Chapter 4

Studying English in the UK and Japan: Exploring the expectations and reality of English study abroad and at home (Study 3)

Portfolio Outline Guide			
Chapters	**Timespan**		
	Phase 1 Prior to April 2010 Before SA (Japan)	**Phase 2** April 2011 to February 2011 During SA (UK)	**Phase 3** April 2011 to February 2013 After SA (Japan)
Chapter1: Portfolio Introduction			
Chapter 2: Pre-university study of English in Japan: Exploring L2 motivation prior to entering university (Study 1)			
Chapter 3: Study abroad for Japanese students: Changing motivation (Study 2)			
Chapter 4: Studying English in the UK and Japan: Exploring the expectations and reality of English study abroad and at home (Study 3)		◎	◎
Chapter 5: Individual journeys: A multiple-case study (Study 4)			
Chapter 6: Portfolio Conclusion			

・・・同じ年齢の子だからすぐ英語をしゃべれないとずぐ諦める。

… because they were of the same age they gave up on us if we couldn't use English soon (Ayumi, on circle participation).

自分から英語を勉強しようという気持ちはＵＫＣのときに比べると完全にずれた。

Compared to when at UKC, (feelings/motivation) to study English on my own changed (were out of alignment) completely (Yuta).

4.1 Study context

The optimal environment for L2 language acquisition is an extended stay in the country where the language is spoken. This has led to the creation of diverse study abroad programs for language students. The non-permanent arrangement of these programs, however, stipulates a return to the home country.

English study prior to study abroad of the Japanese student participants in the series of the studies that make up this portfolio is the focus of Chapter 2, while the focus of Chapter 3 is the changing motivation of these students during the study abroad period in relation to key L2 motivation constructs, including, for example *international posture, integrative motivation*, *ideal L2 self* and *ought-to L2 self*. The present chapter, Chapter 4 extends the exploration of the participants' learning journeys one step further by examining the experiences and L2 motivation of the same cohort in the two

university environments in which they studied English: the United Kingdom and Japan.

L2 motivation is subject to the learning environment, influences how individuals approach the study of a foreign or second language (Kanno, 2003; Ortega, 2009). The immediate learning environment, and the language learner's experiences within this environment, are further influenced by happenings, which may not be necessarily L2 related, within the immediate or peripheral surroundings. L2 acquisition is a journey; as the journey unfolds, the learner evaluates the different learning experiences which can be viewed as a series of motivating and demotivating episodes in the student's L2 trajectory.

A wide variety of terms have been distinguished in the literature to describe the surroundings in which language acquisition takes place. The *learning environment*, also referred to as the *learning context* relates primarily to the physical surroundings where the learning takes place. A classroom in the students' home country with limited contact hours of L2 study is an *instructional or educational setting*; in contrast, a *natural or cultural setting* is a community where the language is spoken in which L2 acquisition takes place (Gardner, 2001; Munoz, 2010).

In an instructional setting, the components of L2 motivation include *curriculum specific motivation components, teacher specific motivation components* and *group specific motivational components*, and the enjoyment or success experienced by the student by means of these components (Dörnyei, 1994a, p.280, Dörnyei, 2009, p.29). In addition, new technologies are offering L2 learners the possibility of *virtual language learning experiences* (VLLE) (Mroz, 2014). All the above components have been reconceptualised in a single term, *L2 learning experience*, which, combined with the *ideal L2 self* and *ought-to L2 self* discussed in Chapter 3, becomes the third component of the L2 motivational self system proposed by Dörnyei (2005, 2009). This third source of motivation to learn an L2 seems to have been the focus of fewer studies than the ideal L2 self and ought-to L2 self. Nevertheless, this component of the L2 motivational self system is important in the context of the studies presented in this and the following chapter, as the level and adaptation of '… successful

engagement with the actual learning process' (Hadfield & Dörnyei, 2013, p.3), or the *learner contribution*, in the two learning environments, in the United Kingdom and in Japan, may possibly be essential if the English of students who have experienced a study abroad program at university-level in Japan is to progress smoothly.

