

Original article

Learner voice and agency in ESP nursing
- A narrative exploration -

Theron Muller

1. Introduction

This paper takes a narrative inquiry approach to investigating nursing undergraduate student goals and impressions of their first year English ESP course at the University of Toyama. The data informing this investigation is comprised of student reflective writing, completed as homework as part of their normal coursework, from the beginning and end of their first semester at university. The objective of this investigation is to base descriptions of students' motivations, hopes and experiences of the course in their own words and from their perspective rather than to force their discourses into preassigned categories or claim their narratives are representative of a larger population of which they are considered a representative subset. The motivation informing this research is twofold. First, it is research in context. There is a considerable amount of literature investigating the motivation of English as a foreign language (EFL) students, but that literature tends to decontextualize students, conducting surveys across institutional, social, and national contexts in order to create representations of an ideal learner to which to aspire or to discern characteristics of successful and unsuccessful learners (for a review of such literature, see Dörnyei, 2005; Irie, 2003). Such research, by its very nature, seeks the "simplification and reduction of complexity" (Blommaert & Dong, 2011, p. 11), yet the actual classroom as experienced by individual teachers and students is comprised of specific people with disparate motivations and goals acting in a social milieu where their characterizations in the research do not necessarily represent who they really are as unique personalities, a point Dörnyei (2005) acknowledges. Thus this investigation takes as a given the inherent complexity of so many different individuals interacting within the social space of the EFL classroom and seeks to explicate what their experiences of one particular course were for them. Second, much of the research into student motivation and experience of English learning tends to fit students into categories that are metaphorically static, such as national identity, current stage of schooling, age, or particular states of personality variables (Dörnyei, 2005; Irie, 2003), which represents a "territorial" (Clark, 1998, p. 11) metaphor for the learning experience. In contrast, this paper contextualizes the actors' learning experiences as "transient" (Clark, 1998, p. 12), where classroom participants are envisioned as moving to and through the physical space of the classroom and the metaphorical space of English, English speaking, and the different cultural implications embedded in the learning of English. Thus, while these learners are Japanese, it is not their Japanese-ness that is of interest in this report, but what they see as important to them in their journey to and through the course (and beyond), based on their accounts of their hopes for and experiences of this class and what relevance they see those as having to their previous and future experiences. After all, almost all current university students are former high school students and future adult learners, thus where they happen to be at the time of data collection isn't nearly as important as seeing them as moving through an "expansive space" (Clark, 1998, p. 12) where "in their interactions, they travel" (Clark, 1998, p. 12). In so doing, one objective is to present findings that are "accessible and meaningful for teachers" (Mitchell & Myles, 1998, p. 31) and to bring "forward into the SLA [second language acquisition] dialogue the perspectives of...learners" (Steinman, 2005, p. 69). Thus learners' voices and issues are foregrounded in the discussion presented here.

While this paper is situated within the English for Specific Purposes (ESP) literature, it is concerned more with the "how" of EAP" (Watson Todd, 2003, p. 148) than the "what" (Watson Todd, 2003, p. 148). That is to say that while the course is an ESP course that, by institutional necessity, concerns the teaching of English for nursing, the premise is not that the nursing students described here represent nursing EFL students in general; this information is only as important as the students make it in their own narrative explanations of what they hope to get out of the course and their interpretations of their course experiences. Furthermore, this essay shares the students' understanding of their experience of the course, not the course contents, unless those arise as being salient to interpreting the student data.

Finally, the objective of this paper is to represent a piece of research in and of practice, thus it is an investigation into a particular classroom (my classroom) and particular students (my students). It draws on the tradition of appreciative inquiry (Ludema, Cooperrider, & Barrett, 2001), seeking to move beyond "romance with critique at the expense of appreciation" (p. 189) to taking "a posture of empathy rather than attack" (p. 197) and recognizing that "inquiry and change are not truly separate moments, but are simultaneous. Inquiry *is* intervention." (p. 198). Furthermore, a requirement of the methodology applied in this investigation is practicality, in that the research needed to be conducted in a real classroom with real students on a real course. This means that an aspect of data collection and analysis taken

into account was class and teacher time required to collect and interpret the data. How this informed the investigation is explained in more detail below.

