australian settings*

The School of Education of University of Western Sydney is supervising a PhD study conducted by Ahmad Radhy R. Alkhalil. This study is being conducted to meet the requirements for a Doctor of Philosophy in Education under the supervision of Assoc. Prof. Carol Reid (telephone: 02 9772 6524); Dr. Criss Jones Diaz (telephone: 02 97726431) and Dr. Katina Zammit (telephone: 02 97726291) from School of Education.

The study is designed to investigate the social and cultural dynamics that affect the process of additional language learning conducted by Arabic-speaking adult refugees in South Western Sydney region. This requires exploring the learning experiences and perceptions of participants. The study may be of benefit to all refugees in Australia but may not benefit you directly.

There are two stages in this research project. Your participation in the first stage will involve the completion of a written biography describing your personal experience and points of view about learning English in Australia. If you are willing to continue your involvement in the second stage of the study, a one hour interview will be conducted. This interview could be audio-recorded; however this will be dependent upon your consent.

All participation in this project is voluntary and you may withdraw from the project at any time. You will be given the opportunity to preview results or interview transcripts before they are used. You will also be given the opportunity to withdraw any information at the end of the interview without negative consequences.

Privacy and confidentiality are assured and no individuals will be identified in the final thesis report. The researcher will be the only person to have access to the information collected.

Please, notice that you might face a potential distress or discomfort when sharing your past learning experiences throughout the course of your participation in this research. If this happened, please let the researcher know immediately, so the interview can be terminated. Also you may choose to approach the following organisations below to deal with these issues:

STARTTS

The NSW Service for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Torture and Trauma Survivors helps refugees recover from their experiences and build a new life in Australia. STARTTS services are free of charge. STARTTS' staffs speaks more than 20 languages, when a counsellor can't speak the language of a client, we use a qualified interpreter. Anyone can make a referral to STARTTS including the person themselves, a family member or friend or another service provider. All referrals are made to the head office on the following address:

Head office Address: 152 – 168 The Horsley Drive,
Carramar NSW 2163

Postal address: PO Box 203
Fairfield NSW 2165

Phone: (02) 9794 1900 **Fax:** (02) 9794 1910

Arab Council Australia

Arab Council Australia is a non-profit independent community organisation working to bring about positive social justice and improves the lives of the most vulnerable people in the community. **Arab Council Australia provides a range of welfare services including** community development, case work, community education, early family intervention, referral, and home visits.

Telephone:

(02) 9709 4333

Facsimile:

(02) 9709 2928

Email:

info@arabcouncil.org.au

Street Address:

Level 1, 194 Stacey Street
Bankstown 2200
NSW, Australia

Postal Address:

PO Box 1103
Bankstown 2200
NSW, Australia

Finally, please do not hesitate to contact me on (0421205891) if you have any questions about the research and your participation.

Thank you,

Ahmad Radhy R. Alkhalil

This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers (Ph: 02 4570 1136). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Participant Information Sheet 1 (Arabic translation)

Human Research Ethics Committee
Office of Research Services



توضيح موجز البحث

أسم البحث-(H9239): العوامل الاجتماعية المؤثرة على تعلم اللغة الانكليزية للاجئين البالغين الناطقين بالعربية في المجتمعات الأسترالية

تقوم كلية التربية بجامعة وسترن سيدني بالإشراف على رسالة الدكتوراه للطالب أحمد راضي الخليل و المعنونة أعلاه. إن الغرض من هذه الدراسة البحثية هو لأستيفاء متطلبات درجة الدكتوراه في فلسفة التعليم تحت إشراف الأستاذ المساعد السيدة كارول ريد (تلفون: 97726524) و الدكتورة السيدة كرس جونز دياز (تلفون: 97726431) و الدكتورة السيدة كاتينا زامت (تلفون: 97726291).

تبحث الدراسة في الظروف الاجتماعية والثقافية المؤثرة على تعلم اللغة الانكليزية للاجئين البالغين من أصول عربية و القاطنين في ضواحي جنوب غرب سيدني من ولاية نيو ساوث ويلز و هذا يتطلب تحليل التجارب الشخصية للمشاركين في البحث و وجهات نظرهم فيما يخص تعلمهم الانكليزية. أن هذا البحث ربما يكون ذو فائدة كبيرة للاجئين في أستراليا في حالة إتمامه لكن المشارك ربما لن يستفيد منه بشكل مباشر.

يتألف هذا البحث من مرحلتين حيث تتطلب مشاركتك في المرحلة الأولى كتابة سرد قصصي قد تستغرق أربعون دقيقة حول ذكرياتك و تجاربك الشخصية عن دراسة اللغة الانكليزية. في حالة رغبتك الأستمرار في المرحلة الثانية من البحث فهذا يتطلب المشاركة في مقابلة قد تستغرق حوالي الساعة و هذه المقابلة قد تسجل صوتيا و هذا يعتمد على موافقتك. أن المشاركة في هذا المشروع البحثي تطوعية لكلا الجنسين ذكور و إناث و يمكنك وقف مشاركتك في أي وقت. كما سيكون بإمكانك الأطلاع على النتائج أو نصوص المقابلة قبل إستخدامها و يكون لك الحق في سحب أي معلومات تخصك عند نهاية المقابلة و بدون أي توابع سلبية.

إن المشاركة في هذه الدراسة ستكون في منتهى السرية و الخصوصية كما إن النتائج النهائية للدراسة لن تتضمن أي أسماء حقيقية أو أي معلومات شخصية قد ربما تقود للتعرف على هويات أصحابها الحقيقيين كما إن الباحث هو الشخص الوحيد المطلع على هذه المعلومات.