The study abroad environment allows language students to study the foreign language '*in situ*', and combined with formal language instruction, is often seen as the best option to enhance communicative language competence and intercultural knowledge (Redmann, 2009, p.85). Incorporating into the program a homestay with a local family is also seen as an ideal way to improve communicative language competence and intercultural knowledge. Apart from the formal components of study abroad programs, for example the daytime classes and the homestay, students also have informal opportunities to communicate with the local community, for example, by going shopping, and participating in volunteer activities or sporting circles, enabling use of their language skills in authentic settings. L2 motivation is supported and stimulated by being surrounded by the culture of the target language, and through meaningful L2 interactions. The limited length of study abroad programs motivates most students to make full use of the time available to improve L2 skills and to explore the L2 culture. Thus, study abroad is viewed as a complete L2 learning package augmenting L2 motivation.

The L2 experience for the Japanese university students in this study underwent two major changes. After six years of classroom-based English instruction at secondary school in Japan, study abroad at the tertiary level offered the students a fresh learning environment and a new learning experience for studying English. The L2 learning experience in the United Kingdom, as part of a sheltered study abroad program in their first year of study, was followed by a return to the Japanese English learning environment, where the students completed the remainder of their required English credits in their second and third years of study at university. Accordingly, the return to Japan after completion of the program was likely to bring about a new set of L2 learning experiences and possibly a recurrence of previously experienced motivators and demotivators.

Situation-specific L2 motivation is likely to exert an influence on the L2 learning experience in both environments. Even though a ten-month period in the United Kingdom is not exceptionally long, the students in this study were exposed to a very different learning environment and learning situation from their prior L2 experience. The students probably had formed images and expectations of study abroad, which in turn motivated them as they looked forward to the study abroad. The first half of the study presented in this chapter examines whether the realities of the study abroad program met students' expectations by identifying which components of the program contributed to student satisfaction and enjoyment; also examined is the link between expectations, realities and L2 motivation in a study abroad context. The second half of the study focuses on how the differences in these two distinct learning environments were experienced and perceived by the students, and their subsequent impact on L2 motivation and engagement with language learning in Japan. Thus, Study 3 of this portfolio seeks to explore how the student cohort internalized the study abroad program *and* the students' subsequent language learning experiences in Japan. It aims to add fresh insights into situation-specific motivation in two distinct L2 learning environments and the L2 experience of Japanese university students of low to intermediate English proficiency, while also investigating established L2 motivators and demotivators.

This chapter is divided into four main sections. Following the introduction and definition of terms, the literature review outlines relevant research which led to the formulation of the research questions for Study 3. Subsequent sections outline the aims, setting and participants, and instruments and procedures. Key findings and implications from the analysis of research data in a small exploratory study are presented and discussed in the final section.

4.1.1 Study abroad: Motivators and demotivators

The literature review that follows is divided into two main sections. The first section examines research conducted within the study abroad environment, while the second section focuses specifically on research investigating motivators and demotivators in general study environments and in EFL settings.

4.1.1.1 Study abroad

Study abroad is often imagined as a magic pill, guaranteeing 'easy' language acquisition. Studies of study abroad programs often focus on language gains and outcomes, and the qualities of the study abroad to explain individual differences in linguistic outcomes and experiences (Kinginger, 2011, p.60). Other studies compare the approach of students with a study abroad experience to language learning in the home country, with that of students who have not studied abroad.

While study abroad research is a vibrant and expanding field, with past studies focusing on a wide range of topics, doing justice to them all is beyond the scope of this chapter. The discussion instead is situated within the broader topic of student perceptions and perspectives, for example, student views on language gains improvements and personal growth, and on L2 experiences both in the classroom and in their free time as part of the formal and informal components of the study abroad program. Thus, the research discussed in this section is limited to studies whose focus relates closely to the above topics, and, in particular, research focused on the individual experiences of students who have participated in study abroad programs.

4.1.1.2 Language gains and personal growth

While language improvement occurs during a study abroad program, the type of improvement can vary; for example, study abroad tends to improve fluency and natural speech rather than grammatical knowledge and listening and reading skills (Tanaka & Ellis, 2003, p.67). Taguchi (2008) indicates that Japanese students who studied English abroad were better able to comprehend indirect and direct opinions and refusals. Gains in aural comprehension skills have also been reported (Hadis, 2005a, 2005b; Iino, 1996; Rivers, 1998).

