

Expanding Selves

An insider's exploration of learner identity
in second or other language learning

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ABSTRACT

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Identity is at the core of all human experience, and that is no different for teaching and learning experiences in second or other language learning classrooms. Yet the task of defining learner identity within these contexts has been subject to much debate, nested in the greater dichotomous landscape of linguistic and sociocultural schools of thought. Nonetheless, with the increasing trends in global migration and international students in higher education, there is an urgent need to define learner identity within these contexts to better support teaching and learning practices and experiences. Understanding learner identity also has further reaching implications for researchers, language and educational institutions, and the broader community in which these individuals reside outside of the language classroom.

Using a Bakhtinian dialogic theoretical framework, this study explores the emic perspectives of learners on self-identity in an English as a second or other language classroom, in a study abroad context in Australia. Through the dialogic interactions of the participants, the findings from this study suggest that learner identity is more complex than often described, composed of both linguistic and sociocultural views on learner identity. Furthermore, from the perspectives of learners, this study also suggests that the language-learner identity is only one part of a larger self-identity. Rather, individuals in language classrooms assume different positions, in addition to the language-learner role. As a result of these findings, recommendations for broader and more integrated approaches in research, teaching and institutional practices, and learning are made.

Keywords: learner identity, self-identity, second language acquisition, language use or socialisation, Bakhtinian dialogic theory, multidimensionality, multi-positioning

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1 INTRODUCTION

An interest in learner identity in second or other language classrooms first emerged while I was teaching English language courses to international students, predominantly on pathways into higher education in Australia. During this time, I observed that some language classes were naturally more socially cohesive than others and, arguably, more constructive in learning. The curriculum, language resources and learning environment for the most part remained the same, and so did my pedagogical style. So the question begged: *what was it about the students themselves, either individually or collectively, which created this phenomenon?* From this point, I became considerably interested in identity, and learner identity in particular, which I believe is at the centre of all teaching and learning experiences.

Identity and aspects of identity have been popularly studied in the field of second language acquisition, hereafter referred to as SLA, since research first commenced in 1970s (Zuengler & Miller, 2006; Kalaja, Barcelos, Aro & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2015). However, the interest in identity is not restricted to this field and nor is it something new. The perpetually innate yearning to know who we are has been documented at least since pre-modernity, at which time identity was defined in collective terms, externally determined by and “subordinated to the greater cosmic whole” (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011, p. 309). The locus for discovering self then shifted in modern times when Descartes famously contemplating a humanistic or individualistic self in *Meditations*, discovered identity from inside a thinking self (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). Thereafter, postmodern theories located identity within greater social contexts that determined identity in different ways (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). In *identity theory*, Stryker (1968, 1980, 1987) and colleagues recognised multiple competing roles within a single individual ascribed by conditions in a social landscape, while in their *theory of social identity* Tajfel and Turner (1979) turned their attention to the power of group membership in defining individual identity (as cited in Hogg, Terry & White, 1995). Today, identity is widely researched across different fields including psychology, sociology, anthropology, linguistics, political science, education, family

studies and public health, and the interest in identity continues to grow (Vignoles, Schwartz & Luyckx, 2011).

Furthermore, more than just the domain of academics, an interest in identity is a commonplace phenomenon, embedded in the everyday experiences of every person. Once sensitised to the topic, it quickly becomes apparent that identity is both discovered and constructed (Vignoles et al., 2011), in different ways at different times in different places. As a personally experienced phenomenon, for example, identity can be discovered through journaling and the sharing of oral family histories, while at the same time it can be constructed in the cinema, music and literature that entertain us. Identity is introduced casually at parties and formalised in interviews. It is celebrated in wedding speeches and eulogised at funerals. It is historicised in movements and events, and through social media, identity spreads far and wide. Identity is public and private, local and global, online and offline, and nature and nurture. Located in the present, identity is explained by the past, while it reaches for the future. Thus, it is clear that identity is a human phenomenon, both consciously and unconsciously experienced, and shared by all. Furthermore, and importantly, identity strives to be understood, because in knowing who we are, we also know how to be. Identity indeed “guides life paths” (Kroger, 2007 as cited in Vignoles et al., p. 2).

Using Bakhtinian dialogic theory, this master’s thesis aims to explore self-identity through the emic perspectives of learners in a second or other language classroom in a study abroad context in Australia. The implications of these findings will further be discussed with particular reference to SLA researchers, teachers and language institutions, and the learners themselves. It is hoped that by defining learner identity, language professionals will be able to respond more critically and responsibly to learners, whilst learners will assume more central agentive roles in their own learning experiences. This is especially relevant today against the backdrop of a complex global world of multicultural and multilingual societies in which learners not only renegotiate their identities, but also shape their environments in the process.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 An orientation to the SLA research landscape

An interest in identity in SLA research is not surprising given that language and identity have long been inextricably connected (Norton, 2010; Vitanova, 2013; Platt, 2013). For example, a speaker's accent commonly reveals where a person is from or at least identifies whether the speaker is an outsider in the dominant community (Marx, 2006; Sung, 2014). This is true of not just national newcomers but regional ones, and cultural and subcultural ones. Furthermore, Miller (2003) premises her book *Audible Difference ESL and Social Identity in School* on the notion that speaking, in particular, not only represents identity but also constructs it. Whilst language is "a form of self-representation", Miller (2003) states "identities are [also] discursively constructed" (p. 2). Perhaps it is for this reason that language learning is often paralleled with identity work (Lemke, 2002; Hicks, 1996). Moreover, the relationship between language and identity becomes critical when approached through a post-structural lens that centres its discourse on the negotiation of identity through language participation in surrounding communities (Norton, 2010; Norton, 2013; Miller, 2003; Kinginger, 2004; Morita, 2004; Nguyen & Yang, 2015). Thus, there is no doubt that language and identity are interlaced.

However, before the topic of learner identity can be examined, it serves to briefly retrace the historically divergent and competing views between structural linguistic and post-structural sociocultural theories in SLA, which is well established in the literature (Firth & Wagner, 1997; Zuengler & Miller, 2006; Block 2007; Kramsch, 2002; Larsen-Freeman, 2002). Beginning with the SLA research from the field of linguistics, second language acquisition has been described in predominantly cognitive or mechanistic terms. For example, the concept of *input processing* in SLA, which emerged in mid 1980s, was primarily concerned with the learner's brain function of comprehending language data input (VanPatten, 2012). This particular model of second language acquisition, along with others such as *Universal Grammar* and

frequency (VanPatten, 2012), describe the “learner-as-a-computer” (Kramsch, 2002, p. 1), which is individually programmed by language instruction. Traditional pedagogies in second language classrooms such as *grammar translation*, *the direct method* and *the audio-lingual method* ascribe to this view to varying degrees (Larsen-Freeman, 2000). Furthermore, this conceptualisation is not restricted to the field of linguistics, especially as technological advances in cognitive neuroscience allow brain processes such as memory involved in language acquisition to be observed objectively (Morgan-Short & Ullman, 2012). This orientation to studying language learning further supports the cognitive view.

However, a significant turn in the understanding of language acquisition is reported to have occurred from the 1990s onwards (Block, 2007; Norton, 2013; Kalaja et al., 2015). This turn is often explained more broadly by emerging sociocultural views of learning including Vygotsky’s *Sociocultural Theory*, *Language Socialisation*, Lave and Wenger’s *Situated Learning Theory*, *Bakhtinian Dialogic Theory* and *Critical Theory* (Zuengler & Miller, 2006; Swain & Deters, 2007). Within this paradigm, the process of learning a language is described as a participatory activity, in which an emphasis is placed on language use within a wider social network (Lave, 1992; Larsen-Freeman, 2002; Norton, 2013; Morita, 2004). In this view, participation is both the process and product of learning a language (Zuengler & Miller, 2006). A well-known example of sociocultural language pedagogies is *the communicative language teaching method*, which emerged in late seventies (Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

In particular, it is the seminal article by Firth and Wagner (1997) *On Discourse, Communication and (Some) Fundamental Concepts in SLA Research* that researchers across the field commonly identify as a cornerstone in the divergent views and research approaches in SLA (Block, 2007; Zuengler & Miller, 2006; Larsen-Freeman, 2002; Swain & Deters, 2007). In this article, the authors argued for more balanced views across the linguistic and sociocultural divide, warning that not doing so only provided part of the picture and, furthermore, reduced learners to weakened positions, especially

when compared to native speaker standards (Firth & Wagner, 1997). Since then, researchers have equally responded to and rejected this call (Long, 1997; Kasper, 1997; Gass, 2008), which has given rise to an ontological tension between the two sides. Whilst it is important to note that the reality within each paradigm is much more complex than what a simplistic reductionist dichotomy can communicate, suffice to say the SLA research landscape was divided, and remains contested up until the present day.

2.2 Learner identity in SLA

There are an untold number of theories, commentaries on those theories and empirical studies that explore learner identity in SLA. In reviewing the literature on how learner identity is defined, three seemingly incompatible binaries emerge across the linguistic and sociocultural paradigms. From the linguistic side, the learner is static, and as an object of instruction, he or she is individually constructed. Whereas from the opposing sociocultural side, the learner is a fluid, socially constructed subject of agency. The latter resides in postmodern theories (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Norton, 2010). Whilst this literature review does not propose to address the complexity of learner identity in its entirety, it does aim to establish a foundation for conducting research into learner self-identity in the language classroom. Moreover, although these binaries will now be described one by one, it is important to note that the dimensions do not operate separately, but rather link and support the other dimensions within their own linguistic or sociocultural paradigms.

2.2.1 Static or fluid learners

A static learner identity is one that is presumed to be fixed, unable to be changed and continuous over time (Marx, 2006). The static learner identity is commonly ascribed to biologically and socially determined aspects of an individual such as age, gender and ethnicity (Duff, 2012 as cited in Kalaja et al., 2015; Norton, 2010). Vignoles et al. (2011) elicits the static identity by posing the question: *who are you?* (p. 2). One may answer: *I am a 40-year-old Australian female*, for example. So, this notion that identity is static is perhaps

not surprising given that it is a conventionally accepted view of identity; and it is often presumed beyond the choice or control of the individual. Although this fact is becoming more and more contested in the modern day, when even factors such as ethnicity and gender are considered as subject to change (Block, 2007).

A common explanation for why learners in language classrooms may be viewed as static is culture. Aktinson (1999) qualifies this by identifying in particular the *received view* of cultures, which describes them “in their most typical form as geographically (and quite often nationally) distinct entities, [and also] as relatively unchanging and homogenous” (p. 626). From the top down, this view of culture dictates who individuals are and how they exist in this world, which makes them immutable (Emerson, 1996). Henceforth stems the belief, and subsequent practices, among some that to learn a new language, one must also learn a new culture and abandon the old (Emerson, 1996). For example, Marx (2006) correlates learning a new language (German) with a new culture in her auto-ethnographic research, and describes herself going to all efforts to appear less North American in her new context of Germany. While Anbreen’s (2015) research subjects at a Pakistani women’s university learn English language through English literature and content. From this perspective, culture is viewed as static; and as a result, so are the individuals that belong to that culture.

In contrast to this argument, learner identity is also viewed as fluid, dynamic and subject to change over time (Miller, 2003; Weedon, 1987 as cited in Norton Pierce, 1995; Marx, 2006; Sullivan, 2007; Norton, 2010). Vignoles et al. (2011) evokes this type of identity with the question: *who do you act as being?* (p. 2) So in this sense, identity is an ongoing process. In her research on learners in a feminist English language class in Japan, McMahill (1997) explicates how through learning the English language in the liminal space of the classroom, individuals are able to explore their feminist identities that were otherwise suppressed by the broader Japanese society. Moreover, DaSilva Iddings, Haught and Devlin’s (2013) pre-linguistic learners also change as a consequence of their interactions with other young learners in the

classroom. Thus, in this sense identity is fluid.

Furthermore, contrasted with the earlier *received view* of culture, which Bakhtin would have rejected (Emerson, 1996), there are also postmodern *alternative* or *nonstandard views* of culture, which directly challenge the static view (Atkinson, 1999). In their article *Culture from the Bottom Up*, Atkinson and Sohn (2013) explain how the Japanese-Korean learner studying in an American university likens culture to water, a resource subject to individual personality and preferences and is, therefore, capable of change at different times. Even the female Pakistani English learners in Anbreen's (2015) study were observed as changing with respect to their psychological aspects, if not their culture. That is to say that their confidence levels were found to increase the longer they studied English, demonstrating that identity was indeed capable of change. Furthermore, in this context English language learning was interpreted as identity work for future opportunities of upward mobility in Pakistani society (Anbreen, 2015).

There is also a sense of fluidity that emerges from the sociocultural notion of *subjectivity* in identity. Atkinson (1999) states that rather than having "internally rational, unified, and consistent selves, the notion of subjectivity indicates that personalities and personhood are fundamentally disunified and fragmented" (p. 633). Furthermore, this fragmentation happens through participation in many communities. As an alternative to Descartes' maxim *I think, therefore I am*, Gergen (1991, 1992, 1994) opts for *I communicate, therefore I am*, which explains why people participating in many different discourse communities assume many identities (as cited in Akkerman & Meijer, 2011, p. 309). Often attributed to Weedon (1997) and explained by her work on feminist identity (Norton, 2010; Norton Pierce, 1995; Ollerhead, 2012), some researchers prefer to substitute the term *subjectivity* for *identity*, deeming the latter too fixed (Vitanova, 2013). Whichever way, identity from this perspective is fluid.

2.2.2 Objects of instruction or subjects of agency

Learners are often described as objects of instruction. This view aligns with the cognitive learner model mentioned earlier (Kramsch, 2002). It also arises

from the indisputable fact that learning a language, as with learning in general, involves cognition (Kasper, 1997). Furthermore, learning does not just happen by being situated in the right learning environment. To illustrate this, VanPatten (2012) points out that sociocultural perspectives do not fully explain why some learners, despite being given teacher corrective feedback, continue to make the same errors in language use.

However, critics of the learner-as-an-object view argue that learners in this sense are defined by their deficiencies in language, as perceived and measured against native-speaker standards (Firth & Wagner, 1997). So in this respect, learners as objects of instruction are viewed as disenfranchised individuals. However, this perceived view of a language-deficient individual is not unfounded. Ollerhead's (2012) teacher interviews on the English language capacities of adult migrant learners in Australia noted pedagogical challenges associated with low-level skills. Furthermore, in her study on African students in ESL classrooms in Australia, Dooley (2009) explains how learners were unable to access lesson content because of their lack of English language skills. So the learner-deficient model should not be readily dismissed.