كما أرجو ملاحظة إن المشاركة في هذا البحث قد تولد لديك نوع من التوتر و القلق عند قيامك بالتحدث عن تجاربك الشخصية الماضية المتعلقة بالتعلم. عند حدوث هذا الشيء أرجو منك إبلاغ الباحث مباشرة حتى يقوم بإيقاف المقابلة. كذلك بإمكانك الأتصال بالمنظمات التالية لمساعدتك في تعامل مع هذه القضايا:

ستارتس (STARTTS)

هي وكالة مستقلة لمعالجة و تأهيل ضحايا التعذيب و الصدمات حيث تقوم بمساعدة اللاجئين للتغلب على تجاربهم السلبية السابقة و بناء حياة جديدة في أستراليا. تقدم ستارتس خدماتها بشكل مجاني كما ان كادرها يتحدث بأكثر من عشرون لغة و عكس ذلك فإن ستارتس ستقوم بتوفير مترجم محلف في حالة عدم توفر كادر يستطيع التحدث بلغة الشخص المراد. إن بإمكان أي شخص القيام بتسجيل الأحالة بما في ذلك الشخص نفسه أو أفراد عائلته أو صديقه أو أي دائرة خدمية أخرى من خلال مقر الوكالة الكائن على العنوان التالي:

Head office Address: 152 – 168 The Horsley Drive,
Carramar NSW 2163

Postal address: PO Box 203
Fairfield NSW 2165

Phone: (02) 9794 1900 **Fax:** (02) 9794 1910

Arab Council Australia / المجلس العربي الأسترالي

المجلس العربي الأسترالي هو منظمة إجتماعية مستقلة و غير ربحية تهدف الى تحقيق مناخ ايجابي من العدالة الاجتماعية و تحسين معيشة أفراد المجتمع الأكثر عرضة للمخاطر الاجتماعية. يقوم المجلس العربي الأسترالي بتوفير حزمة من الخدمات الاجتماعية بما فيها التطوير المجتمعي، دراسة الحالة، التكيف الاجتماعي، التدخل العائلي المبكر و الزيارات المنزلية. المراجعة تكون على العنوان التالي:

Telephone:

(02) 9709 4333

Facsimile:

(02) 9709 2928

Email:

info@arabcouncil.org.au

Street Address:

Level 1, 194 Stacey Street

Bankstown 2200

NSW, Australia

Postal Address:

PO Box 1103

Bankstown 2200

NSW, Australia

و أخيرا أرجو منك عدم التردد في الأتصال بي على الرقم (0421205891) اذا رغبت في السؤال عن أي يخص البحث أو مشاركتك فيه.

مع فائق الشكر و الاحترام

أحمد راضي الخليل

هذا المشروع البحثي قد تمت المصادقة عليه من قبل لجنة أخلاقيات البحث البشري في جامعة وسترن سيدني. إذا كانت لديك أي شكوى أو تحفظات حول سلوكيات البحث فعليك الأتصال بلجنة الأخلاقيات البحثية على الرقم (02 45701136). أي قضايا ستطرحها ستعامل بسرية وسيتم التحقق حولها بشكل كامل و إعلامك بالنتيجة.

APPENDIX D: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Human Research Ethics Committee
Office of Research Services

RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

Research project title: H9239-*Sociocultural dynamics affecting the additional language learning process of Arabic-speaking adult refugees in Australian settings*

Please sign this consent form and place it in the envelope along with your completed written biography, if you agree to be a participant in this study. A copy of this signed form will be made available to you. There is also a sheet, attached, which contains a set of topics and questions that is designed to help plan and guide the writing process of your personal biography.

I,, agree to participate in this research project. I also acknowledge that:

I have read the participant information sheet [or where appropriate, 'have been read to me'] and have been given the opportunity to discuss the information and my involvement in the project with the researcher.

I consent to the audio recording during the interview procedure.

I understand that my involvement is confidential and that the information gained during the study may be published but no information about me will be used in any way that reveals my identity.

I understand that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without affecting my relationship with the researcher/s now or in the future.

Participant's Name: _____

Participant's Signature: _____ Date _____

Investigator's Name: Ahmad Radhy Alkhalil

Investigator's Signature: _____ Date _____

This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers (Ph.: 02 4570 1136). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Participant Consent Form (Arabic translation)

Human Research Ethics Committee
Office of Research Services



ورقة الأشتراك في البحث

أسم البحث-(H9239): العوامل الاجتماعية المؤثرة على تعلم اللغة الانكليزية للاجئين البالغين الناطقين بالعربية في المجتمعات الأسترالية

إذا كنت ترغب بالمشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية أرجو التفضل منك بالتوقيع على هذا البيان و وضعه في الطرف البريدي المرفق مع ورقة السرد الشخصي التي ستقوم بأكملها لاحقاً و سأقوم بأعطائك نسخة من هذا البيان لغرض الحفظ.

إني الموقع أثناءه أوافق على المشاركة في هذه الدراسة و أؤكد التالي:
أولاً: إني قرأت (أو قد قرأت لي) الصفحة المتعلقة بمعلومات المشاركة في الدراسة و أعطيت لي الفرصة لمناقشة هذه المعلومات و مشاركتي في الدراسة مع الباحث.
ثانياً: أوافق على تسجيل المقابلة صوتياً.
ثالثاً: إني أتفهم إن مشاركتي في هذه الدراسة تكون سرية و إن المعلومات المستحصلة من خلال البحث قد تجد طريقها للنشر على أن لا يتضمن ذلك أي معلومات قد تقود الى معرفة هويتي.
رابعاً: إنه بإمكانني سحب مشاركتي بالبحث في أي وقت بدون التأثير على علاقتي بالباحث حالياً أو مستقبلاً.

الأسم الكامل للمشارك:

التوقيع: التاريخ:

الأسم الكامل للباحث: أحمد راضي الخليل

التوقيع: التاريخ:

هذا المشروع البحثي قد تمت المصادقة عليه من قبل لجنة أخلاقيات البحث البشري في جامعة وسترن سيدني. إذا كانت لديك أي شكاوى أو تحفظات حول سلوكيات البحث فعليك الاتصال بجنة الأخلاقيات البحثية على الرقم (02 45701136). أي قضايا ستطرحها ستعامل بسرية وسيتم التحقق حولها بشكل كامل و إعلامك بالنتيجة.

APPENDIX E: UWS HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE APPROVAL

UWS HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

12 September 2011

Associate Professor Carol Reid,
School of Education

Dear Carol and Ahmad,

I wish to formally advise you that the Human Research Ethics Committee has approved your research proposal **H9239** "*Sociocultural dynamics affecting the additional language learning process of Arabic-speaking adult refugees in Australian settings*", until 24 December 2013 with the provision of a progress report annually and a final report on completion.

Please quote the project number and title as indicated above on all correspondence related to this project.

This protocol covers the following researchers:

Carol Reid, Katina Zammit, Christine Jones Diaz, Ahmad Al Khalil.