While enhancing language skills is one of the primary aims of university study abroad programs, an equally important component is raising the awareness of university-age students in terms of being a global citizen and supporting the transition between being a student and an adult. For example, Hadis (2005a, p.4) found that study programs do not only aid language skills, but also global-mindedness and personal and intellectual growth. People can more easily gain an understanding of their own culture during a

lengthy stay in another country, as they observe differences and similarities between cultures. In addition, the timing of study abroad programs at university corresponds for Japanese students to transition period between being a teenager and an adult. This means a study abroad experience is not only just about language learning, but also has implications for awareness of self and one's culture.

4.1.1.3 Interaction with locals

It is often assumed by students that throughout a study abroad program they will be able to have frequent meaningful interactions with native speakers in the target language (TL). Three types of communicative goals for a study abroad program have been identified by Pellegrino Aveni (2005, pp. 28-29): *information exchange*, which may include asking for directions or going to the doctor; *social networking,* for the creation and development of relationships; and *second language practice,* which is initiated by the learner with the aim of using language learned in class and for developing further language skills. Everyday communicative interactions, for example shopping, using public transport and sightseeing, and extracurricular activities, for example joining clubs, volunteering and participating in cultural events, provide valuable opportunities to meet and mix with the local community in order to achieve these communicative goals. This not only has an effect on language competence but also on social competence in terms of interacting with locals and learning new social customs.

While Toyokawa and Toyokawa (2002) argue that extracurricular activities should be offered to Japanese students to facilitate opportunities to socialize with locals, .they also point out that study abroad program organizers should first assess students' needs and interests, in relation to the collectivist and group-oriented nature of Japanese culture (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). That this orientation in Japanese students has the potential to undermine individual participation in activities held within the local culture has been suggested by Ayano (2006), in a study focusing on Japanese university students in the United Kingdom on a one-year study abroad program. That is, if groups have already been formed upon arrival in the study abroad destination, students may not participate in new groups if it comes at the expense of being

distanced from the already formed Japanese group. Highlighting that study abroad is a challenging experience for many students, requiring both effort and commitment, Ayano (2006) further suggests that not only simple cultural differences between the home and the host country, but also the gap between expectations and reality leading to disappointment in the study abroad is a major challenge faced by the Japanese students participating in study abroad programs.

The reality of the informal components of study abroad programs is often a disappointment. Japanese students on a study abroad program in New Zealand used English less in daily life than they had originally anticipated, reporting that the most frequent contact with the local community took place during the homestay (Tanaka, 2007). Homestay, a formal component of many study abroad programs, is discussed in the next section. It is thus indicated that the beliefs and expectations held by students, often defined and supported by images and feedback from the media and organizing institutions, are factors which may impact on the study abroad experience.

4.1.1.4 Homestay

A homestay experience as part of study abroad programs has been well investigated (Allen, 2010; Tanaka, 2007; Wilkinson, 1998). These studies indicate that while homestays may in many cases be positive and motivating experiences, they do not necessarily provide an experience as valuable as the students expect. For example, issues that arise, including a homestay family's preoccupation with their own lives, may result in limited interaction with the student (Allen, 2010, p. 41); lack of common interests, or habits like watching TV, may also limit conversation (Tanaka, 2007, p.46). This mismatch leads to some study abroad participants experiencing disappointment and frustration (Wilkinson, 1998, p.132). In conclusion, it can be said that the majority of problems arising during home stay experiences are related to limited communication and interaction between the home stay family and the students.

4.1.1.5 The same experiences for all?

Study abroad may be perceived as a *fast track* means of becoming fluent in a language, but the reality of the study abroad experience varies greatly for individuals, and the benefit and satisfaction they actually receive from the program depends on a complex

set of variables including their own personality. Relevant personality features identified by Wilkinson (1998) include intercultural skills and sensitivity, problem solving skills, and linguistic ability. Furthermore, it is difficult to predict potential problems or to find an exact cause for any problem that may occur. Participants in study abroad environments also sometimes avoid challenging situations, purposefully reducing interactions with the local community in order to protect their self image (Pellegrino Aveni, 2005, p. 2). Consequently, study abroad programs cannot guarantee the same result for every participant.

In summary, there is a trend in the literature to focus on one aspect of study abroad only; for example linguistic gains, personal growth, identity or individual out-of-class experiences. While longitudinal studies encompassing a selection of the above do exist, for example Jackson (2008) and Pellegrino Aveni (2005), it should be noted that results in these studies are based on students who completed the study abroad programs as individuals, rather than as part of a group.