On the other hand, learner identity is also portrayed as a subject of agency who has the capacity to make choices and take control of their own learning, and as a result self determine their outcomes (Duff, 2012). Morita (2004) illustrates this in her description of female Japanese graduate students at a Canadian university who actively employ strategies such as seeking support from the teacher to gain a more central position in the group. It is precisely this agentive capacity, which is often visible, that supports the view that learners are fluid and capable of change, unlike their cognitive counterparts. Yet even in situations in which agency may not be so visible, learners in this paradigm are still interpreted as subjects rather than objects. In his research on Hong Kongers using English as an academic language, Sung (2014) explains that some learners actively choose to maintain their Hong Kong accent to preserve their Hong Kong identity, whilst others opted for a native-speaker accent to assume a "good learner" identity (p. 548). Thus,

learners have been known to exercise agency silently (Ha & Li, 2014; Lantolf & Genung, 2002; Morita, 2004).

There are many postmodern theories that evoke this image of a powerful agent. To start with, commonly recalled in the literature is Bourdieu (1977) and his *capital metaphors* (as cited in Block, 2007; Norton Pierce, 1995; Vitanova, 2013). There is also Vygotsky (1978) and his concept of *mediation*, and in particular his language-as-artefact metaphor, a tool to master for gaining access to participate in a community (Kalaja et al., 2015; Lantolf & Genung, 2002). Then of course, there is also Lave and Wenger's (1991) *Communities of Practice* that recounts an agent on a periphery legitimising his or her place in the community over time (Lave, 1992; Norton, 2010; Marx, 2006; Morita, 2004). Importantly, Norton Pierce (1995) also supports this view of learners as active participants with her theory of *investment*, which she states is an "investment in the target language... [and significantly here] also an investment in a learner's own social identity" (p. 18). To illustrate this, in her naturalistic research on immigrants in Canada, she describes how one individual actively seeks opportunities to not only improve her language, but legitimise her place in her new home (Norton Pierce, 1995). This, Norton (2010) links to Bourdieu's notion of *cultural capital*. Moreover, far from being a deficient subject falling short of the native speaker, Kramsch (2009) views multilingual subjects as having greater symbolic power in their capacity to participate in many communities through many languages, and thus influence many worlds.

Thus far, learner identity has been described as a static object of instruction from the linguistic perspective, and a fluid subject of agency from the sociocultural one. Altogether, these dimensions of learner identity describe the nature of learner identity both in terms of qualities and behaviours. The discussion now turns to the environment surrounding the individual, and his or her relationship to it, to explicate the third binary of which, as with the first two, are inherently at odds.

2.2.3 Individually or socially constructed learners

Based on the linguistic view that learners are static objects of instruction, learners are also individually constructed. That is to say that learners acquire language directly from instruction, rendering them separate from their greater sociocultural environment. This assumption is partly explained by the value placed on accuracy over fluency in language learning, of which of course only instruction by the teacher and traditional language resources can provide (Larsen-Freeman, 2002). Whilst some theories of language learning emphasise individual construction in a literal sense such as Celce-Murcia's (1991) *cognitive approach* (as cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2000), this idea of individual construction is mostly bound by traditionally didactic pedagogies in language teaching in classrooms that are teacher and resource-centred. For example, exploring learner agency in a Chinese as a foreign language classroom at a North American university, Lantolf and Genung (2002) noted that the research context subscribed to the individually constructed philosophy in the strictest sense. The authors recall that in this context "formal accuracy...[was] of paramount importance", linguistic pedagogies such as drilling sessions conducted by the instructor were a daily occurrence, and the physical layout of the room was arranged with "chairs...in a semicircle with the instructor positioned at the front at all times" (Lantolf & Genung, 2002, p. 181). In these learning contexts, learners largely work independently of other learners.

On the other hand, the socially constructed learner is situated in and connected to a surrounding context, which highly values language use or socialisation (Larsen-Freeman, 2002). The purpose of language learning in this context is more practical, as it is seen as a tool for getting things done, rather than just a means for acquiring knowledge of a language without any real functional application (Kramsch, 2002). This idea of a socially constructed learner is further connected to the belief in learner agency, of which thus far has been explained as learner capacity to act (Duff, 2012); and importantly, in socially constructed environments, learners act together. Furthermore, as learner identities are fluid in this paradigm, individuals also act together to

construct identity through language learning (Miller, 2003). This idea is echoed by Lave (1992) whom, in talking about learning more generally, claims “learning is...a process of coming to *be*, of forging identities in activity in the world...[and] subjects are made and make themselves with others” (p. 2).

Moreover, in the socially constructed world, learner agency is also explained by the freedom to act, which is at the crux of all postmodern and post-structural arguments. That is that all individuals exist within structures that allow them to move autonomously or conversely constrain them (Vitanova, 2013; Tracey, 2013; Norton, 2010). In Lantolf and Genung’s (2002) research, their primary research subject was reported to have lost her motivation and become an ineffective language learner, due to her instructor’s attitude and methodology, which she found highly restrictive and non-conducive to her learning style. So in this sense, a socially constructed learner is not just a learner who has the capacity to act with others, but is also given the freedom to do so. In sociocultural classrooms, lessons are learner-centred and learners are encouraged to be self-determining while working collaboratively with others in groups. Of course, this also assumes that learners are also willing participants in the experience (Vitanova, 2013).

To summarise, learner identity from the linguistic paradigm has been described as static, and as an object of instruction, he or she is individually constructed by teacher instruction and traditional language resources. However, it must be said that the field of linguistics does not strictly negate influence of the learner’s social environment on their language learning (Kasper, 1997). Even in *input processing theory*, Van Patten (2012) acknowledges that early research also focused on “how input was negotiated by learners and/or modified by other speakers” (p. 268), which resonates with learner agency even if just on a cognitive level. Still, research in linguistics does lend greater attention to the cognition of language itself. Whereas on the other hand, the sociocultural paradigm describes the learner as a fluid subject of agency, restricted or unrestricted, in a socially constructed environment. Once again, it is important to highlight that the dimensions in

each paradigm interlace and support the others as shown (Image 1). Moreover, across the paradigmatic divide, learner identity can be viewed as a composite of binaries fraught with conflict and contradiction. Overall, within this composite picture, there are six dimensions in total: static, fluid, object, subject, individually and socially constructed.

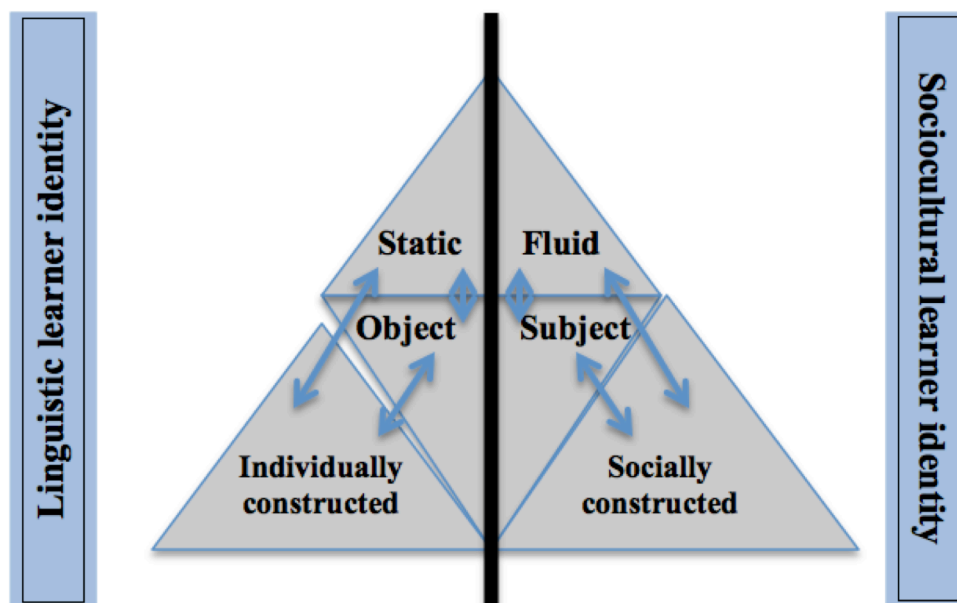


Image 1: The six dimensions in the composite of SLA linguistic and sociocultural learner identities

These six dimensions will shortly be interpreted with reference to Bakhtinian dialogic theory. For now, however, this literature review of learner identity in SLA research serves as a point of departure for commencing research.

3 BAKHTINIAN DIALOGIC THEORY

Supporting this belief that language plays a central role in identity construction (Vitanova, 2013), Bakhtinian dialogic theory was deemed epistemologically suitable for conducting research on learner identity in a language classroom. In part, the suitability of this theory hinges on the person Bakhtin himself. That is that he was both a moral philosopher on the eternal quest to answer questions at the core of identity research, yet he was also a literary theorist who sought to explore identity through language. In particular, Bakhtin has been recognised for pursuing his interest in the relationship between language and subjectivity as a way of understanding what it means to be an individual in relation to others (Sullivan, 2012; Morson & Emerson, 1990).

Bakhtin (1972) states “language lives only in the dialogic interaction of those who make use of it” (p. 183 as cited in Morson & Emerson, 1990, p. 130). Thus, it must be stated that his dialogic philosophies are often aligned with the sociocultural view of the individual as a fluid, subject of agency in a socially constructed environment. As in Bakhtinian dialogic theory, language works to reciprocally shape self and others, while constructing the material world in the process (DaSilva Iddings et al., 2013; Hicks, 1996; Sullivan, 2007). Furthermore, this fluid dialogic self is always unfolding through this authorship or acting in dialogue with others (Vitanova, 2013; Hicks, 1996; Sullivan, 2007; Morson & Emerson, 1990).

Moreover, whilst much of his theoretical explorations were grounded within the context of literary analysis (Sullivan, 2012; Vitanova, 2013), it is Bakhtin’s (2004) essay *Dialogic Origin and Dialogic Pedagogy of Grammar* that bridges the imagination of SLA researchers and practitioners, in connecting his philosophies to language teaching and learning contexts. In particular, it is his argument for teaching stylistics in grammar, the personalised identity in language (Bakhtin, 2004), that challenges traditionally established linguistic views of correct practices in grammar teaching. Holoquist (1990) explains that Bakhtin rejected abstract objectivism that views language as “a pure system of laws governing all phonetic, grammatical, and lexical forms that confront

individual speakers as inviolable norms over which they have no control” (as cited in DaSilva Iddings et al., 2013, p. 35). A language classroom based on Bakhtinian philosophy is a sociocultural classroom, as opposed to a strictly linguistic one, as Bakhtin viewed language as a social activity (DaSilva Iddings et al., 2013).

Yet whilst Bakhtin has often been associated with sociocultural theories (Zuengler & Miller, 2006; Kalaja et al., 2015), and considerable research on identity has been done using this framework (Hicks, 1996; Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; DaSilva Iddings et al., 2013; Vitanova, 2013; Platt, 2013), elements of his work also resonate with linguistic perspectives on learner identity. Whilst Bakhtin rejects the notion of a static self (Emerson, 1991 as cited in Sullivan, 2007), exploring dialogic theory in *Examining the Self-Other Dialogue through ‘Spirit’ and ‘Soul’*, Sullivan (2007) describes the soul as a definite form of self as perceived by others from the outside. It appears that identity defined from this position alone, which echoes sentiments of the *received view* of culture (Atkinson, 1999), has indeed a static quality that is beyond the control of the individual. Moreover, there is also the concept of *istina* or abstract truth in Bakhtinian theory itself that is knowledge monologised (Morson & Emerson, 1990); and the monologic self is not subject to change. Contrasted with *pravda*, living truth in people’s dialogic interactions (Sullivan, 2007; Morson & Emerson, 1990), this abstract sense of self somewhat echoes linguistic perspectives on learner identity.

Furthermore, when it comes to language concepts such as *stable speech genres* and *double-voicing*, Bakhtin’s ideas echo the belief that learners are, or at least capable of being, objects of instruction learning language structures from others. *Double-voicing* is defined as borrowing language from others and presenting it as one’s own language (Gillespie & Cornish, 2009). In the literature, this is commonly explained by the tendency of a child to mirror their mother’s authoritative voice and take her words as their own (Sullivan, 2007). Platt (2013) also refers to this as *double directed words*. Whereas *speech genres*, at times referred to as *oral genres* or *social languages* (Platt, 2013; Hermans, 2002; Akkerman & Meijer, 2011), is shared language among

members from a common discourse background (Hicks, 1996; Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). This view of communities of discourse is also present more widely in SLA literature (Lemke, 2002), but in the language classroom this concept can be paralleled with the explicit teaching of the target language within particular written and spoken genres, for example, essay writing and oral presentations. Whereas *double-voicing* in the classroom may occur in the modelling of spoken language through teacher feedback, which learners adopt as their own. Moreover, Bakhtin (2004) alludes to the linguistic learner identity by stating that language has the potential to turn learners into objects of instruction generating “ready-made language produced by others” (p. 15). The implications of this are considerable given that, much like mothers to infants, teachers often have the final authoritative word in language classrooms (Sullivan, 2007; Lantolf & Genung, 2002; Ha & Li, 2014).

Finally, the linguistic learner dimension of individual construction at first glance resonates with the Bakhtinian dialogic frame of *I-for-self* or *what I say or sense about myself*, as it has an individualistic sense of determinism that resonates with humanistic philosophies (Sullivan, 2007). However, on closer examination, in dialogic theory Bakhtin rejects an individualistic self that is capable of creating meaning alone outside of dialogue with others. Nonetheless, his earlier notion of the *architectonic* self, which forefronts individualistic selfhood, supports this view of the individual nature of identity (Emerson, 1996). This provides a loophole for individual construction in Bakhtinian philosophy more broadly, of which he started with and returned to at the end of his career (Emerson, 1996). So, suffice to say that identity in Bakhtin philosophy is in part individually created.

Moving forward, Bakhtinian dialogic theory affords the researcher with a rich array of ontological assumptions with which to conduct research. However, for the purpose of this study the primary view that dialogue is an emotionally intoned moral act, in and through which identity is revealed, will be assumed. Dialogism in this sense will be used as a tool for locating identity, in preparation for the broader discussion on learner identity in language classrooms, within the landscape of the SLA literature and research

established earlier in the literature review. Therefore, first it serves to unpack this assumption of the emotionally intoned dialogic moral act.

3.1 Dialogue is a collaborative everyday moral act

In dialogic theory, dialogue is much more than just a conversation, a genre in which interlocutors share speaking time, yet could be running parallel to each other in thought and feeling, never quite meeting at crossroads. Rather more, in true Socratic tradition, dialogue is an act in which minds and hearts converge, and through both collaboration and conflict creation happens (Hicks, 1996; Morson & Emerson, 1990). To Bakhtin (1984), dialogue is indeed action (as cited in Vitanova, 2013; Sullivan, 2007); it is specifically the act of coming into being through and with others (Platt, 2013).