Yours sincerely,

Dr. Anne Abraham

Chair, UWS Human Research Ethics Committee

APPENDIX F: BIOGRAPHY WRITING GUIDE

The purpose of the statements and questions, below, is to help writing the biography through maintaining focus on the learning aspects of the refugee's settlement experience:

1. Previous learning experiences with English overseas.
2. Language learning experiences in Australia.
3. Did you attend any English language classes?
4. Your attitudes towards English and the Australian community.
5. Were there any learning strategies you used to improve English language learning?
6. Have you been engaged in any social relationships and activities with members of the English-speaking community?
7. The difficulties you faced when learning English in Australia.
8. The impact of Arabic-speaking community in Australia on your English language learning.
9. Have you received any social or learning support from the community around you?
10. The role of English-speaking media.
11. The role of some public and community bodies, such as, libraries, Centrelink and employment networks in supporting new arrivals.
12. Do you think that getting involved with the Australian community, through work, study, and socialising, can develop your English language skills?
13. Participants' suggestions to promote their English language development.

Thank you again for taking the time to read these questions and writing your biography.

Please note that these questions are merely a guide to help you writing your biography and, definitely, you can talk about different topics or events you faced during your settlement in Australia, which have had an impact on your English language learning.

Please don't hesitate to call me on 0421205891 if you have any questions about how to write your biography.

دليل كتابة التجربة الشخصية

إن الأسئلة التالية ستساعدك في تذكر تجاربك السابقة و كتابة السرد القصصي لتجاربك مع تعلم اللغة الانكليزية و الاستقرار في أستراليا:

- ما هو مستوى تعليمك عندما قدمت الى أستراليا؟
- هل تعلمت الانكليزية في المدارس الأسترالية؟ و كم كانت مدة الدراسة؟ و أين؟
- ما هو مستوى لغتك الانكليزية حالياً؟
- ما هو رأيك باللغة الانكليزية و بالمجتمع الأسترالي؟
- هل طورت و استخدمت أي وسيلة لتساعدك في تعلم اللغة الانكليزية و إتقان براعات القراءة و الكتابة؟
- منذ وصولك لأستراليا هل كونت أي علاقات إجتماعية و صداقات مع إستراليين أو أشخاص ينكلمون الانكليزية؟
- هل كانت هناك أي صعوبات واجهتك في تعلم اللغة الانكليزية في أستراليا؟
- هل كان هناك أي تأثير لاستخدامك للغة العربية على مستوى تعلمك للغة الانكليزية؟ و ماذا كان تأثير وجودك داخل الجالية العربية على استخدامك للغة الانكليزية في أمورك اليومية؟
- هل تلقيت أي نوع من الدعم المعنوي أو اللغوي من المجتمع الذي تعيش فيه أو أي دعم آخر ساعدك على تطوير مستوى لغتك الانكليزية؟
- هل كنت تشاهد أو تتصت الى قنوات الأذاعة و التلفزيون الأسترالية الناطقة بالانكليزية؟
- هل قامت دوائر السنترلنك أو شبكات العمل أو مراكز تعلم الانكليزية أو المؤسسات الإجتماعية الأخرى بأي شكل من الدعم لك منذ وصولك لأستراليا؟
- هل تعتقد بأن الأختلاط بالمجتمع الأسترالي من خلال الدراسة أو العمل أو من خلال المناسبات الإجتماعية تأثير على تطوير مهارات اللغة الانكليزية؟
- برأيك الخاص كيف بإمكان شخص ما تطوير لغته الانكليزية؟

و أخيراً أشكرك على تمضية وقتك في قراءة هذه الأسئلة و التمعن بها. هذه الأسئلة مجرد خطوط عامة لمساعدتك على كتابة قصتك مع تعلم الانكليزية و بالطبع يمكنك الكتابة عن أي شيء آخر أو أحداث كان لها دور في تعلمك للانكليزية. الرجاء التحدث إلي اذا كان لديك أي سؤال أو استفسار حول هذه الأسئلة أو حول كتابة سردك الشخصي على رقم الموبايل التالي (0421205891- أحمد راضي الخليل).

APPENDIX G: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET 2

Human Research Ethics Committee
Office of Research Services



Thank you for writing your biography.

Now, I would like to invite you to participate in an interview. The purpose of the interview is to discuss in more details some of the issues you mentioned in your biography about your English language learning experience. If this is the first time you participate in this research study, then the focus of the interview will be on answering a set of questions regarding your learning experience.

The interview will take about one hour at a mutually convenient and safe location. With your permission, the interview will be recorded and transcribed so that your thoughts are accurately recorded. Any references that identify you, your family or other individuals will be removed so that your identity is protected.

Your additional information on these important matters will be appreciated. If you would like to be interviewed, please provide your mobile/phone number below and I will contact you to discuss the details. Alternatively, you can contact me in person on:

0421 205 891 – Ahmad Alkhalil.

If you have any questions about participating in the interview, please contact me or email my PhD supervisor: Associate/Professor Carol Reid (c.reid@uws.edu.au).

Thanks for your cooperation and support.

I am interested in being interviewed. My contact number is _____

This study has been approved by the University of Western Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officers (Ph: 02 4570 1136). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Participant Information Sheet 2 (Arabic translation)

Human Research Ethics Committee
Office of Research Services



أولاً أود أن أشركك على تفضلك بكتابة تجربتك الشخصية.

أود أن أطلب منك الآن الأشتراك في المقابلة الشخصية لغرض مناقشة بعض النقاط التي أشرت إليها سابقاً خلال كتابتك السردية بشكل أكثر تفصيلاً. في حالة كونك لم تشترك سابقاً في كتابة السيرة الذاتية فإن المقابلة ستدور حول تجاربك الشخصية مع رحلة اللجوء و الأستقرار في إستراليا و خصوصاً قضية تعلم اللغة الأنكليزية و المشاركة في المجتمع الجديد. ورقة الأسئلة المرفقة تحتوي على مجموعة من الأسئلة حول هذه المواضيع و التي سوف يتم الحديث عن بعضها خلال المقابلة.

إن هذه المقابلة سوف تستغرق حوالي الساعة في مكان آمن و متفق عليه مسبقاً. المقابلة ستسجل صوتياً بعد أخذ موافقتك و تكتب فيما بعد من أجل حفظ أفكارك بشكل دقيق. إننا سنقوم بحذف أي معلومات شخصية أو أسماء لأشخاص يمكن أن تدلل على إسمك أو هويتك الشخصية.

إن المعلومات التي سوف تزودنا بها حول النقاط السابقة الذكر ستجعلنا نشعر بالأمتنان لك و لمشاركتك الطوعية في هذه الدراسة البحثية. لهذا إذا كنت تود أن نقابلك الرجاء منك كتابة رقم هاتفك النقال أو النملفون الأرضي حتى أقوم بالاتصال بك و نتحدث عن التفاصيل الأخرى حول المقابلة. كذلك يمكنك الاتصال بي على الرقم: 0421205891 (أحمد راضي الخليل).