4.1.1.6 Motivation and demotivation in L2

While *motivation* encourages individuals to begin and maintain an activity, *demotivation* has the opposite effect on initially motivated individuals; in other words, demotivation can be understood as the fading or disappearance of motivation. The identification and exploration of diverse motivators and demotivators is one of the central issues addressed in all motivation research. Even though the number of motivators and demotivators identified by Gorham and Christophel (1992) and Gorham and Millette (1997) exceed one thousand; recurring categories emerge from the studies. These include antecedent conditions, teacher behaviour and course design. In L2 research, the teacher's relationships with students, teaching styles and class content, and the teacher's own attitude toward the subject being taught, were all possible areas where demotivation could occur (Nakata, 2003; Oxford, 2001; Taylor, 2013). Focusing on already demotivated high school learners studying English and German in Budapest, Dörnyei and Csizér (1998) identified nine demotivating factors. These were led by teacher factors such as personality, competence, commitment or teaching method, followed by group size or level, reduced self-confidence, negative

attitude to the subject, the compulsory nature of English, interference from another L2 being studied, negative attitude towards the L2 community, attitude of group members and the course book.

The degree of teacher autonomy required to execute changes that support more motivational teaching approaches exists in university classrooms in Japan, yet the national English curriculum in Japan, and the importance accorded to the university entrance examinations prevent the full implementation of such approaches at the secondary school level. Thus, the adaptation of strategies presented in research from non-Japanese language teaching contexts cannot always be smoothly transferred to the Japanese L2 learning environment.

Motivation and demotivation during study abroad is a complex issue. Similar experiences can be deemed motivating or demotivating, depending on the individual. For some of a cohort of Chinese students studying English in the United Kingdom, for example, confusion about norms of interaction in the new environment, and difficulty in changing existing viewpoints, were shown to lead to less enthusiasm for communicating with the local population, and even disillusionment, while others in the same cohort were able to reflect on and adapt their own behaviour (Jackson, 2008, p.207). Other research (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010; Walkinshaw & Oanh, 2014; Warrington & Jeffreys, 2005) indicate differences in teaching-style, for example, more horizontal and casual relationship between students and teachers, or being unfamiliar with native English speakers, and their pronunciation, culture and customs as being possible sources of demotivation.

Demotivation in the Japanese EFL context is equally complicated. Research in this area has flourished in Japan since the late 1990s, due to an acknowledged concern felt by educators about the growing number of demotivated students, in particular in secondary schools. The tendency of teachers to teach to senior high school and university entry examinations, although not necessarily through personal choice, rather than to incorporate MEXT guidelines which aim for communicative competence in English, is part of an unfortunate wash-back effect that often leads to demotivation in Japanese school students (Falout, et al. 2009, p.404). While there are

no further entrance examinations once students enter university, the Test of English for International Communication (TOEIC) is another multiple-choice examination hurdle for students who wish to use English for their future careers, as companies often include a TOEIC score of over 600 as a requirement for graduate employment. In this way, the possibly demotivating effect of examination-driven English study is carried over to the tertiary level.

Even though the focus on examinations in learning is often portrayed in a negative light in Japanese education, examinations and the obtaining of qualifications can have a dual function as both motivators and demotivators. Examinations and qualifications permeate an extensive number of learning areas in Japan, ranging from martial arts to flower arrangement and the study of Chinese characters. Many people are motivated to improve their skills, and the consequent formal acknowledgement of their skills propels them on to the next level. Thus, it can be concluded that the motivating or demotivating power of examinations is dependent on a number of factors which vary among individuals, for example effort, investment, value and interest, which in turn are overshadowed and influenced by how success or failure at passing the examinations or obtaining the qualifications is understood by individuals.

Other external and internal sources of demotivation have also been identified. External sources of demotivation are attributed to teaching methods, and the teacher, while internal sources include lack of confidence in English skills and low English proficiency (Arai, 2004; Falout et al. 2009; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2008; Tsuchiya, 2005). While students did express a wish to improve their English skills, the onus was found to be on the teachers to make a difference. Nevertheless, Tsuchiya (2005) also places the onus on students to understand their own issues with studying English. The author also suggests that universities should consider grouping students not only according to ability, but also according to their self-confidence, motivation and demotivation profiles. Furthermore, the absence of a goal for speaking English, not understanding why they should learn English, and low test results were also reasons that led to demotivation in Japanese high school students (Sakai & Kikuchi, 2008). It should also be noted that student attitudes, for example showing a lack of interest in university English classes, have been shown to be the cause of demotivation in teachers (Sugino,

2010). Thus, further research into the relationship between teacher and student demotivation is required to address this complex issue.