In Bakhtinian theory, there are three dialogic frames in which these dialogic acts take place: firstly, there is the *I-for-self* frame, briefly mentioned earlier, in which the first-person pronoun *I* engages with and senses the self; secondly, there is the *I-for-other* frame, in which *others* engage with and perceive the *I*; and thirdly, in the *Others-for-me* frame, the *I* in return engages and perceives the *others* (Sullivan, 2007). Importantly, it is within these intersubjective frames of sensing and perceiving, which is expressed as an utterance meeting a reply (Hicks, 1996; Hermans 2002; Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; DaSilva Iddings et al., 2013), that identity exists (Platt, 2013). Furthermore, these dialogic acts are also prosaic acts (Hicks, 1996; Morson & Emerson, 1990; Holoquist, 1986 as cited in Vitanova, 2013), which further supports the earlier assumption that identity itself is a commonplace phenomenon shared by all.

This depiction of dialogue supports the view that dialogue is not only a collaborative act, but also a creative one. Bakhtin (1984) states dialogue “is not a means for revealing... the ready-made character of a person: no, in dialogue a person not only shows himself outwardly, but he becomes for the first time what he is” (as cited in Vitanova, 2013, p. 154). As a collaboratively creative act, dialogue is fertile ground for identity creation (Markova, 2007; Hermans, 2002). This creative potential embedded in dialogic acts highlights the significance of them, which is why they are often interpreted as gifts

(Sullivan, 2012; Platt, 2013; Vitanova, 2013; Emerson, 1996). For it is only through this exchange that one can truly find oneself. Bakhtin (1981) states “I cannot do without the other, I cannot become myself without the other; I must find myself in the other, finding the other in me” (p. 185 as cited in DaSilva Iddings et al., 2013, p. 36).

Yet just as dialogic acts can be constructive collaboratively, they can also be constructive as conflicting sights of tension (Markova, 2007; Vitanova, 2013; Hermans, 2002; DaSilva Iddings et al., 2013; Morson & Emerson, 1990). Sullivan (2007) identifies these as struggles on “moments of the threshold” in which the spirit strives to reform identity from that which already is, the soul, to that which is yet to come (p. 115). This idea of a dialogic site of conflict is also echoed in Akkerman and Meijer’s (2011) reference to “borderland discourse” (p. 311), as well as more broadly in SLA theory, as are other dialogic notions already discussed (Kramsch, 2009). Central to this idea of conflict is Bakhtin’s concept of *polyphony*, that which is defined as many voices, whether internal or external, competing to be heard (Sullivan 2007; Hermans, 2002; Morson & Emerson, 1990). Yet it is the authoritarian voice mentioned earlier in the mother and teacher, in particular, that is heard above all others (Platt, 2013; Hicks, 1996; Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; Sullivan, 2007). Only carnivalesque laughter, which briefly releases preconceptions of self, provides relief from this struggle from time to time (Sullivan, 2007; Vitanova, 2013).

Finally, the importance of this act also supports the view that dialogue is also a moral act. Bakhtin viewed dialogue as an act of responsibility (Vitanova, 2013), which he took seriously as reiterated in his preoccupation with ethics (Hicks, 1996). For human existence is only possible through dialogic interactions (DaSilva Iddings et al., 2013). However, it must be emphasised that the morality in dialogic acts is not collectively prescribed by society, but rather the individual’s obligation to act in accordance with their own values (Hicks, 1997). This is what Bakhtin refers to as “affix[ing] my personal signature” (as cited in Emerson, 1996, p. 116). This further highlights the imperativeness of each unique individual participating in dialogue.

3.2 The role of emotions in dialogue

The belief that emotions reveal something about identity is widely shared. In her study of immigrants in the United States, Vitanova (2013) explains that the emotions in a speaker's voice reveal a new identity in a new land. Platt (2013) also agrees that emotions reveal a speaker's attitude towards a situation. Beyond SLA research in the field of social psychology, Parkinson (1996) explains that *appraisal theory* states that for emotions to be expressed, the event or situation has to matter to the person experiencing it. Moreover in dialogic theory, Bakhtin (2004) also recognised the role of emotions in personalising even top-down prescribed language such as those of stable speech genres. Siding with the language-for-use argument over the language-for-acquisition, Emerson (1996) claims that Bakhtin would say, "human beings make use of signs, but are never constrained to be defined by them" (p. 111). Now, *how* speakers do this is by intoning language with emotion (Morson & Emerson, 1990).

Specifically, emotions are often associated with a person's values. Thus, emotionally intoned dialogic acts are also "value-laden" acts (Hicks, 1996, p. 106). Once again, this raises the view that dialogue is indeed a moral act. That is to say that through emotionally intoned language, a speaker is acting responsibly in accordance with their values or morals. Furthermore, it is the "emotional-volitional tone" in dialogue where "self-activity in a lived experience" is revealed (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 37 as cited in Hicks, 1996, p. 108). This, Sullivan (2007) would say is the spirit striving to become that which it wants to be. In other words, emotions in dialogue revealing values unveil the true self or *pravda*.

In addition to revealing one's values and true self, emotions also have the capacity to inform values and self. Sullivan (2012) states that emotional intonation in dialogue has a "form-shaping power" (p. 3). Moreover, this experience is not limited or contained within individuals themselves but extends itself to others. In his article, *Emotions are social*, Parkinson (1996) expounds that it is human nature to synchronise emotions or create counteractive roles in response to them. Sullivan (2007) further supports this

stating that “it is through our emotions... that we bestow a form and a value upon others” (p. 110). Finally, particular to the study abroad context, some may argue that emotions are culturally influenced. Whilst this is true to some extent, it is said that emotions are also deeply personal and separate from culture (Parkinson, 1996). So in this sense, the individual plays an agentive role through emotions in their dialogic interactions with others. All these assumptions together provide the researcher with a theoretical framework for exploring learner perspectives on self-identity in the language classroom.

4 RESEARCH ON LEARNER IDENTITY IN STUDY ABROAD IN AUSTRALIA

According to Block (2007), SLA learners fall into three categories: naturalistic, foreign language learning and study abroad contexts. In reviewing the literature on learner identity, particularly in English-speaking study abroad contexts, it was discovered that a lot of the research is based in the North American context (DaSilva Iddings et al., 2013; Atkinson & Sohn, 2013; Morita, 2004; Lantolf & Genung, 2002; Nguyen & Yang, 2015). Furthermore, a review of the literature in the Australian study abroad context reveals that the research focuses on migrant learners in mainstream education or adult education (Miller, 2003; Dooley, 2009; Ollerhead, 2012) and international students in higher education (Ha & Li, 2014; Gomes, 2015). Therefore, a need for research on learner identity in language classrooms between mainstream and higher education has been identified.

These English language classrooms, and the teaching and learning that takes place within them, holds a significant position in international education in Australia, which is the second largest export in Australia after mining (Universities Australia, 2017). In 2016, it was reported that more than 173 000 international students enrolled into these courses across the country (Department of Education and Training, 2017). Furthermore, these language courses also play a critical role in preparing students to enter the higher education sector. To be successful at university, teachers need to prepare students not just linguistically but academically, so that they may reach their academic goals in Australia.

In addition to entering a new educational culture, these individuals also enter a new society in which they are subject to transformative personal change. Furthermore, through the concept of *alterity* or coming into contact with otherness, Gillespie, Kadianaki and O'Sullivan-Lago (2012) explain that these new identities also have the potential to destabilise and rebuild host identities in addition to their own. This idea of defining self through other is more widely supported too (Akkerman & Meijer, 2011). This has implications for societies globally as people migrate at increasing speeds in the modern

day (Gillespie et al., 2012). Thus, it appears that these identity experiences are all encompassing and relevant to us all.

4.1 Research aim and questions

Through an interpretivist lens which assumes the stance of *verstehen*, that of understanding others through a first-hand participatory approach (Tracey, 2013), the aim of this research is to explore the emic perspectives of learners on self-identity in language classrooms, in a study abroad context in Australia. This is based on the grounds that it can be argued that an interpretivist approach is more suitable for educational research where learners are subjects, and hence learner experiences are subjective (Curtis, Murphy & Shields, 2014). Furthermore, an interpretivist approach also complements the dialogic theoretical framework presented earlier, as it recognises the researcher's crucial role as the *other* in defining self (Emerson, 1996).

The research questions are as follows:

1. How do learners define self-identity in language classrooms within a study abroad context?
2. What are the implications of this for SLA researchers, teachers and language institutions, and learners themselves?

As the researcher aims to understand the learners' own conceptions of self-identity, the first research question purposefully uses the terminology *self-identity* as opposed to *learner identity*. This is because learner identity is defined in relational terms (Vignoles et al., 2011), principally the relationship between teacher and learner. Although Norton (2010) states "a person's identity must be understood in relational terms: one is either subject *of* a set of relationships (i.e. in a position of power) or subject *to* a set of relationships (i.e. in a position of reduced power)" (p. 350), it was the researcher's intention to minimise the power construct between the researcher and participants as much as possible. This intention was not only reflected in the wording of the question, but also made explicit to the participants prior to commencing.

5 METHODOLOGY

In conducting research on learner self-identity in language classrooms, many decisions were made at all stages of the process, from choosing the theoretical framework and data collection method, engaging the research site and participants, to transcribing, selecting and coding the data in preparation for analysis. In facilitating this process, both bureaucratic and charismatic decisions were made which are typical of qualitative research (Sullivan, 2012). This is to say that whilst these decisions were made according to established research guidelines (Tracey 2013; Markova, 2007; Sullivan, 2013; Creswell, 2005), they were done with flexibility to adapt to the researcher's own style and situation, which will be discussed in the methodology that follows.

5.1 The research language site, groups and participants

The research language site

In their review of study abroad research, Sieloff Magnan and Lafford (2012) state that these contexts are ideal for researching language learning because they “can provide authentic input and interaction with native speakers” (p. 525). Study abroad contexts are indeed rich locations for exploring language use or socialisation in larger sociocultural environments. However, whilst the authors specify interaction with native speakers outside of the classroom as having the advantage, it can equally be argued that in study abroad contexts it is also the need to interact with learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds in the target language inside the classroom that creates this opportunity. From the researcher's own teaching experience, this is certainly the case in the multicultural and multilingual classrooms at the research site in this study. Whilst the research language site was chosen because it was the place in which the phenomenon was first observed, this study abroad context was also deemed suitable for investigating the linguistic and sociocultural learner identity (Creswell, 2005). In addition to this, an established relationship with the language centre also facilitated the process from a

practical point of view. Thus, the sampling method was convenience or opportunistic (Tracey, 2013).

Located at a major university in Australia, the research language site selected is typical of its kind in that it offers both academic English and general English language courses with an emphasis on the former, as it serves as an alternative pathway into undergraduate and postgraduate courses at university, as previously mentioned. Thus, whilst some learners at the centre are learning English to develop their general English language skills for either professional or personal reasons, most are on extended routes into higher education in Australia. To these learners, the language courses serve the dual purpose of developing their linguistic skills, in addition to their academic literacies, which are necessary for success at university in a new educational context.

At the research language site, elementary to advanced English level courses are delivered over a 20-hour week according to a set curriculum within the relevant streams. The curriculum addresses the usual language objectives of English courses, namely grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, in addition to writing, reading, speaking and listening skills development. The courses are also often delivered using linguistic pedagogies that have traditionally characterised language teaching in these types of contexts. On commencement, learners are placed into the appropriate English level course based on a diagnostic assessment to establish their linguistic needs. Whilst courses run over a 10-week study period, it is possible to complete only the last five weeks of a period, if it is deemed what the learner needs. All lessons take place on the main campus that affords them access to university resources and facilities usual of higher education institutions in Australia.

The research language groups

The data was collected from learners from three different academic English classes: one upper-intermediate and two advanced classes. From a practical perspective, these classes were selected within administrative parameters, primarily class availability in timetabling and the willingness of classroom

teachers to consent to research. However, with regards to meeting the research aim, these classes were specifically selected for the learners' more advanced levels of English, enabling them to confidently participate in interviews. Besides this, these classes had reached the end of their 10-week study period, which put the learners in a better position to be able to reflect and comment on their experiences of self within the language classroom during the course. The collective identities of the groups would have also been at its strongest by this time, with learners having known each for a minimum of five weeks, if not most for ten. Finally, at the higher levels of English language courses at the centre, there was also more of a chance that learners would be able to compare their most recent classroom experiences with those from the past, and thus gain deeper insight into their present experience.

The data collection process for each of these three class groups happened in three stages. In the first stage, general observations of the class group were recorded in the researcher's journal during the initial visit to each classroom in which the researcher met the learners and introduced the intention to conduct research. In the second stage, an autobiographical writing task was facilitated for the purpose of identifying potential participants for the third stage of data collection, focus-group interviews (Appendix 1). It was during this second stage that some basic demographic information was collected from all of the learners across the three different English classes. Whilst the qualitative nature of this research does not orient itself towards statistics, this information serves as a snapshot of the average language class in this type of centre (Table 1). Before introducing the language participants in this study, it is important to contextualise them by understanding a little bit about the language classrooms to which they belonged. In total, 35 learners across the three classes were captured in this preliminary stage of the data collection process.

Average class size	15 learners
Average age of learners	24 years old
Gender representation	Males & females*
# Nationalities across the three classes	13 different nationalities were represented from countries in Asia, the Middle East, Latin America & Europe*
# Other languages in addition to English	The vast majority of learners identified only their first language
Primary motivation for studying English	The vast majority of learners identified higher education
Previous occupation in home country	The majority of learners identified themselves as being students

*With the exception of one class in which there was a notably higher ratio of Chinese males to females and learners from other cultural and linguistic backgrounds, which is not typical of classes at this centre, two of the three class groups were diverse in terms of gender and nationality.

Table 1: Snapshot of an average class at the research language site

The research language participants

As previously mentioned, an autobiographical writing task was facilitated for the purpose of identifying potential participants for the focus-group interviews. The very nature of an autobiographical writing task sets up the individual to write about self from one's own perspective, so this writing task was viewed as a suitable entry point for exploring self-identity in the language classroom. During this task, learners were asked to reflect and write on their personal experiences, ideas and opinions of self-identity in their language classroom (Appendix 1). Based on these writing samples, it was the researcher's intention to invite three participants from each class group to expand on their written responses in a focus-group interview with members from their own class. However, when only the minimum amount of learners volunteered to participate in each class group interview, all were invited to attend. In total, eight students were interviewed across the three groups.