إذا كانت لديك أي أسئلة أخرى حول المشاركة في هذه الدراسة البحثية يمكنك التحدث لي شخصياً أو مراسلة الأستاذ المشرف على البحث السيدة (كارول ريد) على العنوان الإلكتروني التالي: c.reid@uws.edu.au

و أخيراً أتقدم لك بالشكر الجزيل لتعاونك و مشاركتك.

لدي الرغبة و أود المشاركة في المقابلة. رقم هاتفي هو

هذا المشروع البحثي قد تمت المصادقة عليه من قبل لجنة أخلاقيات البحث البشري في جامعة وسترن سيدني. إذا كانت لديك أي شكوى أو تحفظات حول سلوكيات البحث فعليك الاتصال بلجنة الأخلاقيات البحثية على الرقم (02 45701136). أي قضايا ستطرحها ستعامل بسرية وسيتم التحقق حولها بشكل كامل و إعلامك بالنتيجة.

APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (WITH ARABIC TRANSLATION)

1. Interview questions: Heitham	Arabic translation
Q.1 Tell me, please, about the difficulties you faced when you first arrive in Australia?	1. أخبرني، من فضلك، حول الصعوبات التي واجهتها عند وصولك أستراليا؟
Q.2 You mentioned to me before that you completed your undergraduate studies in Serbia before migrating to Australia and you learnt Serbian, so did this language learning experience has had an impact on your English language learning?	2. لقد ذكرت لي من قبل بأنك أكملت دراستك الجامعية في صربيا قبل الهجرة إلى أستراليا وتعلمت اللغة الصربية، لذلك هل كان لتجربة تعلم اللغة هذه تأثيرا على تعلمك اللغة الإنجليزية؟
Q.3 Do you think that your English language learning experience successful?	3. هل تعتقد أن تجربة تعلمك اللغة الإنجليزية ناجحة؟
Q.4 When you think, do you think in Arabic or English?	4. عندما تفكر، هل تفكر باللغة العربية أو الإنجليزية؟
Q.5 You told me before that your wife's English has been improving a lot since her arrival, how do you feel about that?	5. لقد أخبرتني من قبل، بأن لغة زوجتك الإنجليزية قد تحسنت كثيرا منذ وصولها، كيف تشعر حيال ذلك؟
Q.6 In your opinion, what are the factors that improved your English?	6. برأيك، ما هي العوامل التي ساهمت في تحسين مستواك في اللغة الإنجليزية؟
Q.7 You mentioned in your story that you were a physiotherapist when you first arrived to Australia, so did you get a job in your field?	7. لقد ذكرت في قصتك أنك كنت تعمل كأخصائي العلاج الطبيعي عند وصولك أستراليا، فهل حصلت على وظيفة في مجال إختصاصك؟
Q.8 How often do you use English?	8. ما مدى إستخدامك اللغة الإنجليزية في حياتك اليومية؟
Q.9 Do you feel that you are accepted into the wider Australian society?	9. هل تشعر بأنك شخص مقبول من قبل المجتمع الأسترالي؟
Q.10 Do you have any English-speaking friends? If the answer is 'no', then why?	10. هل لديك أي أصدقاء يتحدثوا اللغة الإنجليزية؟ إذا كان الجواب ب"كلا"، لماذا؟
Q.11 Do you like the Australian culture way of life? Why?	11. هل تحب طريقة المجتمع الأسترالي في معيشتهم؟ لماذا؟

2. Interview questions: Nameer	Arabic translation
<p>Q.1 What difficulties did you face when you first arrived to Australia in terms of language and coping with a new community?</p> <p>Q.2 In your story, you mentioned that you have some issues with the informal and the cultural aspects of English language, could you clarify that?</p> <p>Q.3 How are you going to deal with these language weaknesses?</p> <p>Q.4 Do you think that knowing about the new culture is necessary to learn English?</p> <p>Q.5 In your opinion, how can you discover the new culture or what are the resources that you can use to know the Australian culture?</p> <p>Q.6 After this long time in Australia, do you feel that you are accepted into the Australian society? For example, what is the situation at your work?</p> <p>Q.7 Do you still feel that are barriers when you deal with friends or colleagues?</p> <p>Q.8 You also have mentioned in your story, that you are still treated as a migrant by native speakers and that you are not included by your colleagues at work, can you reflect further on this point?</p> <p>Q.9 So, what is the impact of this inclusion or exclusion on your language and cultural learning?</p> <p>Q.10 Do you think that being a Muslim or an Arab has affected your exposure into the Australian culture?</p> <p>Q.11 So, are there any cultural or religious factors that affect your familiarity with the Australian community?</p> <p>Q.12 Have you been discriminated against because of the way you speak English?</p> <p>Q.13 Do you like the Australian way of life?</p> <p>Q.14 Do you consider your English language learning experience successful? And why?</p>	<p>نمير</p> <p>1. ما هي الصعوبات التي واجهتموها عندما وصولكم أستراليا من ناحية اللغة والتآلف مع مجتمع جديد؟</p> <p>2. ذكرت في قصتك، بأن لديك بعض القضايا مع الجوانب الغير الرسمية والحضارية للغة الإنجليزية، هل يمكن أن توضح ذلك؟</p> <p>3. كيف ستتعامل مع نقاط ضعف اللغة هذه؟</p> <p>4. هل تعتقد بأن الإحاطة بثقافة المجتمع الجديد أمر ضروري لتعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>5. برأيك، كيف يمكنك اكتشاف ثقافة المجتمع الجديد أو ما هي الموارد التي يمكنك استخدامها للإحاطة بالثقافة الأسترالية؟</p> <p>6. بعد مرور هذا الوقت الطويل في أستراليا، هل تشعر بأنك شخص مقبول من قبل المجتمع الأسترالي؟ على سبيل المثال، ما هو الوضع في موقع عملك؟</p> <p>7. هل ما زلت تشعر بأن هناك حواجز عند التعامل مع الأصدقاء أو الزملاء في العمل؟</p> <p>8. لقد ذكرت في قصتك أيضا، بأنك لا زلت تعامل على أنك مهاجرا من قبل السكان المحليين، وبأنك بعيد عن واقع زملائك في العمل، هل يمكن أن تتوسع حول هذه النقطة؟</p> <p>9. بناء على ذلك، ما هو تأثير الإحتواء أو الإقصاء المجتمعي على تعلمك للغة والإطلاع على حضارة المجتمع الجديد؟</p> <p>10. هل تعتقد أن كونك مسلم أو عربي قد أثر على إطلاعك على الثقافة الأسترالية؟</p> <p>11. إذن، هل هناك أي عوامل ثقافية أو دينية أثرت على درجة إبتلاك بالمجتمع الأسترالي؟</p> <p>12. هل تعرضت للتمييز بسبب الطريقة التي تتحدث الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>13. هل تحب طريقة معيشة الأستراليين؟</p> <p>14. هل تعتبر تجربة تعلمك للغة الإنجليزية ناجحة؟ ولماذا؟</p>