To sum up, the nature of English learning in Japan appears to provide a fertile ground for demotivation to occur and gain a hold. While study abroad gives students the opportunity to experience a different teaching and learning style in a more relaxed environment, where the purpose of English study, namely to communicate in English, can be found on the students' doorstep, questions remain about how students perceive the changed learning environments, and how their L2 motivation is affected by these changes in their learning situation. A return to the pre-study-abroad language learning environment may be welcomed by some students as being familiar and comfortable, whereas for other students, learning in the new study environment may have become preferable (Coleman, 1997; Freed, 1995; Fryer, 2012a, 2012b; Irie & Brewster, 2013; Jackson, 2008; Pellegrino Aveni, 2005).

There are few studies using a longitudinal design that have investigated the long-term impact on L2 motivation of a return to the original L2 study environment. Other studies addressing the impact of single or multiple returns to Japan from sojourns abroad often focus on Japanese returnees, labelled as *kikokushijo*, for example the students studied in Kanno (2003) or Ford (2009). The students in this study, in contrast, could not be considered *kikokushijo* or returnees, as their stay outside Japan was limited to the ten months immediately after they had graduated from high school; their identity as a 'Japanese' had been firmly established by the time they left for the United Kingdom.

To bridge some of the identified gaps in the literature and to gain fresh insights, the study reported in this chapter has used a longitudinal approach to investigate the experience of Japanese students participating in a ten-month sheltered study abroad program in the United Kingdom.

4.2 Aims and research questions

Study 3 has three primary aims in relation to the Japanese university study abroad program that is the focus of this portfolio. The *first aim* is to examine relations

between out-of-class experiences, improvements in English language skills, and general satisfaction with the study abroad program, and to investigate their link with L2 motivation. The *second aim* of the study is to evaluate the formal and informal aspects of this particular study abroad program, and to explore whether the realities of the program components matched student expectations. The study findings may be used to improve the effectiveness of the program or to aid in the planning, management and marketing of similar programs in Japan. The *third aim* of the study is to explore English language study in the two very different learning environments, and the relationship with L2 motivation, in an attempt to provide insights into the effect of changing learning environments. The L2 environment in Japan is considered to be fraught with problems (Ushioda, 2013, p.5) and demotivating to many students (see Falout, Elwood & Hood, 2009; Kikuchi, 2013; Sakai & Kikuchi, 2008), while the United Kingdom could be considered an almost ideal L2 learning environment. As has been discussed in Chapter 2, students in the present study also had a tendency to blame the Japanese English education system or their English teachers in Japan for their lack of interest in English language study at secondary school; hence leading to this exploration of how students are motivated in two distinctly different learning environments, one new to them, and the other familiar but experienced after ten-month studying English abroad.

The study attempts to find answers to the following research questions:

Do the realities of the formal/prescribed components of the study abroad program match students' expectations?

Do the realities of the informal/incidental components of the study abroad program match students' expectations?

What opinions do Japanese university students express about the L2 learning experience in the United Kingdom compared with Japan?

What kinds of motivators and demotivators do the students identify in both environments?

4.3 Instruments and procedures

The study was designed using a two-phase mixed-methods approach, chosen to obtain a broad range of data related to student expectations, perceptions, satisfaction levels and attitudes to the learning experience in both the United Kingdom and Japan. The first phase took place between April 2010 and February 2011, and the second phase between April 2011 and December 2012.

The aim of the initial quantitative and qualitative components of the data analysis was to gain a general picture of the students' study abroad experience. The data was collected from Part 4 of Questionnaire C, administered at the end of the study abroad program while the students were still in the United Kingdom (February 2011) and from follow-up interviews upon their return to Japan in second year (July 2011). A fourth questionnaire, Questionnaire D, was administered in November 2012, followed by a second round of interviews from July 2012 to February 2013 to discuss the students' continuing L2 learning experience in Japan in their third year of university.