This paper begins with further explanation of the theoretical underpinnings of this investigation, starting with a discussion of the implications of using a metaphor of travel to describe participants' descriptions of their interactions in the class and moving on to discuss some of the current findings of motivational research and how they may inform analysis of the student data gathered. Next an explanation of the researcher's perspective and role in this research is shared, as this represents applied research in practice, and so as teacher-researcher I have a significant influence on my classroom and my students' experience of learning English. This is followed by a description of the methodology of the research, where how the data was collected and analyzed is shared. Results and discussion center on implications for me as teacher and how the students involved in this research are comparable to and unique from some of the categories and dimensions of motivation identified in earlier research such as that summarized by Dörnyei (2005) and Irie (2003). The conclusion presents an evaluation of the methodology employed in this investigation and also revisits the course based on students' feedback and considers how the course could perhaps better meet the needs and expectations of future students who travel through it.

2. The theoretical underpinnings of this investigation: Travel and narrative

This section is divided into two subsections, one which considers the implications for this research of envisioning learning English through a travel metaphor along with learner writing as narrative and another which implements a more traditional literature review, visiting previous research into EFL student motivation.

2.1 EFL as travel, learner writing as narrative

This paper expands a concept outlined in the college composition literature by Clark (1998) to EFL. Clark (1998) argues for the use of writing as travel as a metaphor for describing and representing composition reading and writing. Thus this research builds on multilingualism and learner literacies research which consider the experiences and perspectives of learners in the social milieu of the classroom as central to understanding what goes on in the classroom (Turner, 2011).

As Clark (1998) explains, reenvisioning the classroom as a place where participants are travelers is important because it moves away from the possibility of only two outcomes “of an exchange within any discourse community—either ‘successful communication’ or ‘exclusion’” (p. 10) and ceases to promote social fusion as an ideal (Faigley, 1992). In this paradigm there isn't a need for teacher and learners to forge for themselves a community territory with the purpose of “internal cohesion among group members, with limited regard for the conditions that contribute to community disaggregation” (Alexander & Murphy, 1999, p. 413) but instead the relationships forged within the classroom are considered to be transient and participants can regard one another “as fellow travelers with separate itineraries who stop to meet common needs” (Clark, 1998, p. 14). Thus rather than describing the students as forming a community that includes one another and their teacher, the classroom can represent a physical space students travel to as part of their course of study and a metaphorical space in which to travel both to their past experiences and toward realizing their “future selves” (Markus & Nurius, 1986, p. 954), where they not only have individual motivations and expectations, but where those motivations and expectations meet with the motivations and expectations of others and are transformed.

2.2 EFL Motivation literature

The findings of research into the motivations of EFL learners, particularly learners of Japanese, are shared here. As there is a considerable amount written on the topic, this literature review is intentionally brief and focuses largely on variables that are thought to have immediate bearing on the student participants' descriptions and understanding of their experience on the course, thus many of the psychological dimensions of personality (see Dörnyei, 2005), while generally relevant to the field of understanding personality variables and how they influence motivation, are not explored here, as it is doubtful the students would be aware of those dimensions and able to express them in their English writing. Rather, this review will focus on five dimensions that are considered to have immediate relevance to this research: language anxiety, willingness to communicate, integrative orientation, and instrumental motivation.

Language anxiety refers to “worry and negative emotional reaction aroused when learning or using a second language” (MacIntyre, 1999, p. 27) and has been cited as an issue in Japan in previous research, particularly with respect to anxiety surrounding using English. Language anxiety also includes aversion to making errors, which Irie (2003) describes as part of “performance goal orientation” (p. 95), or a desire to be successful and perform better than other students. Willingness to communicate as a learner variable in Japan has been explored by Yashima, Zasuk-Nishide, and Shimizu (2004) and involves a willingness and interest “to initiate interactions and make friends” (p. 121), although it's correlation with proficiency remains contested in the literature (Dörnyei, 2005). Integrative motivation is considered

a “general disposition toward language learning and the values the target language conveys” (Dörnyei, 1990, p. 65), including a desire to make friends with and interact with speakers of English in the future. Instrumental motivation is in turn “associated with the pragmatic, utilitarian benefits of language proficiency, such as a better job or a higher salary” (Dörnyei, 1990, p. 46).