3. Interview questions: Muna	Arabic translation
<p>Q.1 What difficulties have you faced while learning English?</p> <p>Q.2 Do you consider your English language learning experience successful?</p> <p>Q.3 In your opinion, what are the factors that could improve any learner's English?</p> <p>Q.4 Do you feel that you are accepted into the Australian society?</p> <p>Q.5 What do you think about the role of some community organizations such as public libraries, Centrelink or job networks in supporting your English learning?</p> <p>Q.6 Do you play any sport or practise any hobbies or any social commitments?</p> <p>Q.7 Was it hard to settle in Australia?</p> <p>Q.8 Do you think that you need to speak English fluently in order to settle in Australia?</p> <p>Q.9 What do you think about the Australian culture or way of life?</p>	<p>منى</p> <p>1. ما هي الصعوبات التي واجهتها حين تعلمك اللغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>2. هل تعتبر تجربة تعلمك اللغة الإنجليزية ناجحة؟</p> <p>3. برأيك، ما هي العوامل التي يمكن أن تساهم في تحسين لغة المتعلم للإنجليزية؟</p> <p>4. هل تشعرين بأنك شخص مقبول من قبل المجتمع الأسترالي؟</p> <p>5. ما رأيك في دور بعض المؤسسات المجتمعية مثل المكتبات العامة، مؤسسة الضمان الاجتماعي أو شبكات العمل في دعم تعلمك للغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>6. هل تمارسين أي رياضة أو هواية أو أي نشاطات اجتماعية أخرى؟</p> <p>7. هل كان من الصعب عليك الإستقرار في أستراليا؟</p> <p>8. هل تعتقدين أن عليك التحدث باللغة الإنجليزية بطلاقة من أجل الإستقرار في أستراليا؟</p> <p>9. ما رأيك بالثقافة الأسترالية أو طريقة معيشتهم؟</p>

4. Interview questions: Ameer	Arabic translation
<p>Q.1 Did your study in Iraq involve any English instruction?</p> <p>Q.2 Did you do any work after you left the detention centre?</p> <p>Q.3 What do you think of your English language level now?</p> <p>Q.4 In your opinion, what are your English language weaknesses?</p> <p>Q.5 Do you face any issues in understanding Australian slang?</p> <p>Q.6 Are you studying any courses currently?</p> <p>Q.7 Have you received any learning support from family, friends or your community?</p> <p>Q.8 How often do you use English in your daily life?</p> <p>Q.9 What are the factors that could improve your English?</p> <p>Q.10 Do you think that living in an area mostly inhabited by an English-speaking community is going to improve your English?</p> <p>Q.11 Do you feel that you are accepted into the Australian society?</p> <p>Q.12 Have you been discriminated against because of the way you speak English?</p> <p>Q.13 Do you have any English-speaking friends?</p>	<p>أمير</p> <p>1. هل إحتوت دراستك في العراق على أي مادة تعلم باللغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>2. هل عملت بعد خروجك من مركز الاعتقال؟</p> <p>3. ما رأيك في مستوى لغتك الإنجليزية الآن؟</p> <p>4. في رأيك، ما هي نقاط ضعفك في اللغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>5. هل تواجه أي مشكلة في فهم اللهجة العامية الأسترالية؟</p> <p>6. هل تدرس أي من المقررات الدراسية في الوقت الحالي؟</p> <p>7. هل تلقيت أي دعم من عائلتك، أو أصدقائك أو مجتمعك خلال مسيرتك التعليمية؟</p> <p>8. ما مدى إستخدامك للغة الإنجليزية في حياتك اليومية؟</p> <p>9. ما هي العوامل التي يمكن أن تسهم في تحسين لغتك الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>10. هل تعتقد بأن سكنك في منطقة تقطنها أغلبية ناطقة باللغة الإنجليزية ستسهم في تحسين مستواك في اللغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>11. هل تشعر بأنك شخص مقبول من قبل المجتمع الأسترالي؟</p> <p>12. هل تعرضت للتمييز بسبب الطريقة التي تتحدث بها اللغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>13. هل لديك أي أصدقاء من خلفية ناطقة بالإنكليزية</p>

5. Interview questions: Daulat	Arabic translation
<p>Q.1 In your opinion, what are the factors that have improved your English language learning?</p> <p>Q.2 Do you agree with me if I say that you hardly need English in your everyday transactions or dealings while you live in Auburn since there is a wide Arabic community that live in this area?</p> <p>Q.3 How often and where do you use English?</p> <p>Q.4 What are the factors that made it difficult for you to learn English?</p> <p>Q.5 Being Arabic illiterate, how does that affect your English language learning?</p> <p>Q.6 Have you been discriminated against because of the way you speak English?</p> <p>Q.7 Do you have any English-speaking friends?</p> <p>Q.8 Do you think that being a Muslim woman has made it harder to learn English?</p> <p>Q.9 Do your kids help you with your learning?</p>	<p>دولت</p> <p>1. ما هي العوامل التي أدت إلى تحسين تعلمك للغة الإنجليزية في رأيك؟</p> <p>2. هل تتفقي معي إذا قلت أنك لست بحاجة إلى اللغة الإنجليزية في المعاملات اليومية أو التعامل لأنك تعيشين في ضاحية أوبرن حيث يعيش فيها جاليه عربيه كبيره ؟</p> <p>3. كم مرة وأين تستخدمين اللغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>4. ما هي العوامل التي جعلت من الصعب عليك تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>5. كونك فتاه عربيه غير متعلمه (أميه) كيف يمكن أن يؤثر ذلك على تعلمك للغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>6. هل تعرضت للتمييز بسبب الطريقة التي تتحدثين فيها الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>7. هل لديك أصدقاء يتحدثون باللغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>8. هل تعتقدين أن كونك امرأة مسلمة أدى الى ان يكون اصعب عليك تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>9. هل يساعدك أطفالك في التعلم؟</p>