Questionnaire C consisted of six open-ended questions related to the UKC experience including English classes, out-of-class activities, friends, and travel. Ten further statements were included to collect information about the participants' perception of the components of the study abroad program, as well as their improvement in English and the incidence of their English use. Participants were asked to rate each item on a six-point Likert scale, where one equalled strongly disagree and six strongly agree; participants were also able to add their own opinion below the ten statements. Questionnaire C and Questionnaire D shared some common open and closed items so that the two learning environments could be compared. The students were also invited to contribute information on motivating and demotivating aspects of the learning environment at UKC and at the university in Japan. In this section, students were asked to comment on the *good and bad points about studying English* in the respective environments. The third set of items related to teacher-specific motivation impact comprised eight single closed items, also measured using a six-point Likert scale.

All questionnaire items were adapted to suit this particular study with reference to the literature. The original questionnaires can be found in Appendix H to K. Quantitative

data analysis was limited to content for open items and frequency for closed items because of the small sample sizes in Questionnaire C (N=43) and Questionnaire D (N=15). Moreover, due to the difference in sample sizes, direct comparisons were not feasible between the two questionnaires. Please refer to Appendix O for the matrix used to code open ended items and Appendix P for further descriptive analysis results of items presented in Table 4.1, Table 4.2, Table 4.3, Table 4.4 and Table 4.5.

Further qualitative data were collected and analysed from semi-structured interviews (N=15) conducted in the second and third years. In the interviews, the students were asked to reflect and comment on English study during the study abroad program and upon their return to Japan. (Refer to Section 1.6.4 for interview protocol.)

The open items in Questionnaire C and Questionnaire D, combined with the semi-structured interviews, provided the main qualitative data for this study. The qualitative component allowed for an in-depth exploration of the quantitative results, and was also expected to uncover any additional information which may not have been addressed by the set items in the questionnaire. The results are discussed with reference to the Japanese socio-cultural setting.

4.4 Results and discussion

The results and discussion section is divided into two main parts. The first part explores the students' perceptions of the L2 learning experience in the United Kingdom. The second part focuses on the L2 learning experience in Japan from the second year of university. Please refer to Appendix P for additional descriptive analysis results of items presented in Table 4.1, Table 4.2, Table 4.3, Table 4.4 and Table 4.5.

4.4.1 The L2 learning experience in the United Kingdom

This section reports three results, namely students' responses in relation to their overall enjoyment and satisfaction of the study abroad program and their perceptions of the *formal* components of the program, including the classes, the teachers and the homestay, linguistic gains, and the *informal and incidental* components, including

interactions with the local community such as participation in circles and volunteer activities, and subsequent English language usage outside of class.

4.4.1.1 Formal components of the L2 learning experience

If considered from the point of enjoyment, the formal components of the study abroad program appear to be a success. As indicated in Table 4.1a below, less than 10% of the students reported a negative response to the daytime classes, the homestay, and the conversation classes. Table 4.1a and Table 4.1b summarise the frequency of responses and descriptive statistics results for the following items:

- I enjoyed the 10-month stay at UKC (1)
- I enjoyed the home stay (2)
- I enjoyed UKC English classes (3)
- UKC English classes helped me feel more comfortable when using English (4)
- I enjoyed the conversation classes (6)

Table 4.1a Formal components and overall program (Frequency)

Item(s)	Q	Frequency (%) for Likert scale items							
		SD	D	DS	Disagree Total	AS	A	SA	Agree Total
1	C	0	0	4.7	4.7	9.3	18.6	67.4	95.3
2	C	2.3	0	4.7	7	16.3	11.6	65.1	93
3	C	0	2.3	2.3	4.6	16.3	27.9	51.2	95.5
4	C	0	4.7	4.7	9.4	27.9	27.9	34.9	90.7
6	C	2.3	2.3	2.3	6.9	23.3	16.3	53.5	93.1

Note. Q: Questionnaire; SD strongly disagree; D disagree; DS disagree slightly; AS agree slightly; A agree; SA Strongly agree

Table 4.1b Formal components and overall program (Mean, SD and range)

Item(s)	Q	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Range
1	**C**	*5.48*	*0.85*	*3*	*6*	*3*
2	**C**	*5.30*	*1.14*	*1*	*6*	*5*
3	**C**	*5.23*	*0.97*	*2*	*6*	*4*
4	**C**	*4.83*	*1.11*	*2*	*6*	*4*
6	**C**	*5.09*	*1.21*	*1*	*6*	*5*