Two focus-group interviews had three participants; the third had only two. In the two-participant interview, both participants were on confirmed pathways into postgraduate studies. In the first three-participant interview, only one participant was on a trajectory into higher education at an

undergraduate level, whilst the other two only hinted at further education as a possibility. Finally, in the second three-participant interview, two participants were on academic pathways, whereas the third identified personal development as the primary motivation for learning English at the language centre. Overall, across the three interviews, more than half of the learners had already established themselves as professionals in their home countries and viewed their studies in Australia as an extension of that foundation.

Furthermore, with the exception of one of the three-participant interviews, all participants came from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, when compared to others in their group. This multicultural and multilingual mix is representative of the whole-class groups, but for the exception of the one class that had a disproportionately higher amount of Chinese-speaking English language learners. That these learners had Chinese as their first language is not of importance per se; rather what is important is the impact these learners had on the language classroom by choosing to speak Chinese during class, which is evidenced in this group's dialogue in their interview. Moreover, male and female representation was present across all groups, and the participants' ages ranged from 19-33 years old.

The participants across the three interviews had been at the language centre anywhere from ten to forty weeks. Therefore, they had varying degrees of experience with learning English in the language classroom within this particular context. Moreover, in both of the three-participant interviews, the learners had studied together in the same class with each other for a minimum ten weeks. Whilst in the two-participant interview, the learners had only studied together for five weeks due to one student having changed class during the course. Overall, the participants demonstrated sufficient familiarity by comfortably interacting with each other during the focus-group interviews. Finally, for the purpose of transparency, the participants had only met the researcher/interviewer once before the interviews were conducted.

5.2 Research method – focus-group interviews

In order to explore the emic perspectives of learners through this interpretivist approach to conducting research, interviews were chosen as the preferred and primary method of data collection for analysis. As Tracey (2013) recognises that interviews “elucidate subjectively lived experiences and viewpoints from the respondents’ perspectives” (p. 132). In addition to this, interviews also provide a way to access the language classroom, the context of interest in this study, albeit retrospectively now that the course had finished (Tracey, 2013).

Furthermore, there were three main theoretical considerations to be exact that were taken into account in planning to conduct focus-group interviews. Firstly, Markova (2007) states that focus groups are known as a method to “examine a particular set of socially relevant issues” (p. 32), which in this case is self-identity in the language classroom. Secondly, focus groups are dialogic groups which “involve many voices to facilitate the circulation of ideas, which are situated within a cultural and historical context shared by the participants”, and this also includes speakers who are not physically present in the interview (Markova, 2007, p. 49). It is through dialogue with other voices that self can be known (Markova, 2007; Fontana & Frey, 2005 as cited in Tracey, 2013). Thirdly, focus groups are also known to “effectively explore emotional experiences” (Tracey, 2013, p. 167), which is essential in dialogic theory. Thus, these considerations aligning with Bakhtinian dialogic theory make focus-group interviews a preferable method for collecting data.

Conducting the interviews

The focus-group interviews were conducted in a meeting room at the research language site at a time that was agreed upon by all participants. All efforts were made to make them comfortable which is important for these types of situations (Markova, 2007). The interviews varied in length from approximately 30 to 50 minutes; the two-participant interview was proportionately shorter than the other two. They were semi-structured to “allow for more emic, emergent understandings to blossom” as well as emotions to emerge (Tracey, 2013, p. 139) of which, as mentioned earlier,

aligns with the theoretical framework. At the beginning of the interviews, the participants were provided with a list of the interview questions (Appendix 2), yet in actuality the participants seldom referred to them. Rather, the participants responded to the researcher asking the questions. Whilst there was structure in the interview questions, flexibility in answering them was made explicit to the participants prior to starting. That is to say that the participants were encouraged to respond dialogically to each other by adding to or commenting on the contributions of others, or by raising their own improvised questions. It was the researcher's hope that the dialogue would develop organically to some extent. This was done successfully to varying degrees, mostly by concurring and adding onto what another participant had already said. A few attempts were also recorded where participants challenged each other's perspectives on different situations.

A combination of opening, generative and closing questions that encourage extended answers were planned for the interview (Tracey, 2013; Creswell, 2005). Also, clarifying or elaborating probes were used to encourage speakers to develop their answers (Creswell, 2005). Moreover, whilst the written questions elicited a first-person response, observations in the data identified that the questions had a tendency to lend themselves to the three different frames in dialogic theory as shown (Table 2).

	<i>I-for-self What I say/sense about myself</i>	<i>I-for-other What others say/perceive about me</i>	<i>Others- for-me What I say/ perceive about others</i>
1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourselves?	✓		
2. How would you describe your class as a group?	✓		✓
3. Where do you see yourselves (individually) in this group? Why?/Tell me more.	✓	✓	
4. Has this changed for you throughout your language studies? i.e. from other classes. Please explain.	✓	✓	✓
5. Is this different to how you see yourselves in other groups - for example, friendship, professional or work groups and/or the people you live with in Australia? How?/Tell me more.	✓		
6. What would you like your teacher to know about you as individual people/a group to help them create better learning environments for you?	✓		✓
7. Is there anything else you would like to add?			

Table 2: The focus-group interview questions and their corresponding dialogic frames

This tendency of the questions to lend themselves to particular dialogic frames was also in part due to the rephrasing of some of the originally scripted questions during the interview. For example, Question 3 *'Where do you see yourselves (individually) in this group?'* was rephrased to *'How would others describe you in the group in the classroom?'* This was to facilitate the process of taking another's perspective including those who are not present in interview room, which is important in dialogic theory (Markova, 2007). Furthermore, in other instances where the participants demonstrated difficulty in answering the question, the researcher was a bit more creative in rephrasing the question to help the participant imagine their position in the classroom in more concrete terms. For example, Question 3 was also rephrased to *'If you were a character in a movie in the classroom, which character would you be?'* In answering the questions, the participants included the voices of those absent in the interviews, in addition to their own. This was notably demonstrated by their use of direct and indirect speech (Sullivan, 2012), of which at times was also audibly animated. That is to say that there was a change in pitch, volume or pace.

At different times throughout the interview, the researcher also improvised questions in response to the participants' answers, often asking learners to clarify or extend their answers with specific examples. However, whilst the participants were speaking, the researcher made a conscious effort to assume a reflective listener position (Tracey, 2013), so as to give the participants centre stage in the interviews. Although it was noted that whilst the participants engaged with each other, attention was often directed back to the researcher. Thus, the researcher was aware of the authoritarian voice that privileged her position in the interviews (Tracey, 2013), as both a researcher and self-identified English language teacher. In particular, this was made apparent by some of the participants' tendencies to look towards the researcher for language feedback, as language learners tend to do with teachers in the classroom.

Finally, all the interviews were recorded using an audio-only recording application on a smart device. In order to give the participants full attention,

the researcher chose to not take notes during the interviews. However, notes were recorded in the researcher's journal following the interviews, reflecting on the participants' responses in addition to the overall process.

5.3 Data preparation

Whilst observational field notes were recorded in the researcher's journal throughout the data collection process, and written data was collected in the autobiographical writing task, only the focus-group interviews were included in the data analysis. The process of transcribing, selecting and coding the data will now be outlined below.

Transcribing and selecting the data

All the focus-group interviews were fully transcribed in preparation for coding and analysis. Prior to beginning transcribing, based on the importance of contextual language features in interpreting the dialogue itself (Markova, 2007), it was decided that the manner in which the dialogue was delivered would be transcribed, in addition to the content. In other words, *how* something was said was as important as *what* was said. Guided by Sullivan (2012) in *Qualitative data analysis. Using a dialogical approach*, emphatic speech, the use of direct and indirect speech, overlapping speech when participants competed for talk-time, and inaudible speech were all recorded as contextual information. In addition to this, pace, volume and pitch in speech (including sudden changes), extended pauses, different types of laughter and audible emotions noted as *frustration*, *uncertainty*, *surprise*, *amusement* and *seriousness*, among others, were recorded. As mentioned earlier, animated voices in speech noted as *role-playing* were also included, as these all added to the emotional intonation of dialogue in the interviews.

A researcher-modified version of the *Jefferson key*, and the *Inqscribe* transcription tool for greater control of the running audio, were used to carry out the process. To ensure greatest accuracy in transcription, each interview was transcribed over more than one listening. During this time, and subsequent consultations with the data, the researcher became thoroughly familiar with the data. While transcribing, emerging observations about the

individual participants and focus groups were recorded in the researcher's journal. Notes about the participants' individual communication styles or personalities in the interviews were also made. For example, different speakers demonstrated a propensity for using different interactional techniques such as active listening, turn taking, co-constructing ideas and laughing together, or the opposite of ignoring an invitation to engage with the other and, in one instance, absent laughter where it may be expected. Whilst the interview room itself was outside of the context under study, namely the language classroom, these observations were somewhat useful for interpreting identity, as boundaries can blur and identity is not necessarily bound by a specific physical space. Furthermore, it was important to be conscious of the identities emerging within the interview space, as they undoubtedly added to the emotional intonation in the dialogue.

On completion of the transcribing stage, and in preparation for the data coding and analysis, individual data sets were created for each participant. This was in part to make the data manageable, but also prepare the researcher for identifying each individual's perception of self-identity in the language classroom. To do this, the interview transcripts were scanned for the dialogic scenes performed by each speaker, one at a time. A *dialogic scene* was defined as a group of speech acts that was deemed complete or absolute by the researcher. The research questions often served to highlight these boundaries, identifying where a dialogic scene started and ended and, thereafter, where another one began. Together these dialogic scenes were compiled for each participant and these data sets were saved for coding. This was also done to maximise the data at least in the first stages, as a further reduction would be needed later (Sullivan, 2012).

Coding the data

When it came to coding the data, the individual data sets were addressed one by one, and this was done in three stages. Firstly, connected with dialogic theory that explains that identity is located in dialogic interactions (Hicks, 1996; Hermans 2002; Akkerman & Meijer, 2011; DaSilva Iddings et al., 2013), the dialogic scenes were read for their dialogic frames - *I-for-self*, *I-for-other*

and *Others-for-me*. An example of this is shown with reference to a speech act from one participant's dialogue (Table 3, Column 1).

Interestingly, in coding the data an extra frame unidentified in Bakhtinian dialogic theory was found, which was then called the *I-for-us* frame or *what I say or sense about us*. In this frame, it was difficult to clearly distinguish what the speaker said about him or herself from their class group. So this was noted as an extra frame. There was also an instance in which the dialogic frame *I-for-self* was split in two. This resonates with Gergen's (1991) notion of *multiplhrenia*, or "the splitting of self into a multiplicity of self-investments" (as cited in Akkerman & Meijer, 2013, p. 309). In other words, the individual referred to him or herself as two people in one. Although this was rare, it was also noted.

Secondly, the dialogic scenes were read for emotional intonation in the speech acts for each participant. As stated earlier, this step was important because emotional intonation in dialogue is what hints at true identity (Vitanova, 2013; Platt, 2013; Parkinson, 1996; Bakhtin, 2004). Registering emotional intonation was guided by the contextual information recorded during transcription now present in the marked dialogic frames. In addition to this, emotional intonation was registered according to the speech choices made by the speakers, for example, vocabulary choices (including repetition), the use of figurative language, stylistic choices around sentence and question

Speech act	1	2		3
	Dialogic frames	Emotional indicators	Emotional intonation	Identity perspectives
But the, teacher especially with Teacher 1,* I think that it was good . Eh, excellent teacher I think. She, she gave us a lot of , eh, tips . No, tips no ((looking for language)). Em, no, a lot of advice, advices , um, for the reading test, em, for the listening, and for me was good . I improved my listening and reading, with Teacher 1.* Emm.	Others-for-me (Teacher)	Repetition of "good" "a lot of"	Real sense of satisfaction with the teacher and language instruction	<i>Object of instruction, individually constructed</i> - learning by instruction
	I-for-self	Vocabulary choices "tips" "advice" Strong adjectives/adverbs "especially" "excellent" Reported positive results "improved"	Sense of confidence in one's own ability as a result of that instruction	<i>Fluid identity</i> - improved language skills

Key: ((Additional contextual information))

Emotional indicators in bold

*Real names have been removed

Table 3: The process of coding dialogic scenes illustrated with a speech act

types (including declarative and rhetorical ones), and other syntactic tendencies such as a preference for particular subject pronouns. These emotional indicators all informed the researcher's interpretation of emotional intonation in the dialogue of the participants as shown (Table 3, Column 2).

Thirdly, guided by the emotionally intoned speech acts, identity perspectives were interpreted by the researcher with reference to the six dimensions of learner identity in the SLA literature (Table 3, Column 3). That is to say that the qualities of being static and fluid, the behaviours exhibited by objects and subjects, and the individual and social landscapes of the participants in their speech acts were coded, but importantly not strictly through the lens of a *language learner per se*, as done in SLA research. Whilst it was important to deduce meaning from the data within the context of the established literature, it was crucial that the emic perspectives of the participants themselves were forefront in this research. Interpreting self-identity in the data only through the lens of a language learner was deemed too limiting, as explained earlier in *4.1 Research aim and questions*. After all, being a language learner is only part of an individual's whole identity.

Once all the data was coded, the data sets for each individual were scanned and the contexts in which the identity perspectives emerged were identified. Since although the research focus was on the context of the language classroom, the interview questions and consequent participants' dialogues were not necessarily confined to the classroom. Rather, there were three recognisable contexts in the dialogues: inside the classroom; outside the classroom; and in the interview room. Needless to say, all of the instances inside the classroom were included in the analysis. However, there were instances in which identity perspectives emerged in overlapping contexts. In other words, an identity perspective may pertain to inside the classroom but also outside the classroom and/or in the interview room in a single speech act. An example of this is illustrated in *Table 4*. In this speech act, the participant is responding to Question 5 '*Is the way you see yourself in class different to how you see yourself in other groups – for example, friendship, professional or work groups and/or the people you live with in Australia?*'

Speech act	Emotional intonation	1	2
Um. I think. Now ((elongated)), if I wanna talk about myself, I'm definitely a new person. Really, Really different. Um. Ah, maybe my friend in Colombia, ah, always, ah, see me like a confident person. But, my ex-classmates, they can say "oh, Jennifer* feel <i>nervous</i> sometimes. And, when she is in front of us, uh, she, mmm, try to, I don't know, make a lot of mistakes. " Um. But ah. But definitely we are, at least two different per-people, no? Two, two different, yeah? ((rising intonation - looking for language confirmation)).... Yeah, em, I think yeah. Definitely, yeah. The, the answer is yes ((elongated)). And, and something, I'm someone really different here.	Extremely strong sense of certainty and awareness about going through a personally transformative change in this study abroad experience Some certainty in how friends in the home country perceive a "confident" person Some certainty in how classmates in the classroom perceive a "nervous" person lacking in confidence	Identity perspective <i>Fluid</i> identity - going through deeply personal change from being confident in the home country to lacking confidence in the classroom This change is marked by the present time "now" & place "here", referenced to past time and place	Outside the classroom (home country) Inside the classroom

Key: ((Additional contextual information))

Emotional indicators in bold

*Real names have been removed

Table 4: Overlapping contexts in a speech act

In this emotionally intoned speech act that arises in the *I-for-self* and *I-for-other* dialogic frames, the identity perspective that emerges is a *fluid* identity (Table 4, Column 1). The nature of this fluid identity arises from absent speakers in different contexts, namely friends in the home country and classmates in the classroom (Table 4, Column 2). In fact, this identity perspective of fluidity is dependent on a marked change in context, as well as a change in time. Thus, in this situation, the contextual boundary with respect to this identity perspective is blurred. So, the identity perspectives in these overlapping contexts were also included in the data analysis.