6. Interview questions: Khalid	Arabic translation
<p>Q.1 What kind of education did you receive in your home country?</p> <p>Q.2 How was your English when you first arrived in Australia?</p> <p>Q.3 What kind of jobs did you do at the beginning?</p> <p>Q.4 What difficulties did you face when learning English?</p> <p>Q.5 How do you evaluate your English language level now?</p> <p>Q.6 Did your wife help you to improve your English?</p> <p>Q.7 What language do you use at home with your family?</p> <p>Q.8 Do you think that it is essential to learn something about Australian culture and traditions in order to improve your language proficiency?</p> <p>Q.9 Are there any other language difficulties?</p> <p>Q.10 How often do you use English in your everyday life?</p> <p>Q.11 Have you been discriminated against because of the way you speak English?</p> <p>Q.12 Do you have any English-speaking friends?</p> <p>Q.13 Do you like the Australian way of life?</p>	<p>خالد</p> <p>1. أي نوع من التعليم تلقيت في بلدك الام؟</p> <p>2. كيف كان مستواك في اللغة الإنجليزية عندما وصلت لأول مرة في أستراليا؟</p> <p>3. ما هي انواع الاعمال التي مارستها في البدايه؟</p> <p>4. ما هي الصعوبات التي واجهتك عند تعلم اللغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>5. كيف تقيم مستواك في اللغة الإنجليزية الآن؟</p> <p>6. هل ساعدك زوجتك على تحسين مستواك في اللغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>7. ما هي اللغة التي تستخدمها في المنزل مع أسرتك؟</p> <p>8. هل تعتقد أنه من الضروري أن تتعلم شيئاً عن الثقافة والتقاليد الأسترالية من أجل تحسين الكفاءة في لغتك؟</p> <p>9. هل هناك أية صعوبات لغوية أخرى؟</p> <p>10. ما هو حجم إستخدامك للأنجليزية في حياتك اليومية؟</p> <p>11. هل تعرضت للتمييز بسبب الطريقة التي تتحدث فيها الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>12. هل لديك أصدقاء يتحدثون باللغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>13. هل تحب الطريقة الأسترالية في</p>

7. Interview questions: Afaf	Arabic translation
<p>Q.1 Could you tell me something about yourself like name, age, home country and job?</p> <p>Q.2 How did you come to Australia?</p> <p>Q.3 How was your English when you first arrived in Australia?</p> <p>Q.4 Where and how long have you studied English since your arrival?</p> <p>Q.5 Have you completed any professional or TAFE courses?</p> <p>Q.6 What difficulties have you faced when you have been learning English?</p> <p>Q.7 Have you received any learning support from family, friends or your community?</p> <p>Q.8 Do you have any English-speaking friends?</p> <p>Q.9 Do you think that your English is better now?</p> <p>Q.10 Do you think you still need English although you deal with Arabic-speaking people?</p> <p>Q.11 Do you feel that you are accepted into the Australian society although you are from different background?</p> <p>Q.12 Do you watch Australian T.V?</p> <p>Q.13 Do you like the Australian culture?</p> <p>Q.14 What are the learning strategies or learning materials you are using to improve your English?</p>	<p>عفاف</p> <p>1. هل لك أن تخبريني شيئاً عن نفسك مثل الاسم والعمر والوطن الأم والوظيفة؟</p> <p>2. كيف أتيت إلى أستراليا؟</p> <p>3. كيف كان مستواك في اللغة الإنجليزية عندما وصلت لأول مرة في أستراليا؟</p> <p>4. أين تعلمت اللغة الإنجليزية و ما طول مدة الدراسة منذ وصولك هنا؟</p> <p>5. هل أكملت أي دورات مهنية أو دورات في المعاهد؟</p> <p>6. ما هي الصعوبات التي واجهتها في تعلمك للغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>7. هل تلقيت أي دعم في التعلم من العائلة أو الأصدقاء أو من مجتمعك؟</p> <p>8. هل لديك أصدقاء يتحدثون باللغة الإنجليزية؟</p> <p>9. هل تعتقد أن لغتك الإنجليزية هي أفضل الآن؟</p> <p>10. هل تعتقد أنك لا تزال بحاجة إلى اللغة الإنجليزية على الرغم من أنك تتعاملين مع أناس يتحدثون بالعربية؟</p> <p>11. هل تشعرين أنك مقبولة في المجتمع الأسترالي على الرغم من أنك من خلفية مختلفة؟</p> <p>12. هل تشاهدين التلفاز الأسترالي؟</p> <p>13. هل تفضلين الثقافة الأسترالية؟</p> <p>14. ما هي الاستراتيجيات التعليمية أو المواد التعليمية التي تستخدمينها لتحسين مستواك في اللغة الإنجليزية؟</p>

8. Interview questions: Hanah	Arabic translation
<p>Q.1 How was your level of English when you finished university in Iraq?</p> <p>Q.2 Where and how long did you study English since your arrival?</p> <p>Q.3 What kind of social and learning activities did you do during the time of the language course?</p> <p>Q.4 What aspects of English language have been harder for you to learn?</p> <p>Q.5 What would you do if your study group were talking about an unfamiliar topic such as cricket?</p> <p>Q.6 Have you tried to develop friendships with people from other speaking backgrounds?</p> <p>Q.7 Do you consider your English language learning experience successful?</p> <p>Q.8 I understand from your previous answers that you faced two kinds of resistance; one from the Australian students who were not willing to build a relationship with you, and another resistance from your own Iraqi group in order not to leave their group, is this true?</p> <p>Q.9 How often do you use English in your daily life?</p> <p>Q.10 Do you feel that you are accepted into the Australian society?</p> <p>Q.11 Have you been discriminated against because of the way you speak English?</p>	<p>هنا</p> <p>كيف كان مستوى لغتك الانكليزية عندما أكملت دراستك الجامعية في العراق؟</p> <p>كم مدة دراستك للانكليزية هنا في استراليا بعد وصولك و أين درستي؟</p> <p>ما هو نوع النشاطات التعليمية و الاجتماعية التي كنت تقومين بها أثناء دراستك الرسمية للانكليزية هنا في الجامعة؟</p> <p>ما هي الجوانب الأكثر صعوبة في تعلم اللغة الانكليزية؟</p> <p>ماذا كنت سوف تفعلين لو كان زملائك في الجامعة يتحدثون عن موضوع ليست لديك عنه أي معرفة مثل الكريكت؟</p> <p>هل حاولت تكوين صداقات مع أشخاص من خلفية إنكليزية أو يتحدثون الانكليزية؟</p> <p>بماذا تقيمين تجربتك بدراسة الانكليزية. هل كانت ناجحة؟</p> <p>فهمت من إجاباتك السابقة بأنك واجهت نوعين من الصد أو الممانعة من الناس الذين حولك.. الرفض الأول من جهة الطلاب الأستراليين في الجامعة عندما حاولت بناء صداقات معهم أما النوع الثاني من الصد أو المقاطعة فكانت من قبل مجموعة الطلاب العراقيين حتى لا تقومين بترك مجموعتهم ... هل هذا صحيح و كيف؟</p> <p>الى أي حد تستخدمين الانكليزية في حياتك اليومية؟</p> <p>هل تشعرين بأنك أصبحت مقبولة من قبل هذا المجتمع الجديد؟</p> <p>هل تعرضت لأي نوع من المضايقة الناتجة عن أسباب عنصرية بسبب الطريقة التي تتحدثين بها أو لكنتك الانكليزية؟</p>