3. Researcher positioning

As the teacher-researcher in this project, I am a professor hired as a ‘native English speaker’ to teach English classes to students of the medical faculty at the University of Toyama. With my educational background firmly rooted in communicative teaching methodologies, my objective is to make my classes communicative and to seek ways to facilitate learner agency in my classrooms with the belief that these are the most effective means available toward an end of facilitating language proficiency among my students in my courses and as they continue their language learning journey after they finish their studies with me. Toward this end, I believe as teacher I “should focus on rapport building among all parties in the learning context” (Murphey & Carpenter, 2008, p. 33). Part of the motivation behind this research is to investigate to what extent I’ve been successful in these efforts with the class discussed here.

4. Research methodology

As stated earlier, this is research-in-practice, implemented in a course for first year nursing majors, with data from their first semester of study. Typically research of this type would be characterized as action research, but an issue with action research is that it problematizes the research context in which it is employed, and through asking what’s wrong with current paradigms, erodes community, promotes hierarchy, and contributes to cultural and organizational enfeeblement (Ludema, et al., 2001). The solution to this dilemma was to adopt an affirmative inquiry stance in this investigation, not asking a question about what’s wrong with my classroom but rather asking how my classroom can be transformed “from competence to excellence” (Tait, 2002, p. 153).

Furthermore, the objective of this research is to try to investigate my students’ experience of the course rather than to reconstruct my experience of my teaching, and to accomplish this a literary inquiry stance has been taken, aware that “much of SLA research and literature seems to attend to the dance rather than to the dancer...to the language rather than to the language speaker” and thus there is a need to “carve a space...for learner perspectives” (Steinman, 2005, p. 75) in my research and practice.

Students were asked to write for homework for their first class of the semester a 100 word answer to the question, “What do you hope to learn in this class?” Then, at the second to last class of the 15 class semester students were asked to write a 100 word answer to the questions, “What did you learn in this class? What did you like? What do you want to change?” The last question was pertinent to the students because the class would continue in the second semester of their first year, and so there was the opportunity for changes to the curriculum if requested. Homework of this sort was assigned throughout the semester, asking students to reflect on or answer a particular question in 100 words, although only their first and last writings are included in this investigation.

In the spirit of literary inquiry, students’ writings were investigated for themes that emerged through their words rather than starting from assumptions regarding what learners would find important and salient to them. Thus there was an intentional effort made to bring the voices of the learners to the fore. There was also an intentional effort to attend to individual differences where possible, thus minority voices are included in the discussion which follows in addition to the voices of the majority where there was a majority present.

Research questions were as follows:

1. What did students’ writing reveal regarding their hopes and motivations for the course?
2. To what extent were those hopes and motivations realized, as described in their end of semester writing?
3. What does the students’ writing reveal about their overall evaluation of the course? Are there aspects of the course that could benefit from improvement from the perspectives of the students’?

Another objective of this research is to explore the efficacy of such a simple methodology—100 word essays—for exploring these kinds of issues in the EFL classroom. An example of a students’ essays from the beginning and end of the semester are included in Appendix 1.

5. Results and discussion

26 students were enrolled in the course, all of whom provided an essay as the first homework of the semester, on what they hoped to learn in the class. 24 students provided reflective essays regarding what they learned in the class. In analysis student essays were matched, making it possible to compare what a student said they hoped to learn at the beginning of the semester with their account of what they learned at the end of the course (see Appendix 1 for an example). This section presents and discusses the results of the analysis and is divided into two parts, the first of which

discusses students' hopes for the course based on their first essays and the second of which examines their end of course essays to determine to what extent their hopes were realized.