Lastly, observations on the participants' dialogues during and after the coding process were also made in the researcher's journal.

5.4 Data analysis

In the next stage, the identity perspectives in the language classroom, informed by the emotionally intoned speech acts of the participants, were analysed. As part of this process, a profile based on the six dimensions (i.e. static, fluid, object, subject, individual, social) was created for each individual. This was done by selecting sound bites, interesting or revealing speech acts

(Sullivan, 2012), from each individual's dialogue and organising them into these six categories (Image 2). That is to say that whilst the emotionally intoned speech acts with their identity perspectives were initially coded separately, the profiles provided a holistic picture of each individual. These profiles were also substantiated by the noted observations of each participant in the researcher's journal made during the transcribing and coding stages of the process. Whilst these individual profiles were not absolute, a preliminary sketch of each individual's holistic sense of self-identity in the language classroom emerged.

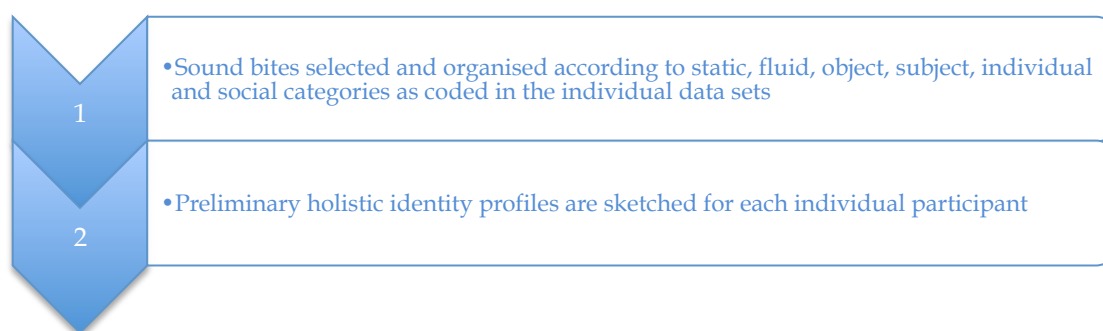


Image 2: The process of creating preliminary holistic identity profiles

Furthermore, by closely analysing the sound bites in the individual profiles, interactional processes between the identity perspectives were also observed. It was found that whilst not all of the six dimensions were necessarily present in the sound bites in a given instance, more often than not more than one was and, importantly, they interacted with each other in interesting ways. Moreover, whilst they interacted in an unpredictable manner, three categorically identifiable patterns were identified in these processes, which will be discussed in the research findings.

Moreover, when analysing the individuals' preliminary identity profiles, it was also observed that all the individuals assumed different positions or stances in their speech acts at different times. This was in addition to the position of a *language learner* in the classroom, as presented in the SLA literature. These positions were interpreted not only in the emotional intonation but, importantly, in the content of the speech acts. In total, five

distinct positions were identified and noted across all the data sets. The positions were also noted for each individual. All of this presented a complex picture of self-identity as viewed from the perspectives of learners, which will again be expounded on in the research findings.

Finally, reviewing the preliminary holistic identity profiles for the individuals, sound bites pertaining to the language-learner identity position alone were selected and reorganised. These sound bites were cross-referenced in the strictest sense with the descriptions of the linguistic and sociocultural learner identities from the SLA research. For example, a sound bite was not just noted for subject agency in general, but subject agency in specifically learning the target language. From this, a language-learner identity profile was created for each of the eight participants. Based on these individual profiles, a global profile of the language-learner identity in the language classroom emerged (Image 3, Stages 3-5).

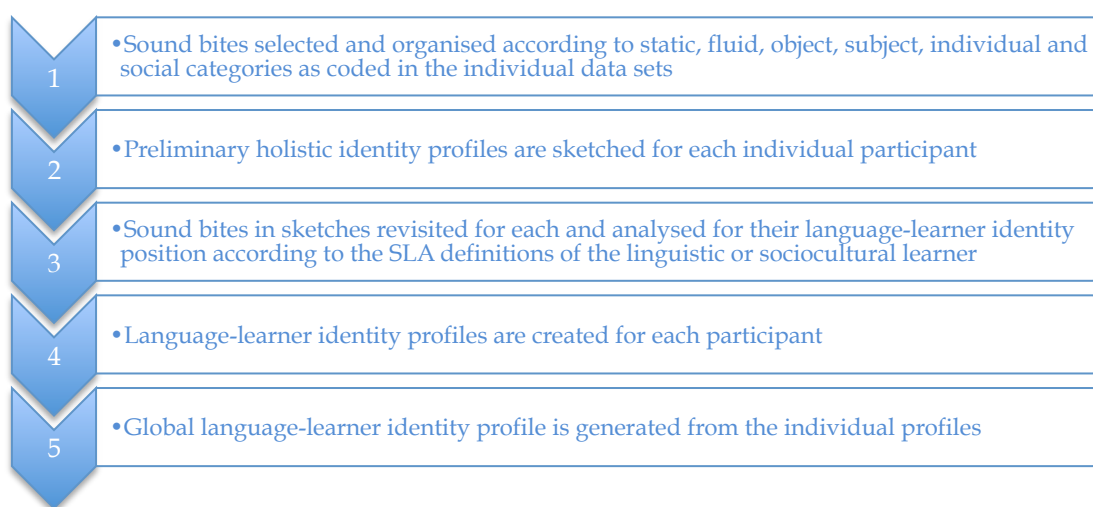


Image 3: Creating language-learner identity profiles from the preliminary sketches

5.5 Ethical considerations

To begin with, prior to commencing the data collection, full disclosure of the researcher's professional identity, the research intentions and the process were made to the research language site, teachers and also the learners participating in the process (Creswell, 2005). Following standard research practices, a consent form detailing all this information was signed by each

participant. All the data collected has also been protected in the researcher's own archives at all times (Creswell, 2005).

Furthermore, in order to not disrupt the classroom teachers and learners in their language studies (Creswell, 2005), the end of term was deemed a suitable time to facilitate the process, as all final assessments had been completed by this time. It was also made clear to participants that the research project was not to impact on their language goals in anyway. Rather, as an English language teacher, the researcher offered to provide feedback on the participants' writing and speaking samples on the completion of the data collection for those who requested. It was thought that the participants could also benefit linguistically from participating in the process (Creswell, 2005). The researcher also only sought to invite teachers and learners who were interested in participating in the research voluntarily.

Moreover, it is believed that including the learners' own voices in research that concerns them directly adds not only to the integrity of the study but, importantly, also the researcher's responsibility to the subjects themselves. For these reasons, the participants' voices as transcribed have also been included in this thesis. However, to protect the identity of the participants, names were changed and identifiable markers have been removed. Furthermore, the research site has also been anonymised as per common research practice (Creswell, 2005).

Finally, integrity in this thesis also comes from the researcher acknowledging her position in the work. As a researcher, I am aware and concede my interests and partiality for sociocultural views as both a researcher and English teacher in second or other language classrooms since 2006. This is apparent in my precise topic of choice, namely *identity*, which is strongly aligned with sociocultural theories (Norton, 2010; Marx, 2006). As a means of maintaining reflexivity throughout the process, however, regular meetings and open communication with my supervisor were invaluable during the unfolding of this project. The researcher's journal I maintained was also useful for tracking my subjectivity in the process, in addition to recording ongoing observations.

6 RESEARCH FINDINGS

As discussed earlier, learner identity in SLA has historically been described as dichotomous and conflicting in nature across linguistic and sociocultural paradigms. On one side, learner identity is a static object of instruction that is individually constructed; whilst on the other hand, learner identity is fluid, a subject of agency in a socially constructed environment. During the process of analysing the emotionally intoned speech acts on self-identity in the language classroom, however, a more complex picture and pattern arose than previously identified. This will now be discussed.

6.1 Multidimensional language-learner identity

Firstly, in analysing the data through the language-learner position, it was found that all six dimensions were present across the individual profiles of the participants in the language classroom. That is to say that a global profile of identity from this position in this context is a composite picture of being static and fluid, an object of instruction and subject of agency, and individually and socially constructed as illustrated below (Image 4).

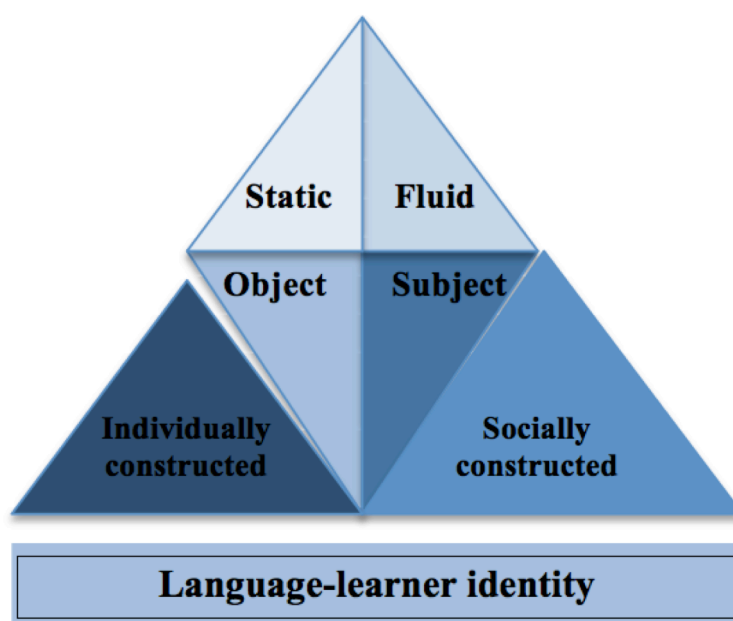


Image 4: Multidimensionality of the global language-learner identity in the language classroom

However, in the individual profiles the participants presented a composite picture of the language-learner identity in uniquely personalised ways, as shown by the highlighted cells below (Image 5). In these cases, three individuals presented as strictly linguistic learner identities, in which the static, object and individual dimensions were activated (Participants 2, 4 & 8), whereas one presented as a linguistic learner with the fluid element of the sociocultural learner identity (Participant 1). Conversely, one participant had a strong sociocultural learner identity, which was also noted within the context of the interview, yet with the static dimension of the linguistic learner profile (Participant 7). Two individuals presented across the linguistic and sociocultural divide in different ways (Participants 3 & 6). Finally, one individual reflected the global language-learner identity (Participant 5).

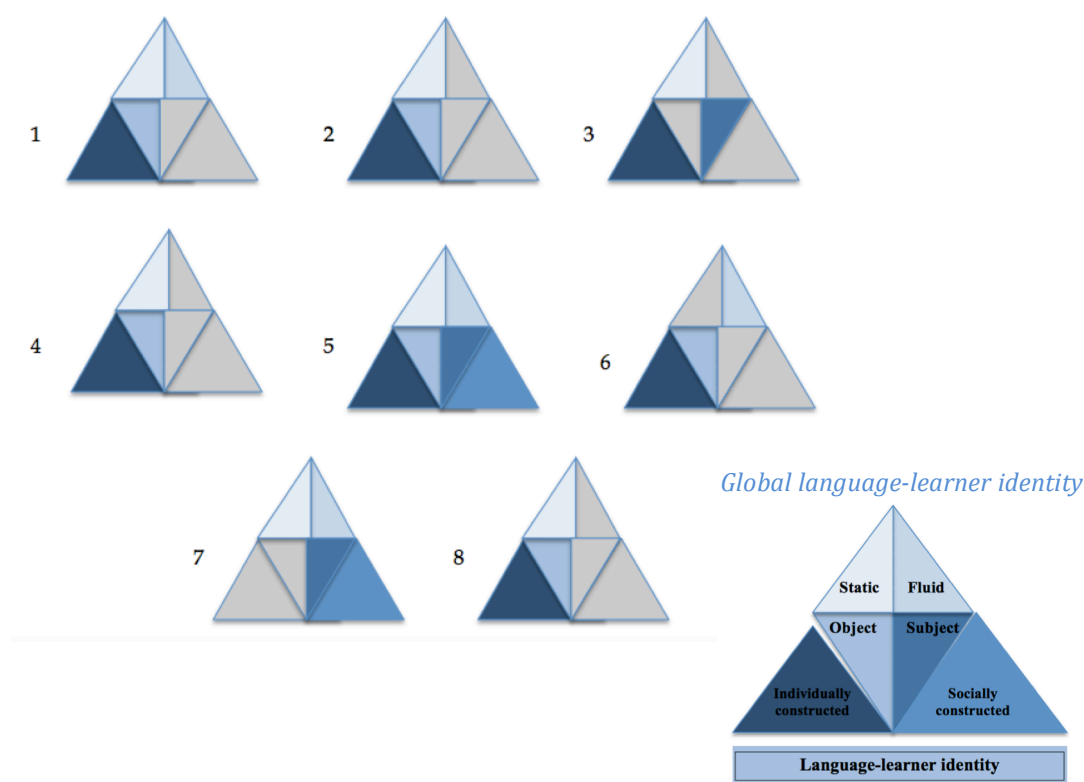


Image 5: The individual language-learner identity profiles of the eight participants

These findings present a complex picture of the language-learner identity in the language classroom. Perhaps most striking is the apparent

contradictions in five of the eight identities when observed within the existing SLA landscape on learner identity (Participants 1, 3, 5, 6 & 7). That is to say

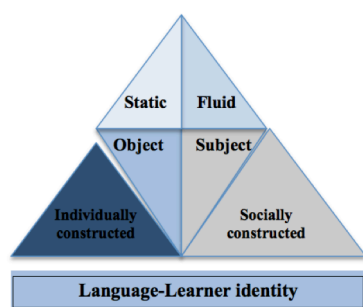


Image 6: Participant 1

that dimensions from the linguistic learner identity can coexist with the sociocultural one. For example, Participant 1 emerged as a linguistic learner with the dimensions of being a static, object of instruction that is individually constructed. However, from a sociocultural perspective, fluidity was also sensed in this participant's speech acts as

highlighted (Image 6). The static dimension was interpreted in this individual's sense of continuous struggle with listening comprehension skills in the classroom. This participant also expressed a positive response to learning from the teacher, highlighting the object of instruction dimension, of which it was reported led to an improvement in reading and, interestingly, listening skills. This indicated the learner was also subject to change. Finally, this individual also explicitly stated a preference for mostly working independently of others.