9. Interview questions: Mary	Arabic translation
<p>Q.1 Would you like to talk about your journey to Australia and your life in the refugee detention?</p> <p>Q.2 What difficulties have you faced when learning English?</p> <p>Q.3 Do you consider your English language learning experience successful. And why?</p> <p>Q.4 In your opinion, what are the other factors that helped you to improve your English?</p> <p>Q.5 How did your friends help you to improve your English?</p> <p>Q.6 What do you think about the role of education and employment in developing your English language skills?</p> <p>Q.7 How often do you use Arabic in your daily life?</p> <p>Q.8 Do you use the internet in your daily activities?</p> <p>Q.9 Do you read any English books or newspapers regularly?</p> <p>Q.10 Do you face any problems understanding the Australian culture?</p> <p>Q.11 Do you feel that others accept you in the wider Australian community?</p> <p>Q.12 In your opinion, what are the positive and negative aspects of the Australian culture that affect your social involvement and language development?</p> <p>Q.13 Have you been discriminated against because of the way you speak English or your race?</p> <p>Q.14 Was it hard to settle and develop your life in Australia?</p>	<p>ماري</p> <p>هل ترغبين بالكلام عن رحلتك الى أستراليا و المدة التي قضيتها في مركز الأحتجاز؟</p> <p>وما هي الصعوبات التي واجهتها خلال فترة تعلمك الأنكليزية؟</p> <p>هل تعتقدين بأن تجربتك بتعلم الأنكليزية ناجحة؟ و لماذا؟</p> <p>ما هي العوامل الأخرى التي ساعدتك في تعلم الأنكليزية؟</p> <p>كيف تمكنت صديقاتك من تطوير مستوى لغتك الأنكليزية؟</p> <p>ما هو دور التعليم و العمل في تطوير مهارات اللغة الأنكليزية عندك؟</p> <p>الى أي مدى تستخدمين العربية في حياتك اليومية؟</p> <p>هل تستخدمين الأنترنت بشكل يومي؟</p> <p>هل تطالعين أي كتب أو مجلات أو صحف ناطقة بالأنكليزية و بشكل منتظم؟</p> <p>هل تواجهين أي صعوبات في فهم الثقافة الأسترالية؟</p> <p>هل تشعرين بأنك مقبولة إجتماعيا هنا من قبل الآخرين؟</p> <p>برأيك ما هي الجوانب الأيجابية و السلبية في الثقافة الأسترالية و التي تعيق أو تسهل تعلمك الأنكليزية و إنماجك بالمجتمع؟</p> <p>هل تعرضت لأي نوع من المضايقة لأسباب عنصرية بسبب طريقة تكلمك بالأنكليزية؟</p> <p>هل كان تجربتك في الأستقرار في أستراليا مهمة صعبة؟</p>

APPENDIX I: SAMPLE OF CODED TABLE FOR BIOGRAPHY DATA

Raghib

I am 57 Years old man. I came from Lebanon to Australia in 1986. I was a high school science teacher in Lebanon. At that time, I had a BSc – Chemistry and a BA – History.

Themes	Categories	Code	Quotes
Settlement experiences	Employment	Uses of English Bilingual-speaking workplace Employment	Extract 1: I use English to communicate at work and my private connections. Extract 2: At the start of 1987, I started teaching Arabic at the Saturday School for Community Languages and later obtained my Casual Teaching Number. I started to do casual teaching in various high schools until I was appointed as a full time science teacher in 1990. Working in high schools gave me the opportunity to improve my English.
Social learning strategies	Interacting with technology	Using the internet Yahoo websites	Extract 3: I use the internet in English and Arabic on a daily basis for work and personal matters. Extract 4: I usually don't watch Australian TV channels and read about the Australian local news by examining the Sydney Morning Herald and Yahoo websites.
Multilingual experiences	Multilingual experiences	Learning English is easy	Extract 5: Learning English was not a big problem for me as I believe that knowing French had helped me,
Linguistic transfer	Language transfer	Knowing French	Extract 6: In Lebanon, my first language was Arabic and I studied French as a second language since primary school.

Themes	Categories	Code	Quotes
Social learning strategies	Leisure	Reading Australian newspapers	Extract 7: I usually don't watch Australian TV channels and read about the Australian local news by examining the Sydney Morning Herald and Yahoo websites.
Social capital (bridging)	Friendship	Close friends	Extract 8: I have close friends from different backgrounds and I have some good friends that I knew during my days in Lebanon.
Agency Resilience	Personal development	Search for new challenges	Extract 9: I am happy with my current work but always think of some other challenges and possible change if my family situation changes.
Settlement experiences	Home-sick feelings	Home country eagerness	Extract 10: It was hard for me to settle here at the personal level as I was actively involved at the intellectual level in Lebanon.
Cultural identity	Religion	Awareness of Islam	Extract 11: As I grew older and gained more knowledge through study and reading, I became more aware of the view of Islam where we are all humans where there is no idea for definite countries with boundaries.
	Ethnicity	Arab identity	Extract 12: Being from a family which originally came from Mecca to Iraq and migrated to Lebanon about 400 years ago, made me feel that I am an Arab rather being narrowly Lebanese. Therefore I see myself as an Arab person with an Islamic cultural background living in the country of the aborigines and believing in their right to decide its future.
Attitudes	Views of the host community	Anglo-Australian background	Extract 13: The term "Australian" was pushed in a way to mean "Anglo Australian" and if you are not from this background you are supposed to "adopt" this culture and embrace it but you are still considered to be below the "real Australians".