Note. SD=standard deviation

Responses to interview and open items further explained the quantitative data presented in Table 4.1a and 4.1b. These responses indicated that, at first, some participants found the all-English instruction challenging, but they became more familiar with being taught in English as the program progressed. The combination of being taught in the L2, and gradually gaining confidence in responding in English without fear of making mistakes resulted in most during study abroad students becoming more comfortable using English in everyday situations. A certain give and take between the teachers and the students, for example, teachers answering the students' questions, was also a source of motivation. New knowledge, not only about words and grammar, but also about content and study skills, in addition to being exposed to a variety of native-speaker English accents all day, added to the students' interest and liking of classes.

> 本当に英語できなくて、嫌い、けどイギリスに行ってからその文法分かるようになって、好きになって・・・英語しかない環境で英語をやって、少人数クラス結構面と向かって勉強できた, 英語能力上がった。
>
> I really was not good at English (could not do English), disliked it, but after going to the United Kingdom I was able to understand grammar and got to like English…studying English in an all-English environment, being able to study English in small classes and coming face to face with English, our

English improved (Miu, Interview 2, July, 2012, original in Japanese, translated by researcher).

Another student commented on the fact that test marks in class were motivating for her in terms of both her personal score and competing with other students. The same student also mentioned that the English level of the students in the group needed to be similar in order to encourage this type of motivation. The small, level-based classes thus supported group cohesion and goal-orientedness, both being components of group-specific motivation (Dörnyei, 1994a).

Some students did express criticism of UKC classes. The following response highlights views that some higher-level students had of UKC classes

文法は向こうでやったけど印象が中学校と高校でやったことあるようなも一回英語で・・・

Grammar at UKC seemed to be a repeat teaching of JHS and SHS.

Asked about which class she felt was the most valuable, the student continued:

どれだ。Management. It's new knowledge and English… Some people don't say anything, especially management・・・ みんな黙りすぎ。

Which one I wonder. Management (because) it was all new knowledge in English … everyone is too quiet (Chie, Interview 1, July 2011, original in Japanese and English, translated by researcher).

Relevance, interest, expectancy and satisfaction are all aspects of course specific motivation. The comment above testifies to the importance of implementing a course design aimed at enhancing engagement with the L2 learning process to sustain L2 motivation.

As suggested by research presented in the literature review, the teacher is often viewed by students as a major source of motivation or demotivation. A substantial proportion of the written and spoken comments made by the students in this study also reflect the

teacher- specific motivational impact on the L2 learning experience. Table 4.2 shows the results of the following closed items.

The teacher motivates me by:

- creating a positive working environment in the class (1)
- getting on well with students (2)
- encouraging students to participate (3)
- being well prepared for class (4)
- showing patience (5)
- having enthusiasm (6)
- choice of authentic teaching materials (7)
- giving students individual attention (8)

Table 4.2a The UKC teachers and L2 motivation (Frequency)

Item(s)	Q	Frequency (%) for Likert scale items							
		SD	D	DS	Disagree Total	AS	A	SA	Agree Total
1	C	4.7	2.3	16.3	23.3	30.2	20.9	25.6	76.7
2	C	2.3	4.7	9.3	16.3	23.3	25.6	34.9	83.8
3	C	2.3	0	7	9.3	34.9	23.3	32.6	90.8
4	C	2.3	2.3	9.3	13.9	39.5	20.9	25.6	86
5	C	2.3	0	20.9	23.2	27.9	27.9	20.9	76.7
6	C	0	0	14	14	25.6	32.6	27.9	86.1
7	C	0	2.3	14	16.3	37.2	27.9	18.6	83.7
8	C	0	2.3	11.6	13.9	34.9	23.3	27.9	86.1

Note. Q: Questionnaire; SD strongly disagree; D disagree; DS disagree slightly; AS agree slightly; A agree; SA Strongly agree

Table 4.2b The UKC teachers and L2 motivation (Mean, SD, and range)

Item(s)	Q	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Range
1	**C**	*4.37*	*1.34*	*1*	*6*	*5*
2	**C**	*4.69*	*1.30*	*1*	*6*	*5*
3	**C**	*4.74*	*1.13*	*1*	*6*	*5*
4	**C**	*4.51*	*1.18*	*1*	*6*	*5*
5	**C**	*4.44*	*1.11*	*2*	*6*	*4*
6	**C**	*4.74*	*1.02*	*3*	*6*	*3*
7	**C**	*4.46*	*1.03*	*2*	*6*	*4*
8	**C**	*4.62*	*1.09*	*2*	*6*	*4*