Despite some assuming contradictions in the language-learner identity profiles, these findings were equally comprehensible within the context of the greater dialogue, which reveals individuals as dynamic entities, responding to moving elements in their environment. In addition to time and place, other elements that appeared to have some influence on the participants' identities in the language classroom were also noted. These included: the people, namely the teachers and other learners; the curriculum; the pedagogical styles; the learners' English language skills which were distinct from the learners' Australian English language skills; and interestingly, also, other languages aside from the target language. These were both silent and voiced languages heard in the classroom (i.e. the learners' first languages). For example, Participant 1's continuous struggle with listening skills, which activated the static dimension, was specifically related to the other learners' English pronunciation in the classroom. However, the same individual also

identified an improvement in listening that was connected to the teacher's instruction, giving rise to the fluid dimension of this identity. Although these elements were not included in the analysis in this study, they demonstrated some interactional effect on the six dimensions of learner identity that may be worthy of future studies.

Finally, it must be highlighted that these language-learner identity profiles were marked by each individual's tendency to present themselves in such a way in their speech acts within the limited time and space of the interview room. This explains why some individuals have stronger profiles than others, although this is not indicated in *Image 5*. Some individuals were more actively vocal than others in the focus-group interviews; however, all individuals participated sufficiently for the researcher to confidently interpret a language-learner identity profile for each of them.

6.2 The complexity of identity processes

Just as the language-learner identity profiles are complex, so too are the processes they emerge from. By analysing the sound bites in the participants' individual profiles, interactional processes between the different dimensions were observed. Whilst these processes are somewhat unpredictable, they can be grouped into three categorically identifiable patterns: that of simple, compound and complex processes, which will now be explained.

A *simple process* is defined by the presence of only one dimension from either side of the paradigmatic divide, as illustrated in these speech acts from a dialogic scene sharing how Participant 8 is viewed by other learners in the classroom (*Image 7*).

I'm an **IMPUNCTUAL** person. I **ALWAYS** arrive late.

It's a cultural problem. Because for US ((elongated)), is okay to arrive like late, a little bit late ((spoken in a "small" animated voice)). But no, that's no good. I'm trying to change that habit.

Key: ((Additional contextual information))
AUDIBLE EMPHASIS ON WORDS IN CAPITALS

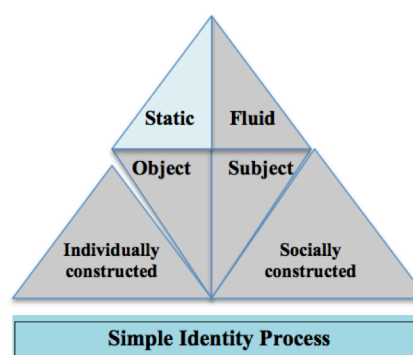
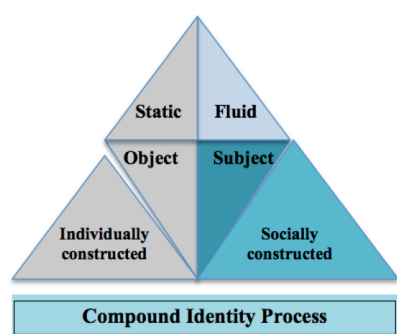


Image 7: A single dimension in a simple identity process (from Participant 8)

So in this regard this aspect of Participant 8's learner identity, her tendency for being late to class that is explained by her culture, resonates with the static dimension of the linguistic learner identity. Although she is trying to change this habit, she is unchanging for the moment. Importantly here, for the purpose of this part of the discussion, as a simple process it stands alone devoid of interaction with any of the other dimensions shown.

However, identity processes are, more often than not, compound or complex. A *compound process* is defined as two or three dimensions presenting themselves in speech acts from either side of the linguistic or sociocultural divide. An example from Participant 7's dialogue sharing the experience of studying together with other classmates illustrates this below (Image 8).



In the start everyone was shy, no one talks to everyone, anyone. I was the guy who was like making "hey Jim meet John" ((laughs softly)) "John, Jim"* ((role playing)). Like introducing everyone to each other so that I want everyone to be like friends, and make groups...

We were really good in studies at that time like, when it's a quiz, or exam, or something like that. We sit together, we we teach each other what should we do, how, how. Believe me, I I haven't taken a class in the morning and there was a test in the afternoon, and, all of them just, they gave me a lecture that - that's contention, that's a claim, that's a thing like that ((role playing)). And, I scored really good in that test. Yep.

Key: ((Additional contextual information))
*Real names have been removed

Image 8: Three sociocultural dimensions in a compound identity process (from Participant 7)

In this instance, Participant 7 describes himself as a fluid, subject of agency in a larger socially constructed environment, which strongly resonates with the sociocultural learner identity. He is fluid in the sense that his language skills are improving, but importantly they are improving because he used his agency to develop a social group that proved constructive in supporting learners to build their language capacities together. Thus, he is also socially constructed. As a compound process, three dimensions are activated, and in this case they are on the sociocultural side.

Finally, *complex processes* are two or more dimensions presented from the competing paradigms across the linguistic and sociocultural divide. In this instance, Participant 3's speech act shares his experience of doing assigned group work in the classroom (Image 9).

If they [teachers] give the [group] work, I have to do alone. And the, if the lecture[r] asks, eh, the answers. They [other learners in my group] use my, ah, answers and talk. Eh, give them the answers ((soft laughter)). So in my case, I'm just like a captain on the ship.

Key: ((Additional contextual information))

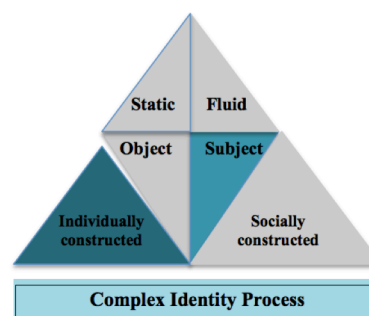


Image 9: Two dimensions, one linguistic and another sociocultural, in a complex identity process (from Participant 3)

In this socially constructed classroom, the learner is nonetheless individually constructed, which is explained by the reluctance among group members to attend to the task as instructed i.e. working together. Nonetheless, this individual uses his agency to complete the task independent of the other learners. In this complex identity process, a dimension from each side of the linguistic and sociocultural divide is activated in this participant's speech act.

Finally, whilst identity processes can be identified according to the level of complexity involved (i.e. simple, compound or complex), the order in which the dimensions are activated in these processes as presented in the speech acts is unpredictable. Rather, when the sound bites of all the participants are observed as a complete data set, it appears that the dimensions emerge from an organic flow, interacting with each other but in seemingly spontaneous ways. This supports the view that, in addition to being complex in nature, the global language-learner identity emerges through complex identity processes.

6.3 Multi-positioning in self-identity

The complex nature of self-identity from the learners' perspectives is also attributed to the multi-positioning by individuals in the language classroom. That is to say that, in addition to the conventional position of the language learner as mentioned thus far, individuals also assume other stances in the

language classroom. The five stances identified in the analysis were those of *an academic or professional identity, a cultural identity, a social identity, a personal identity* and, finally, the *language-learner identity*, which is distinct from the academic identity as some individuals are not on pathways into academia, having already established themselves as professionals in their home countries. To say that an individual assumes a position means that he or she senses self or is perceived by others as acting in that role. This is particularly evidenced in the content of the emotionally intoned speech acts. An excerpt with reference to the personal identity position from *Appendix 3 Multi-Positioning in Self-Identity* is included below (Table 5).

Speech act	Interpretation
<p>The diversity of the group is okay because, I found people who are, very different cultures. And I'm very curious always about, how other people in the world thinks. So, I ((laughs softly)) I, almost all the days bother the Middle East people about their religion. I, asked him about things of their religion. I asked Arjun* ((laughs softly)) about the religion. Yeah. Because is a, very different. For example, I, I'm very, like, very worry about how the Middle East world, treats her womans. So, I asked for the woman that we have in the class, in the class, wh-, what, what he, she, thinks about that. And for she is normal...</p> <p>So for me is, is, is interesting how, they think about their religion, and their culture.</p> <p>(Participant 2)</p>	<p>From the personal identity position, this individual explains how the cultural diversity of the language classrooms meets his personal interest in learning about people and cultures from around the world.</p> <p>He acts out this role "almost all the days" by regularly initiating conversations with others on topics that interest him personally in the language classroom. In this example, he talks about how he asks different classmates about their religion.</p> <p>Being in the language classroom is more than just about learning English for this individual, but rather satisfying his innate curiosity to learn more broadly through others.</p> <p>This stance is also present in other parts of this individual's dialogue, reinforcing this personal identity position.</p>

Key: ((Additional contextual information))
*Real names have been removed

Table 5: *The position of personal identity as assumed in a speech act (from Participant 2)*

From these different positions, the six dimensions, explored earlier in reference to the language-learner identity, are also activated in complex ways. Furthermore, in analysing a participant from different positions, it was found that the same individual could present differently with respect to the dimensions according to the position they assumed, despite being in the same

context of the language classroom. For example, Participant 1 from earlier presented as a static object of instruction in an individually constructed environment, with the dimension of fluidity, from the position of the language-learner identity. However, from the stance of a professional identity, this participant presented as a fluid, subject of agency with capacity to act in a socially constructed environment (Image 10).

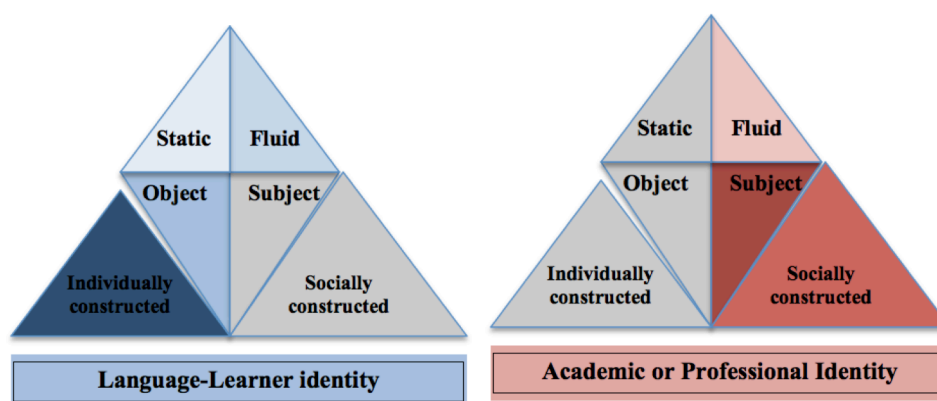


Image 10: Different identity profiles for the same individual according to the position assumed (Participant 1)

It must be stated that not all individuals assume all the different positions in language classrooms, but rather that there is potential for individuals to assume different stances, in addition to their language-learner identities. It was also found that position salience was stronger in some individuals more than others. From the eight participants interviewed, three individuals assumed a strong sense of cultural identity, another individual had an unmistakable social identity, and two individuals presented highly as personal identities. Interestingly, only one individual presented mostly as a language-learner identity. Finally, one individual was difficult to place.

Thus, it has been shown that self-identity in the language classroom from the emic perspectives of the learners themselves is more complex and much broader than established in the SLA literature. Rather the multi-positioning and multidimensionality potential of these identities in the language classroom can be more accurately illustrated by the kaleidoscopic metaphor shown in *Image 11*, with the individuals at the centre directing this experience. The implications of this will now be discussed.



Image 11: Multi-positioning and multidimensionality of learner self-identity in the language classroom

7 DISCUSSION

A sense of multiplicity in learner identity is shared in the established SLA literature (Marx, 2006; Norton, 2010). Kramsch's (2009) multilingual subject participates in and is constructed by many worlds, and Hicks' (1996) allusion to a "densely populated self... who juggled numerous positions of value" (p. 107) resonates with Hermans' (2002) competing and cooperating *I-positions* in a fully membered society of the mind. Yet it is probably Lemke's (2002) description of identity as "fractal mosaics" (p. 74) that most closely resembles the image of the kaleidoscopic self in the language classroom presented earlier. It connects with the notion of a complex self-regulating individual assuming different identities for different purposes over time (Lemke, 2002).

This kaleidoscopic metaphor of self-identity accommodates the multidimensionality of the language-learner identity, and also the multi-positioning selves, highlighting that learner self-identity cannot be reduced to purely language-learner terms. This is especially relevant in the study abroad context where the majority of learners are "not language majors and they have diverse identities so language acquisition may not be their primary goal" (Gore, 2005 as cited in Sieloff Magnan & Lafford, 2012, p. 436). This was certainly true of the participants in this research who were learning English for the purpose of achieving different professional and personal goals beyond the language classroom. This raises the obvious question: *why should individuals studying languages be observed exclusively as language-learner identities?*

For the purpose of this thesis, the key implications of these findings for the immediate stakeholders will now be addressed: that is researchers, teachers and language institutions, and the learners themselves. Whilst these implications are not exhaustive, it is hoped that they will encourage some consideration and provide guidance for the future.

7.1 Implications for researchers and research

To begin with, the multidimensionality of the language learner contends that research from both the linguistic and sociocultural paradigms must continue.

As stated earlier, sociocultural approaches in SLA research have been increasing since the 1990s with Firth and Wagner's (1997) article often cited as the turning point (Block, 2007; Zuengler & Miller, 2006; Larsen-Freeman, 2002; Swain & Deters, 2007). Yet, this is not to say that research in the field of linguistics has decreased as a consequence (Zuengler & Miller, 2006). Rather, it has increased due to advancements in technologies that allow learner cognitive processes to be studied, as briefly mentioned earlier (Zuengler & Miller, 2006; Morgan-Short & Ullman, 2012). Furthermore, rather than settling the debate, Larsen-Freeman (2002) argues that it is more important to focus on ensuring that research does not weigh too heavily on one side at the expense of the other, "becoming hegemonic" (p. 35). This would also only lead to centripetal views of learner identity in SLA contexts. Finally, by supporting research across the divide, each paradigm can also provide "the necessary checks and balances for the other" (Larsen-Freeman, 2002, p. 37). Thus, the status quo should continue.