5.1 Students' hopes for their journey through the course

Students' essays were read to identify themes which they took up in response to the question of what they hoped to learn from the course. These themes were then gradually refined to produce a synopsis picture of nine general topics they raised in their writing. Table 1 outlines the main topics which emerged from the students' texts, along with selected extracts from their writing to illustrate how they expressed those ideas in their own words. Each main topic contained further subtopics, some of which are discussed further below. The numbers in Table 1 represent the number of students who mentioned that particular theme. Attention has been given to presenting the students' writing authentically rather than trying to edit or correct their words.

Table 1 *Nine student themes emerging from students' writing*

Theme	Number of students	Example from student essay
Future goals and aspirations	41	I want to travel abroad so it is necessary for me to speak in English.
Hopes for class	31	So I'll talk with a lot of classmates and Mr. Muller in English. And I hope to improve my English's communication skills.
Reference to (lack of) personal abilities	20	I can read and write English but it is difficult for me to speak English well.
Affect	16	I like to study English.
Previous experience (including accounts of lack of experience)	15	I have been studying English for six years. However, I only studied English vocabulary and structure by writing so I don't have enough chance communicating with other people in English.
Learners' personal attributes	4	I am shy in front of strangers.

Considering the language learning motivation literature, students' future goals and aspirations have some resonance with both integrative and instrumental motivation, in that students tended to describe a general desire to be able to communicate in English as related to a desire to travel and also the fact that in the future they will be nurses, a point I underscored as teacher in their first lesson, which likely influenced students' thinking in their writing of their hopes for the course. Many students included both a desire to travel and the fact that they will be nurses in the future in their writings, as illustrated in the following student's assignment:

I hope to learn how to communicate with foreign people in this class. It is difficult for me to enjoy talking with foreigner now. But I have dreams of getting married to foreign man. So I will be hard to study English in Muller's class. I want to be nurse in the future. I want to work in not only my home town Toyama but also another town and another country. If I will work in another country, I need to speak English. So I want to learn many new medical words.

The extracts above show how the student envisions her hopes for the course based on her own personal life journey, noting her dream of *getting married to foreign man* and where she hopes to work as a nurse in the future with *I want to work in not only my home town Toyama but also another town and another country*. Thus while she is interested in communicating as part of the course, she attributes this interest in communicating with part of the process of becoming a future self who is comfortable communicating and having relationships, including romantic relationships, with foreigners.

Students' hopes for the class referred to their aspirations for classroom activities, and included aspirations for speaking in English, *I hope to speak English smoothly in this class* (11 students), reference to the effort they hope to make in the class, *So I will be hard to study English in Muller's class* (5 students, example extracted from above), and expressed hope to learn vocabulary, *My vocabulary is very few. So I want to increase my vocabulary* (four students) along with some more minority requests, one of which is worth noting here, reference to the class being taught only in English, *And I was surprised, because this class conduct entirely in English* (two students). These hopes, as demonstrated above, were consistently linked to future goals and past experiences.

Reference to abilities was generally negative, particularly with respect to English ability and ability to communicate, as illustrated in the following extract, *I am not good at English. So I was worry about this class*. Two students referred to their writing ability positively, and one to reading ability, but the other mentions of English ability were negative, and positive attributions of ability were often followed with a contrast to lack of communication ability, as illustrated here, *I can read and write English but it is difficult for me to speak English well*. These references were related to past experience, particularly an emphasis on reading and writing in secondary school, and denote how the students see their experience of English study in university relating to their previous experience, with them having moved from test preparation in their previous classes to preparation for life experience in this course, with an eye on how they may want or need to use English in the future after the course is finished.

Affect primarily included an evaluation of English as positive (eight students), *But when I took lessons from Mr. Muller, I felt so fun*, a general liking of English (five students), *My favorite subject is English. When I was seventeen, I came to like to study English* and, interestingly, four students expressed a desire to change their affect, both to widen their perspective, *My small world may widen a bit*, and to become more positive, *Moreover, I'm negative. So, I would like to become positive in this class*. These last two items point to at least some students seeing themselves not simply as static personalities, but as selves capable of and interested in self transformation through experience, including through the experience of their English class.