Themes	Categories	Code	Quotes
Social identity	Ethnic discrimination	Negative role of the TL media	Extract 14: If someone is ignorant and believe the dirt spread by the media, it the problem of this person and certainly not mine. I do not waste my time on those people.
		Understanding of racism in Australia	Extract 15: I am fully aware of the different types and aspects of racism in Australia especially against Arabs and Muslims. This does not affect me and I do not feel that I am obliged to explain to people anything.
		Embedded racism	Extract 16: The hate of Arabs and Muslims did not start as a result of September 11 events. It is deeply rooted in the Western culture and people are generally racists but don't even realise that. I call this "embedded racism".
Agency	Individual efforts	Personal efforts	Extract 17: I relied mainly on my own effort and study to improve my English.
		Professional achievements	Extract 18: I am currently employed as a full time science teacher and have my own business as a translator.
		Passing professional tests	Extract 19: I obtained NAATI approval for translation from and into Arabic without going through any formal study for the qualification.
Attitudes	Views of English	Easy language to learn	Extract 20: I personally consider English as an easy to learn language when it is compared to Arabic and French. It has less complicated grammar. The major problem was that English is much less phonetic than Arabic and French.
Educational background	Undergraduate education	Overseas qualification	Extract 21: I came from to Australia in 1986. I was a high school science teacher. At that time I had a BSc – Chemistry and a BA – History.
		Overseas language training	Extract 22: I studied English for few weeks with a private tutor but this was interrupted by the events of the civil war at that time.

Themes	Categories	Code	Quotes
Settlement experiences	ESL instruction	AMEP program	Extract 23: After I arrived to Australia, I studied English in an Adult Migrant Education College for about three month.
Home language use	Arabic-speaking environment	Arabic media Absence of L2 community learning support	Extract 24: I mainly watch the Arabic satellite channels – News and drama serials. Extract 25: I did not have any support from the community to improve my language.
Social identity	Understanding the TL community	Understanding the social fabric of the TL community Issues of identity	Extract 26: As a migrant in Australia, I was able to have a clear picture of the dynamics of the society. Extract 27: As I migrated to Australia in 1986, I realised how things to do with identity are similar to Lebanon. Pushing the idea of identity and insisting on very special Australian one.
Attitudes	Views of the host community	The country of Aborigines Vague “Australian” culture	Extract 28: Australia is a country which was built on racism and the ethnic cleansing of the Aborigines with a deep hate of them under different “excuses” hiding the fact the survival of the Aborigines denies all the fabrication about the Anglo Australian identity of the land. Extract 29: Australia is mixture of groups of people with no real distinctive “Australian” culture or way of life.

APPENDIX J: SAMPLE OF CODED TABLE FOR INTERVIEW DATA

Muna

Muna participated in the first stage of data collection process through writing her story. In the interview part, Muna described her settlement experiences upon her arrival to Australia and how managed to overcome some social and psychological issues she faced during her journey of building her life in Australia.

Themes	Categories	Code	Quotes
Intelligibility and unfamiliarity with accent	Linguistic problems	Writing and listening	<p>One of the difficulties I faced in learning English was writing because in Iraqi schools, the focus was on conversation not on grammar and writing.</p> <p>The other difficulty was the Australian accent which differs from one person to another. I don't find this difficulty when I speak English with someone from different speaking background.</p>
Home language use	Arabic-speaking connections	Arabic women worker	<p>In regard to work, I think I am confused or somewhere in the middle since my job as Arabic women worker requires me to be in continuous contact with Arabic speakers and this has a negative impact on my English language development.</p>
Resilience	Personal drive	Determination to deal with racism	<p>Sometimes I feel some people discriminate against me, I remember when I first came to Australia, I used to hear some words forwarded to me and I didn't know their meanings but when I go back home and ask my kids, they told me that that these were insults! Another incident, when I was wearing a dress with long sleeves and some young boys started making fun of me because I was wearing these clothes in summer. My daughter wanted to reply in anger but I stopped her. I think the significant thing here in the middle of all these challenges; I managed to use all these difficulties and negative criticism and turned them into a potential drive or energy inside me through my determination that I must do something positive to myself in Australia and to prove to others that a woman wearing a scarf is a human being and still can do something regardless of all the stereotyping against her.</p>

Themes	Categories	Code	Quotes
Social identity	Group membership	Group exclusion	I give you another example from the university where I study now, because of my accent and also my middle age and maybe also because of my scarf, it becomes hard to get students to participate with me when we do group work. When the teacher puts me on the head of the group, some other students avoid being in my group, so all other groups consist of four students except my group consists of three, even the third member who is Australian was trying to be in another group but she couldn't..
Social identity	Group membership	Group inclusion	On the other hand, when I decided to apply for a job, I was told by some people that it would be very hard to get a job because I am wearing a scarf, but I didn't experience such things as I applied for a job with an Australian organisation although I had been two years only in Australia and my English wasn't that good. Despite this, I was interviewed by a good person and he gave me the job. So, I wondered why this person was good to me and didn't care about my cultural background. I think this is because he is an educated person who travelled around the world, including Arabic countries, and worked with many social and UN organisation including UNISEF and understands the meaning of multiculturalism in Australia. This person is so good because he was always advising me about how to do things in Australia and encouraging me all the time. So, he was very supportive during the two years I worked with him and till now I keep good relationship with him.
Settlement experiences	Confusion and stress	First days of arrival experience	Yes, of course. Especially at the beginning when you migrate to Australia with your family and you don't have anyone here to support you. I remember when we first arrived to Sydney; we had a case worker, who is originally Egyptian. He told us a lot of wrong information about Australia such as, no work available since he himself didn't get a job as engineer, living is very expensive and other things to the extent that we were stunned and our kids started crying. So, my husband phoned the immigration officer in charge and told him if all these basic needs not available in Australia, why did you bring us here?! The officer was surprised and asked my husband about the source of this false information and later they removed that case worker! Despite that experience and the stress caused us during the first two days of our arrival.

Themes	Categories	Code	Quotes
Social capital	Moral support	The importance of friends upon arrival	I believe that having relatives or friends is very helpful since they can direct you and tell you what and how to do things. We saw some Iraqis coming with us in the same plane and their relatives were waiting for them at the airport and helped them to find simple jobs like trolley collectors few days after their arrival.
Settlement experiences	Disappointment	First days of arrival experience	Our first day in Australia happened to be Australia Day, so we were worried when we heard the sounds of the fireworks because we didn't know anything about these celebrations. So the second day, my husband asked to go out and discover the places around us whether there are shops or malls or anything else but I was too scared to go outside the unit. Even the case worker wasn't that helpful; I remember the case worker filled in the form wrongly and needed my husband to fix what he did! It was very disappointing at the beginning.