However, there are also proponents who argue for integrating the linguistic and sociocultural fields, and promoting cooperation as opposed to competition. In *Language Use and Language Socialisation*, Kramsch (2002) introduces the metaphor of an ecology to facilitate this process of integration on the basis that it not only "captures the dynamic interaction between language users and the environment as between parts of a living organism, [it importantly] seems to offer a new way of bringing together frames from various disciplines to illuminate the complex relationship under investigation" (p. 3). In other words, it recognises that research across the paradigms is part of a broader interactive system, in which researchers both affect and are able to be affected by others in the field. Sieroff Magnan and Lafford (2012) describe this more tangibly by stating that linguistic and sociocultural researchers need to work together to answer questions such as *what sociocultural factors support language acquisition?* (p. 526) Bakhtin would have also supported this view of an integrated approach to research. Highlighting the importance of dialogic interaction in his *Methodology for the Human Sciences*, Bakhtin (1986) warns that monologic knowledge is inaccurate

and at best incomplete, and somewhat reductive in attempting to reify that which in reality cannot be finalised.

With specific reference to researching learner identity, integrating linguistic and sociocultural research approaches would also aid a greater understanding of the complexity in multidimensional learner processes. Under the umbrella of the ecology metaphor, Larsen-Freeman (2002) offers chaos/complexity theory, which “deals with complex, dynamic [and] nonlinear systems” (p. 38), as a means for investigating the multidimensional learner. From the chaos/complexity lens, it would be possible to better understand the interactional qualities and effects of the linguistic and sociocultural dimensions involved in complex identity processes, as opposed to separating and studying them categorically, which is usual of traditional scientific approaches (Larsen-Freeman, 2002). Lemke (2002) further supports this idea by highlighting that “academic analysis bias us to classify identity options too categorically, to marginalize the normal hybridity of identities across our artificial categories” (p. 78). Thus, new integrated approaches should be taken in exploring the complex processes of the multidimensional learner.

Moreover, the field of applied linguistics has been identified as the landscape for integrating research. It is here where Candlin and Sarangi (2002) state that researchers can “move freely between the boundaries of language acquisition and language socialisation”, facilitated by “dialogicity [that is] inclusive of mild disagreements” (p. xi). This idea concurs with dialogic theory, where it is only through interaction with the other, that a greater holistic understanding may be achieved. Emerson (1996) claims that “Bakhtin would counsel us to surround ourselves with as much difference as possible [and] the last thing we should do is cluster together with those who share our attributes and complaints” (p. 111).

Additionally, with particular reference to identity research, this dialogicity can also be bridged to other fields with similar interests such as narrative psychology, which seeks to understand identity through stories. For example, Hicks (1996) explores the identity of her young subject Jake through

story “since the research and writing on narrative suggests very fruitful connections to personhood” (p. 111). Recognised for increasing learner reflectiveness, knowledge and voice, narrative research design already popularly used in education (Creswell, 2005), should also be applied in exploring learner identity in SLA. This integration between SLA research and other fields and methods could be viewed as part of a larger integration with all identity research, as outlined by Vignoles et al. (2011) in their *Introduction: Toward an Integrative View of Identity*. Furthermore, this dialogue should also be extended to teachers in the field (Sharkey & Johnson, 2003 as cited in Norton, 2010)

In addition to continuing and integrating research practices, the findings also highlight that there is a need to have more emic perspectives in SLA identity research. By including these perspectives, opportunities will arise to explore not only the multidimensionality of learners, but the multi-positioning of these individuals, which would have otherwise been out of reach to SLA researchers. This need to take a phenomenological stance in research is also argued by Kramsch (2002) in order to uncover the “intentional worlds... perceived and mediated through human emotions, desires, and value judgments” (p. 11), which result from individuals dialogically acting in their worlds.

Furthermore, having more emic perspectives would also address the moral imperative in assigning attributes to learners, which both constrain and afford them opportunities in the language classroom. As expounded by *positioning theory*, people act according to the rights and responsibilities assigned to them based on beliefs about their attributes (Harré, Moghaddam, Pilkerton Cairnie, Rothbart & Sabat, 2009; Kayi-Aydar & Miller, 2018). Thus, for example, if researchers assume that learners are strictly linguistic entities (i.e. static objects which are individually constructed), teachers and learners will act according to the rights and responsibilities assigned to them based on these beliefs. Teaching will continuously be teacher and resource-centred, and learners repeatedly viewing formal instruction as the primary source of knowledge, will surrender all agency in their learning experiences. This will

be further expanded on in the implications for teachers and learners, but suffice to say for now that whilst this may be constructive in some respects, it would also be extremely limiting if this strict view is maintained at all times in the language classroom.

In addition to having serious consequences for language learning, *positioning theory* also implicates identity construction. In a study by Menard-Warwick (2008), it was explained how a female learner of Hispanic background was positioned as a homemaker by her teacher who rejected, somewhat unconsciously, her contributions as a businesswoman in class. In the context of this classroom, the teacher's goal was to develop the language skills of learners, who for the most part were presently homemakers, in order to support them in transitioning to paid employment. Thus, it may be assumed that by not developing the necessary language repertoire of a businesswoman, her opportunities for becoming this identity in her new context of California were further constrained. Despite that she had been a businesswoman in her home country.

To conclude, Harré et al. (2009) states that positioning is embedded in large-scale discursive practices, in addition to personal encounters. SLA research can be considered as large-scale discursive practices. This further supports the moral imperative of including learners' voices in research that most concerns and affects them.

7.2 Implications for teachers and teaching

The obvious corollary of these findings for teaching is that linguistic and sociocultural theories must continue to equally inform pedagogical philosophies and practices in language classrooms. However, whilst the historically divisive landscape in SLA research is clearly marked, this is not quite the case for teaching and learning in classrooms. This is because social experiences are embedded in everyday human interactions like those between teachers and learners. That is to say that in practice teachers already apply mixed pedagogical approaches. For example, many teachers can anecdotally attest to assigning a grammar activity from a published resource which subscribes to the *a priori grammar attitude*, emphasising predetermined

grammatical structures and rules, yet encourage learners to work collaboratively in pairs, negotiating meaning when differences in answers arise, thus subscribing to the *emergent grammar attitude* (Larsen-Freeman, 2002). This is often also leveraged in a whole-class feedback session on completion of the pair-work task.

However, it can be argued that whilst both linguistic and sociocultural theories shape teaching and learning experiences, it does so largely unconsciously. This is because teacher training programmes, published language resources and language centre policies that subscribe to linguistic learner philosophies often guide teachers in their practice. This is particularly true for study abroad language classrooms in Australia. In fact, the Dogme ELT movement, pedagogy driven by conversation, has been identified as a response to language teaching relying too much on coursebooks and other materials (Chappell, 2014). Yet, this criticism is not new. In *A Dogma EFL*, Thornbury (2000) is particularly critical of the excess of prepackaged and prescribed language resources that dominate language classrooms, stating that lessons “were being hi-jacked, either by material overload, or by Obsessive Grammar Syndrome (OGS)” (p. 2). This view still exists today. Whilst this is not an argument to abandon linguistic informed practices in language teaching, it is one to make a more conscious turn to include sociocultural pedagogies in language classrooms. As Chappell (2014) claims that whilst linguistic pedagogies such as recitation have a space in language programmes, they should not be overused at the expense of genuine communication practice.

In order to cater for this need, teachers need to go beyond focusing on content knowledge and focus on becoming critical, reflexive and responsive teachers (Kramsch, 2009). To become critical practitioners, they need to ask not only the *what* of lessons, but *how* and, importantly, *why* they teach how they do; and they need to understand the consequences of these choices which is at the core of sociocultural theory (Lantolf & Pavlenko, 2001 as cited in Marx, 2006). For example, teachers will need to be aware of their *interactive positioning* of students, in which they assign rights and responsibilities to

learners in the classroom (Kayi-Aydar & Miller, 2018). The consequences of not doing this were illustrated earlier with Menard-Warwick's (2008) description of the businesswoman positioned by her teacher as a homemaker in the language classroom. This is especially important given that the teacher's voice has long been recognised for its authoritative quality both in theory (Sullivan, 2007; Bannink, 2002), and anecdotally in classrooms. Teachers must neither consciously nor unconsciously limit learners' opportunities for language development and identity construction in their language classrooms (Norton, 2010).

Critical teachers also need to be aware of other structures that position learners in different ways. These include written and unwritten rules or norms, educational goals and assessment (Lantolf & Genung, 2002), in addition to relationships with other class members that form the basis of classroom culture. There is also the factor of the physical layout of the language classroom that needs to be considered. Contrasted with Lantolf and Genung's (2002) teacher-centred forward-facing learners in the Chinese language classroom mentioned earlier, the DaSilva Iddings et al. (2013) study of pre-linguistic learners describes a classroom that was arranged to foster interaction between the students. Student desks are positioned facing each other and learning centres are stationed around the room for pair or small group work, independent from the teacher.

Furthermore, in catering to more sociocultural theories in language classrooms, in their article *A Critical Praxis: Narrowing the Gap Between Identity, Theory and Practice*, Waller, Wethers and De Costa (2017) discuss how teachers can critically engage learners in dialogic discussions on identity. Dialogic pedagogy, described as "a pedagogy which exploits the power of talk to shape...thinking, and to secure...engagement, learning and understanding in a classroom" (Alexander, 2008, p. 92), has the potential to address not only language skill development but also identity work. Moreover, in transforming classrooms from monologic teacher-centred spaces to more polyphonic democratic environments, which Bakhtin viewed as important for "self-building" (Emerson, 1991 as cited in Sullivan, 2007, p. 122), teachers will

allow individuals to explore their multiple positions in identity and build the language repertoire needed to assume those identities. Norton (2010) states that the learning environment has to be such that the learner wants to invest in language learning in that context. What better way to do this than by making classrooms more inclusive of individual diversity.

Finally, in addition to the need for critical practice, there is also the need for reflexivity and responsiveness in teaching, or in other words the ability to assess the effectiveness of pedagogies on learners and respond to them appropriately (Waller et al., 2017). Lantolf and Genung (2002) state that “it is not embedding that makes learning effective; it is the quality of the social framework and the activity carried out with that framework that determine learning outcomes” (p. 176). Thus, it not just a matter of teachers going into the classroom with a larger bag of resources, but being able to reflect and respond to the outcomes that arise from using these resources. Bannink (2002) in her research of oral fluency development in an advanced EFL class in Amsterdam explains how she abandons a set teaching plan when she realises it is not working effectively. Her decision to do so is further validated by eliciting feedback directly from the learners themselves to understand the problem, then reflecting and responding to it. Bannink (2002) states that teachers need to develop a metareflective practice that involves “logbooks, feedback sessions, teacher diaries, lesson observations by colleagues [and] action research” (p. 281), and not just depend on free flowing fleeting thoughts in the moment or before or after lessons. The notion that action research develops critical practitioners is also more broadly shared (Burns, 2010; Curtis, Murphy & Shields, 2014).

7.3 Implications for language institutions

The degree or balance to which linguistic and sociocultural theories in language teaching are subscribed to will vary from context to context. After all, Lantolf and Genung’s (2002) Chinese language students’ experiences in the US were evidently very different to those of Bannink’s (2002) English language students in Amsterdam. Whilst a lot of this depends on teachers themselves as discussed, it also depends greatly on the educational context in

which the teacher is located, as institutions have the power to shape the experiences of individuals that reside within them (Sullivan, 2007; Parkinson, 1996).

The implications discussed for teachers and teaching earlier, should provide considerable thought for language institutions, as will the implications for learners yet to come. Specifically though, to cater to multidimensional multi-positioning learner identities, language institutions must support teachers to become critical, reflexive and responsive practitioners for their learners. To start with, language institutions need to be aware of their own *interactive positioning* of teachers (Kayi-Aydar & Miller, 2018), and the consequences of teacher rights and responsibilities that come with this. Much like learner agency, teacher agency must be leveraged by allowing teachers the freedom to act professionally. This must also be done by building teacher capacity to act, through providing meaningful professional development opportunities, such as with the example of action research mentioned earlier. Conducting action research to find solutions to local problems will not only support learners, but teachers themselves in their own learning experiences (Burns, 2010). So just as teachers are required to be critical, reflexive and responsive to their learners, so too are language institutions to their teachers.

A place to start the supportive process would be by opening dialogue. Ollerhead (2012) states that “human agency is also highly relevant to language teachers, in the sense that they have the ability to resist highly limiting policy environments, or situations where resources are limited or forcefully prescribed” (p. 67). Whilst subversive techniques may be viable to some extent, it can be further argued that a better alternative to this would be dialogicity between teachers and institutions, as recommended for researchers earlier (Candlin & Sarangi, 2002). Since it has been stated that “ongoing interaction between teachers, administrators and policy-makers, with reference to larger material conditions... can serve to constrain or enable the range of identity positions available to students” (Luke, 2004 as cited in Norton, 2010, p. 362). Thus, language institutions should dialogue openly

with teachers about all aspects that influence teaching and learning experiences including language policies, curriculum, pedagogical practice, language resources and assessment, in addition to student well-being.

Yet perhaps dialogue should begin with defining educational success (Larsen-Freeman, 2002). For language centres servicing higher education institutions, educational success undoubtedly entails much more than just linguistic skills and academic literacies. Rather a greater capacity for socialisation into the academic community through interactions with members of that community is also required. However, defining educational success should also be done in consultation with learners, as Lemke (2002) states many students are “learning to mobilize and hybridize multiple identities that modernist institutions have traditionally seen as incompatible” (p. 77). So by leveraging the emic perspectives of learners in defining educational success in their context, just as with research practices, language institutions and teachers can better meet the needs of these learners, while also developing their skills and updating their language centre practices for educational success.

7.4 Implications for learners and learning

Thus far it has been stated that teachers and language institutions need to cater for multidimensional learners through critical, reflective and responsive practices informed by both linguistic and sociocultural theories. However, as much as these conditions can be provided for learners, the learners themselves also need to respond to these opportunities. This is especially important for the sociocultural identity of the learner that is largely unconscious in the traditional language classroom. As it has already been discussed, this is not only for the learner’s language skills development, but their identity work. For example, learner agency is not just about having the capacity and freedom to participate, but also the willingness to do so (Emerson, 1991 as cited in Sullivan, 2007). In her research, Bannink (2002) describes how although the teacher provided the perfect opportunity for learners to dialogue with each other about their childhood experiences, and they were explicitly shown how to do so, the learners still took only to

minimally answering the scripted questions intended as a springboard, explaining they had met the task requirements. In this situation, the learners' responses in the dialogue were described as "preprogrammed language use" as opposed to emergent language use, which is more characteristic of dialogue (Bannink, 2002, p. 273). Whilst teacher-talk often dominates the main floor in language classrooms, Bannink (2002) reminds learners that there are many subfloors in the small group collaborative spaces during a lesson in which learners can participate as an agentive sociocultural learners, thus engaging their full multidimensionality. This is demonstrated by another group of Bannink's (2002) learners who successfully engage in a task in which they were required to create their own identities and engage in dialogue organising an agenda for a meeting at the weekend. Thus, learners must be prepared and willing to respond to a range of language learning experiences in the classroom.