Previous experience of English study primarily included a lack of speaking or communication experience in school (five students), as illustrated in the following extract, *When I was junior high school or high school student, I studied English grammar and vocabulary. But, I couldn't speak English smoothly. I studied English for test, so my English skill couldn't improve and I don't feel happy studying English*. Minority, but striking, accounts of previous travels to English speaking countries and encounters with non-Japanese in Japan also emerged:

When I was a high school student, I went to the UK to study English. But I was not satisfied because I went there only for two weeks. So I could not have spoken English fluently.

When I was eight years old, I went to ocean with my family. We enjoyed camping. Then we met two foreigner. We began friends soon, and we eat dinner with them. We could not speak English, but we had a good time with them. I think, if I speak English, I could more enjoy. I want to understand English!

These accounts again show how the students are envisioning their experience as connected, between the classroom and life experience, and between previous experience and their current English study. They are relating their desire for greater English proficiency to particular life events where they found themselves unable to communicate adequately, and see this course as a means toward moving closer to their goals of more fluent English language ability.

Finally, personal attributes generally involved students describing themselves as shy (three students), *Also I am a shy girl*. Along with a desire to overcome this shyness and become more outgoing and comfortable with their fellow students, both within the class and throughout the university.

In summary, using the metaphor of travel, many students appeared to see themselves as moving to and through this class, noting where they had been previously, how those past experiences shaped their aspirations for the course, and explaining what they hoped to learn from their encounters with their fellow travelers in the class. Importantly, even though this was homework completed just after the first class of the semester, six students noted aspects of the class, including learning from a non-Japanese teacher for the first time (three students) and the teacher (me) as having a positive influence on their evaluation of the class and English. To combine two extracts from above into the original complete prose:

I want to get an ability to speak with other people in this class. I am not good at English. So I was worry about this class. But when I took lessons from Mr. Muller, I felt so fun. I think that I can learn English for nursing and talk with my friends. And I was surprised, because this class conduct entirely in English. I have learned English by Japanese teacher all the time. So this class challenged me to try new thing. It is difficult for me to learn English. But I try to do something in this class.

5.2 Students' reflections on their journey through the course and the path ahead

Students' end of semester reflections were quite encouraging, in the sense that 23 of the 24 students who completed their essays shared that they enjoyed their experience in the class and that they felt they learned and improved their English abilities through the course. Interestingly, many seemed to have adopted the learning as a journey philosophy,

as illustrated by the following essay:

I learned two things in this class. First, it is difficult for foreign people to see doctor in Japan. Through Muller's experiences in Japanese hospital, I think that there is a distance in language between foreign patients and Japanese medical care works. By taking this class, I feel listening English fun. In addition, I gained an attitude to try to understand what speaker says. Second, it is fun to tell people my feeling in English. But I am not good speaker still, I try to have myself understood people in English. This experiences were useful to improve my English skills. Therefore I believe that my English skill is better than before. By studying English harder, I want to be a good speaker in English more.

This learner has engaged with the narratives I've told throughout the course as a teacher, and attributes the course with affective changes toward learning English, *I feel listening English fun*, and changes in how to go about listening to English accounts, *I gained an attitude to try to understand what speaker says*, as opposed to the unstated listening to English in preparation for comprehension questions. She has also become comfortable *to tell people my feeling in English despite not being a good speaker still*. She finishes her essay looking toward the future, beyond simply this particular course, with *I want to be a good speaker in English more*.

Students also noted that they enjoyed the chance to speak to one another in the class, during a time termed *conversation time* in the class plans and that this lead to them making friends with one another, conversations and friendships which one student shared continued into lunchtime after class had finished (and hopefully beyond the university into their everyday lives):

I learned the method of nursing in English, and how to take communication by this lesson. Especially I learned a lot in the conversation reproducing the nurse's work. For example, when a nurse was busy, the method of refusing the request from the patient and method of the question became study very much. Medical English had many first words for me to hear. Although there was also a word which is not memorized easily, it will certainly be useful in Japan where internationalization progresses in the future. Moreover, I liked conversation time in this lesson. Conversation time differs in a theme each time. Therefore, the whole surface which was can be seen. So, it was interesting. At the lunchtime after a lesson finishes, conversation was often becoming lively with this theme. There is no place I want me to change by this class. Thank you for the lesson which is pleasant and beneficial!