Moreover to this extent, learners should also see the language classroom as an opportunity to explore their multi-positioning stances in identity, as teachers should not be expected to sufficiently cater for the needs of all individuals in their positionally-diverse classes. In research on a transgender Korean student in an ESL classroom in the US, Nguyen and Yang (2015) describe how this learner used the language classroom to explore her fluid identity, by becoming transgender in a way that was prohibited in her home country. It was explained that she did this by using her agency, and consistently challenging the heteronormative discourse that is common in these classrooms (Nguyen & Yang, 2015). As a result, it was found that this learner developed not only her transgender identity, but became an effective language user in this identity. This resonates with the allusion to learner resistance in Canagarajah's (2004a) study on students in the US and Sri Lanka who resorted to "clandestine literacy practices to create 'pedagogical safe houses' in the language classroom" when the pedagogy did not suit them (as cited in Norton, 2010, p. 359).

With regards to the multi-positioning and multidimensionality of the learner identity, Kayi-Aydar and Miller (2018) highlight the learners' own

reflexive positioning in the language classroom, in which the individual assigns rights and responsibilities to him or herself, based on their beliefs about their own attributes. Thus, it could be stated that learners should also assume more critical, reflexive and responsive roles in the language classroom.

However, to further cater to their multi-positioning selves, learners also need to extend their identity work beyond the classroom. Within a sociocultural theoretical framework, it is widely agreed that language is acquired from larger sociocultural activity (Miller, 2003; DaSilva Iddings et al., 2013). Furthermore, it is said that through this activity individuals are transformed (Kramsch, 2000; Lantolf, 2000 as cited in DaSilva Iddings et al., 2013). For it is not through the linguistic acquisition of language that Vitanova's (2013) subject recreates her world, but the dialogic relationships with others inside it. Thus, learners need to find Norton's (2010) imagined communities or "the realm of their desired community extended beyond the four walls of the classroom [which is] not accessible to teachers" (p. 355). As it will be through the discursive practices in these communities that individuals will be better able to meet their multi-positioning language and identity needs.

Moreover, to cater for the community of identities in a single individual, Lemke (2002) states that the individual needs to work on their "identity repertory... across a wider range of settings and participants" to support them in ways that a single classroom cannot do (p. 76). That is to say that beyond the classroom individuals need to simultaneously work on their academic or professional, cultural, social and personal identities, which often fall outside of the bounds of the language classroom. Furthermore, individuals need to do this everyday (Hicks, 1996; Morson & Emerson, 1990). This is especially important for individuals who want or plan to stay in the new society (Marx, 2005), as they will undoubtedly go through multiple transformations establishing themselves through a new language, investing in their future identities in this new context. Whilst this will take time and strength to overcome external and internal resistance (Gillespie et al., 2012), this experience should be embraced encouragingly as an opportunity to

develop and expand the symbolic self (Kramersch, 2009).

7.5 Limitations and recommendations

An obvious limitation of this study is the participants' English language skills. Although measures were taken to include learners who had sufficient oral-skill capacity to participate confidently in the focus-group interviews, there were instances throughout the interview in which some participants indicated difficulties with expressing themselves in the target language. That is to say that if the individuals in this study had the option of participating in their first language, the data collection will have undoubtedly produced varied results. Nonetheless, as this study was interested in learner self-identity in the language classroom, in this case the English language classroom, exploring the participants' identities as presented through the English language lent itself to the research aim. However, whilst these findings are by no means conclusive or representative of these whole individuals, it hoped that these findings contribute to the ongoing dialogue on learner self-identity in language classrooms.

Another limitation worth noting is my novice status as the researcher in this study. This is particularly significant given that an interpretative approach locates the researcher at the centre of the meaning-making process. Norton (2010) states that as "researchers [we] have to understand our own experience and knowledge as well as those of the participants in our studies... [because] all research studies are understood to be 'situated', and the researcher integral to the progress" (p. 351). So, whilst my considerable experience in teaching English as a second or other language to international students in Australia lent itself to the participants and context in this study, conducting research in this capacity was a relatively new endeavour. In fact, I experienced my own professional identity transformation, from that of a teacher to a researcher, in the process of conducting research on learner self-identity. However, as mentioned earlier, I am confident that through my own reflective research practice, and ongoing critical support from my supervisor Josephine Moate, this limitation was abated.

Finally, some comments with regards to a limitation and recommendation on the research design. In *Intersubjectivity: Towards a Dialogical Analysis*, Gillespie and Cornish (2009) state that there is a need to explore dialogue intersubjectively in order to locate identity. This view that intersubjectivity is key to dialogism is also supported by others (Platt, 2013; Morson & Emerson, 1990). Whilst identity in this research was explored in the dialogic frames presented by the individual participants in the focus-group interviews, there remains the opportunity to explore intersubjectivity in the unfolding moments between these individuals. However, the context of this research was the language classroom. Therefore, future research would benefit from exploring intersubjectivity ethnographically within the context of the language classroom itself, as illustrated by other research (Platt, 2013; DaSilva Iddings et al., 2013). In exploring intersubjectivity, there would also be a greater opportunity to answer the question that spurred my interest in learner identity in the first place, which was: *why are some groups socially more cohesive and constructive in learning than others?*

8 CONCLUSION

Through Bakhtinian dialogic theory, this study has found that learner self-identity in language classrooms is complex, multidimensional and multi-positioning. Based on these findings, recommendations for researchers, teachers and language institutions, and the learners themselves have been made. However, whilst this concludes one investigation into self-identity in a particular context at a particular time, the subject philosophically remains open. As according to Bakhtin, true identity is unfinalisable, forever living in the dialogic spaces between self and other (Sullivan, 2007; Morson & Emerson, 1990). Still, Bakhtin also encourages fostering curiosity and paying close attention to the subject. This is the moral philosophy of love that seeks to unveil the individual and at the same time create the individual in this endless process (Emerson, 1996,). Whilst inconclusiveness is frustrating in the search of knowledge in empirical research, comfort comes in the certainty that ongoing participation in the process is needed. After all, it is the dynamism in identities participating in life that creates it, and the only thing one needs to be is morally responsive to it.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Autobiographical Writing Task Sheet

Autobiographical writing task - Self-identity in the English language classroom

Instructions: There are two parts to this autobiographical writing task. The first part is an extended piece of reflective writing. Do not worry too much about your accuracy in grammar, vocabulary or spelling. Sharing your personal experiences, ideas and point of view on self-identity in the language classroom is more important. Full sentences and paragraphs are preferred over short answers. Although some questions are provided below, this is NOT a question/answer writing task. The questions are only there to guide you in expressing your thoughts. Think of this task more like a letter or journal-writing task. Please write this first part on the paper provided.

The second part of this writing task seeks to collect some background information on you. In this part, it is acceptable to write one or two word answers. Please write these answers on this same task sheet.

Part ONE

Write a short autobiographical piece describing yourself in your language classroom (approx. 1 page). Consider the following questions in your reflection, in addition to your own free thoughts:

- How would you describe yourself as an English language student?
- Are you different or the same in comparison to the person you were in your home country prior to moving to Australia and starting your language classes?
- How are you different/the same? Why do you think this is?
- How would you describe your language class as a group, and the people within it?

Part TWO

Please take a few minutes to fill in the information below.

Name: _____

Age: _____

Gender: _____

Nationality: _____

First language:

Other languages:

Occupation in home country:

Occupation outside of studying (if any) in Australia:

Family situation (single, married and/or with children):

Length of time in the language centre:

English language level when first entering in the language centre:

Current English language level:

Motivation for studying English at the language centre:

Would you be willing and able to participate in a group interview with 2-3 members of your class group? The interview will take a maximum of 40 minutes. Useful written feedback on your spoken English can be provided upon your request should you participate.

Yes No (Please tick one box)

Would you like written feedback on your writing and speaking sample, where applicable, should you choose to participate?

Yes No (Please tick one box)

Please provide your contact details for the researcher to contact you to arrange a suitable interview time and/or provide you with written feedback where requested.

Email:

Telephone number:

Thank you kindly for participating in this research project!

Appendix 2 Interview Questions Task Sheet

Focus-group interview – Self-identity in the English language classroom

Instructions: Read aloud and answer the following questions as a group. These questions seek to extend your own personal reflections on self-identity from the autobiographical writing task AND, furthermore, importantly explore this as a group.

Be prepared to speak but also listen. As you work through these questions, please feel free to improvise and raise your own questions/comments in response to the other participants' contributions. Remember to encourage each other to contribute to the discussion, as all voices are equally valued.

Questions:
1. Can you tell me a little bit about yourselves?
2. How would you describe your class as a group?
3. Where do you see yourselves (individually) within this group? Why?/Tell me more.
4. Has this changed for you throughout your studies in language centre? In other words, how does this experience compare with those from other language classes? Please explain.
5. Is this different to how you see yourselves in other groups – for example, friendship, professional or work groups and/or the people you live with in Australia? How?/Tell me more.
6. What would you like your teacher to know about you as individual people/a group to help them create better learning environments for you?
7. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Please feel free to take a copy of the researcher's contact details below. Should you have any questions with regards to the proposed research on learner perspectives on self-identity in the language classroom, please do not hesitate to email.

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Thank you kindly for participating in this research project!

Appendix 3 Multi-Positioning in Self-Identity

	Speech act	Interpretation
Language-learner identity	<p>After like studying ... [in the language centre], I feel that, ah, this is the MOST-IMPORTANT-THING ((slows down "most-important-thing")) that I learn here than in my own country, because I completed my old bachelor in English also. But we are not like taking it serious, grammatical problems or something. Because in academic writing in India, they, they do need like you write proper things or that like... is clear. That's it. They don't like change the grammatical mistake, but, here, like I learn many thing about grammars.</p> <p>(Participant 5)</p>	<p>From the language-learner identity position, this individual explains how invaluable the English language course has been in addressing his linguistic needs, most significantly his English grammar skills.</p> <p>He briefly mentions his academic identity in his home country by referencing his bachelor studies, but this is only to highlight the importance of his current position as a language learner, which he forefronts in this speech act by focusing on the language-learning experience throughout.</p> <p>He is identifiably a language-learner identity in a language classroom.</p>
Academic or professional identity	<p>Yeah. Um, we, as a master student, so postgraduate student, we have to do some research work now. We should be focusing more on report writing or you can say on, um ((extended pause-looking for language)), research papers. We should be teach them how to write research paper, how to do citations, how to make them proper and, um, make them according to the world standard. So, that we can publish our papers in future. So that's, that's the requirements of a postgraduate student.</p> <p>(Participant 7)</p>	<p>From the academic identity position, this individual identifies and discusses his needs as an almost-to-be master's student at the university.</p> <p>In assuming this position, his speech act makes repeated references to academic vocabulary including "research papers" "citations" "publishing papers" throughout. He anticipates fulfilling this role in the future by acting in the present moment by stating what he needs.</p> <p>So, for this individual, in this speech act, he assumes the position of academic identity in the language classroom.</p>
Cultural identity	<p>Ah, really difficult to, ah ah, get habit and also we are not, never call, eh, the lectures with his name. We'll respect sir or teacher, or madam. If in here, there's no teachers ((laughs softly)). We always call some, that person's name, so is really difficult to me. Because in, in my primary [school], with the teachers teach us, don't call the name. To respect, please respect them. So, they are teachers teach us. So we have to respect. In, in here, this culture, they are no respect. They call the names, so, in that case it's, ah, really difficult to make. In, in, I think, in first two or three weeks, I didn't call the lecturer, if I, if I had a pr-, problem, I didn't call, because, I ah, um, eh the name, not come automatically in the mouth. So, it's real difficult. Then, um, some after go, the two or three weeks, I start to call - Teacher 1, Teacher 2* - but difficult.</p> <p>(Participant 3)</p>	<p>From the cultural identity position, this individual recalls a difficult experience of having to learn to call his English language teachers by their first names.</p> <p>He explains how he really struggled with this situation, because from his home cultural identity position, his responsibility is to address his teachers by "sir" or "madam" as a sign of respect. His role as a student in a new educational context is conflicting for him, because of his cultural identity stance.</p> <p>Furthermore in the interview, one can still hear him struggling with the idea, as he repeatedly uses and stresses the word "respect" in this speech act. His conflicted cultural identity is still very present.</p>

<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Social identity</p>	<p>Over the time we, we ((elongated)), changed a little bit, and we tried to be more, friendly ((elongated)). And we tried to ((elongated)), ah, to be agree. Can I say that? ((asking for language confirmation)) To be agree with, with other. And JUST is not now my idea. It's not about what I THINK. That is about what he THINKS. Ah, try to ((elongated)) share ideas. Um. If you wanna have coffee, okay, let's have coffee, but I would like to have, ah something else. But not, not just, not just, um eh CARE about yourself.</p> <p>(Participant 4)</p>	<p>From the social identity position, this individual describes the experience of her classmates (including herself) slowly warming up to each other and coming together and bonding as a social group.</p> <p>As a member of this social group, she plays this role by assuming the responsibility of compromising with others at times, and caring for them. Also, by the very nature of a social group, she explains others have this responsibility too.</p> <p>The classroom experience is apparently more than just about language learning for this individual, but being part of a social group.</p>
<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Personal identity</p>	<p>The diversity of the group is okay because, I found people who are, very different cultures. And I'm very curious always about, how other people in the world thinks. So, I ((laughs softly)) I, almost all the days bother the Middle East people about their religion. I, asked him about things of their religion. I asked Arjun* ((laughs softly)) about the religion. Yeah. Because is a, very different. For example, I, I'm very, like, very worry about how the Middle East world, treats her womans. So, I asked for the woman that we have in the class, in the class, wh-, what, what he, she, thinks about that. And for she is normal...</p> <p>So for me is, is, is interesting how, they think about their religion, and their culture.</p> <p>(Participant 2)</p>	<p>From the personal identity position, this individual explains how the cultural diversity of the language classrooms meets his personal interest in learning about people and cultures from around the world.</p> <p>He acts out this role "almost all the days" by regularly initiating conversations with others on topics that interest him personally in the language classroom. In this example, he talks about how he asks different classmates about their religion.</p> <p>Being in the language classroom is more than just about learning English for this individual, but rather satisfying his innate curiosity to learn more broadly through others.</p> <p>This stance is also present in other parts of this individual's dialogue, reinforcing this personal identity position.</p>

Key: ((Additional contextual information))

AUDIBLE EMPHASIS ON WORDS IN CAPITALS

*Real names have been removed