In the above essay the student is attributing relevance of aspects of the course to her future experience in a Japan *where internationalization progresses*. She also notes how her experience with her fellow students during class carried over outside of class, with themes from her English lesson traveling to her everyday experiences with her peers.

There was also reference to transformation of affect with respect to English speaking:

I learned the joy of communication with other people in this class. I was not good at communication with other people, but I think I am better at communication a little than I used to be, because my fear that I talk to others is getting a little decrease. So, I like communication time. Thanks to topics, I feel to be easy to talk. So, I enjoy communication! And I want to change English skill more! I feel good in this class!

Compare this to the student's beginning of semester essay and there is surprising consistency from the start of the semester and the the end of the course, *I hope to learn the joy to communicate with others in English*. Thus she's traveled from an image of English speaking as an anxiety-inducing activity to one where English speaking is enjoyable, and she sees herself continuing this journey of improving her English proficiency into the future with *And I want to change English skill more!*

Regarding ways the course could be improved further, there were requests for more time for students to have conversations with one another and some students asked that class quizzes be announced in advance, both changes I intend to implement in the next semester's class.

Finally, the one student who didn't report a positive experience of the class appeared to blame this failure on herself, and referred to general issues with her life habits in addition to difficulty with English:

I become often late for a school recently. I do club activities into the night and am caused

by the fact that I am up into the night. I want to turn on my mind soon again because it is an examination. In the English class of the teacher, I want to acquire an English word other than communication. I was weak in English, and I always cried at the time of study since the age of a junior high school. It does not still change. This is my trouble. Therefore I want to come to like English a little in this classroom.

Importantly, this student also noted an extremely low English ability in her first essay in the course, although she also expressed some hope for success, *Surely I am the weakest at English in class, but I try to realize*. The unfortunate reality from the student's end of semester writing is that the hope for success in her beginning of semester essay is absent; she expresses her experience in almost exclusively negative terms, blaming events outside the classroom, her staying up late for her club activities, for her inability to effectively study and perform well in the course, demonstrating how outside factors negatively impact her experience in the class.

Thus while the picture painted by these student essays is largely positive, one student appears to have fallen through the cracks and a challenge that remains is connecting with her in the second semester of the course to improve her experience and affective impression of English. Regarding the travel metaphor itself, while students are interested in and invested in building relationships with other students in the class, they tend to see these developing relationships as part of a larger journey, toward becoming a nurse proficient enough in English to communicate with fellow English speakers, toward travel outside Japan, and toward building relationships with non-Japanese.

6. Conclusion

Considering the methodology employed for this research, asking beginning and end of semester questions of students regarding their hopes and experiences of the course provided a rich picture of what students saw as important to them in their English language learning journey. While this simple, unobtrusive tool doesn't yield as rich a tapestry as more complete language learning narratives such as those referenced in Murphey and Carpenter (2008), for classes where the objective of the course isn't on learners building an inventory of their experiences, but is instead focused on occupationally relevant English, such as in this nursing English course, this simple measure could give teachers and students an opportunity to share with one another their stories, hopes, and aspirations without taking a significant amount of time or energy away from the content based aspects of the coursework and allow for rapport building without making rapport building the central objective of the course. Or, in the words of a student in her end of semester reflection, *I was surprised and very happy because Mr. Mullar read my homework and write message in it every time. So, I enjoyed to do homework. Thank you very much*. It is important to note that as teacher I kept my comments brief, and my objective was to finish grading and commenting on homework during class while students were engaged in other tasks so as to give quick feedback, which has been marked as important to students in past research.

Regarding the metaphor of travel, in students' end of semester essays it was obvious this metaphor, rather than community, was more relevant in interpreting their experience of the course. While they mentioned having made friends, they noted that this improved their affective impression of English, and felt the experience would make it easier for them to make friends again in the future. They also felt that their experiences in the class would be of relevance to their future encounters with English speakers both as nurses and also as travelers within and outside of Japan.

Finally, in terms of a teacher interested in assessing the success of this course from the perspective of my students, I feel that this kind of narrative inquiry gives a much richer picture of their experience of my course than the pictures presented by the Likert-scaled items included on formal institutional evaluation cards or in the personality inventories produced by experimental psychology. Even when such measures are seen as important to research, I would encourage teacher researchers to add space for their students to share their experiences in their own words so as to give an extra dimension to their understanding of their experiences as they see them, rather than as researchers envision them.

References

- Alexander, P. A., & Murphy, K. (1999). Learner profiles: Valuing individual differences within classroom communities. In P. L. Ackerman, P. C. Kyllonen, & R. D. Roberts (Eds.), *Learning and individual differences: Process, trait, and content determinants* (pp. 413–431). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Blommaert, J., & Dong, J. (2011). *Ethnographic Fieldwork*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Clark, G. (1998). Writing as travel, or rhetoric on the road. *College Composition and Communication*, 49 (1), 9-23.

- Dörnyei, Z. (1990). Conceptualizing motivation in foreign-language learning. *Language Learning*, 40 (1), 45-78.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2005). *Psychology of the Language Learner: Individual Differences in Second Language Acquisition*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Faigley, L. (1992). *Fragments of rationality: Postmodernity and the subject of composition*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press.
- Irie, K. (2003). What do we know about the language learning motivation of university students in Japan? Some patterns in survey studies. *JALT Journal*, 25 (1), 86-100.
- Ludema, J. D., Cooperrider, D. L., & Barrett, F. J. (2001). Appreciative inquiry: The power of the unconditional positive question. In H. Bradbury & P. Reason (Eds.), *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice* (pp. 189-199). London: Sage.
- MacIntyre, P. D. (1999). Language anxiety: A review of the research for language teachers. In D. J. Young (Ed.), *Affect in foreign language and second language learning* (pp. 24– 45). Boston: McGraw-Hill.
- Markus, H., & Nurius, P. (1986). Possible selves. *American Psychologist*, 41 (9), 954-969.
- Mitchell, R., & Myles, F. (1998). *Second language learning theories*. London: Arnold.
- Murphey, T., & Carpenter, C. (2008). The seeds of agency in language learning histories. In P. Kalaja, V. Menezes, & A. M. F. Barcelos (Eds.), *Narratives of Learning and Teaching EFL* (pp. 17-34). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Steinman, L. (2005). Writing life 1 in language 2. *McGill Journal of Education*, 40 (1), 65-79.
- Tait, J. (2002). 'From competence to excellence': a systems view of staff development for part-time tutors at a distance. *Open Learning*, 17 (2), p. 153-166.
- Turner, J. (2011). *Language in the Academy*. Channel View Publications. Kindle Edition.
- Yashima, T., Zenuk-Nishide, L., & Shimizu, K. (2004). The influence of attitudes and affect on willingness to communicate and second language communication. *Language Learning*, 54 (1), 119– 152.

Appendix 1. A sample of a student's essays from the beginning and end of the semester

1. Write 100 words:

What do you hope to learn in this class?

I like studying English. I would like to go abroad in my future and make many foreign friends. I want to go world Heritage Sites when I'm a college student in 4 years, but I don't have good listening skills.

I haven't talk with foreign people many times, so I hope to talk with Muller many times and learn good listening skills. I will get good listening skills. Also I am a shy girl. I want to be a positive girl. I hope to learn to be used to talking with people in English. I hope to learn good listening skills and the way which I talk with many people in English. Thanks for sharing your goals. I hope you are able to learn these things in this class.

I studied a lot of things in this class.

Especially I learn ability to listening

English. I wasn't good at listening

but slowly I can listening native English.

I like things in this class is short speaking
and Conversation time.

Short speaking is a little difficult to think

experience in English but I though many things

in English! And in Conversation time,

I could know a lot of things about everyone!

I think occasionally noisy in this class, so

I think you need to scold.

But I like this class very much!

So please look after the later period.