Note. SD=standard deviation

As Table 4.2a and Table 4.2b show, encouraging participation, closely followed by having enthusiasm and getting on well with students were considered the three most motivating attributes of UKC teachers. Both the standard deviation and range result for item 6 (enthusiasm) in Table 4.2b also highlight the uniform nature of the responses. Teachers showing both enthusiasm and encouraging student participation is more likely to result in a two-way interactive class. In comparison, a teacher-centred class presented by teachers who do not appear to be inspired by the subject matter of their own class displays features of the '*incompetence*' classification, the most frequently cited demotivator for Japanese students in the study by Zhang (2007).

Feeling comfortable in a given setting, whether in the L2 classroom or a social situation, is a prerequisite for stress-free communication in any language. According to Bailey (1983), anxiety can, depending on an individual's response, be debilitating or facilitating for learners with a low self-image, resulting in a flight or fight response respectively. For learners with a positive self-image, anxiety appears to be less of a problem. It is clear that the UKC study environment was supportive and encouraging,

much more so than the students had experienced in the past, thus even students who initially felt anxious in class were able to blossom in the small group atmosphere and later on, became comfortable using English to communicate in the local community. A teacher at UKC commented on the difference in learning environment and its effect on L2 motivation, stating:

> … students gain confidence in using English, not just in terms of ability but also because they realise they won't be made to look foolish if they make mistakes. … Students become more active speakers and contribute more to class from around the second or third month (R. Smith, personal communication, July 2012).

An unexpected result was the comparatively low frequency of '*agree responses'* and mean for *creating a positive environment* and *showing patience*. The first item appears to be related to the three highest ranking items discussed above, which theoretically are also related to a positive class environment, yet they were scored as the lowest. The second item somewhat contradicts descriptions such as *friendly* and *kind*. Thus, further study on the relation between these items is required to clarify the reason for this result.

Giving students one-on-one attention ranked fourth out of the eight items. This is possible at UKC because of the small class sizes (approximately ten to twelve students) and shows that students respond well to individual attention in a 'relaxed' atmosphere, rather than being one of forty students, or more, in a multi-level teacher-centred class. This result appears to indicate that small class sizes may be a means of motivating students in Japan.

The use of authentic materials, for example menus and sightseeing brochures, both print and online, to foster student motivation in the L2 classroom, is a strategy often employed by teachers. Yet, the use of authentic materials was seen as slightly less motivating than other teacher-related items by the students in this study. An interest in products of the culture would indicate an intrinsic orientation, albeit in a veiled and superficial form; but if language learning is seen largely as a useful tool for job hunting or travel purposes, an interest in authentic materials may be low. This result

may also indicate that choosing resources according to the students' English skill and interest levels is more important than authenticity if the aim is to increase L2 motivation.

Results from the free responses also indicated that the English teachers at UKC were seen in a positive light. Some comments used to refer to teachers, for example *friendly, polite, funny* and *kind* related to their personal characteristics, whereas others, for example *great* and *good* to their teaching skills. Some participants felt they wanted to get to know the UKC teachers and were motivated by being able to spend time chatting with the teachers outside of class. Some teachers also invited the students to their houses for a class 'get together'. A sense of familiarity between speakers has been shown to help students relax and become less inhibited in L2 learning situations (Pellegrino Aveni, 2005, p. 99). The unavailability of UKC teachers after school and on weekends was a source of disappointment.

Conversely, negative comments related to UKC teachers were related to natural (fast) speech, and poor handwriting skills. Getting used to English spoken at normal speed and the British English pronunciation did take some time, as students were accustomed to classes conducted in Japanese with a focus on American pronunciation. Furthermore, students appeared to have difficulty reading the UKC teachers' writing and questioned their spatial use of the white board. This is one area where secondary school English teachers in Japan excel, as they are carefully taught blackboard writing skills and the usage of writing space.

The lack of comments regarding the English language knowledge of UKC teachers suggest that the Japanese students felt this knowledge was '*atarimae*', or a given, whereas the language knowledge of non-native-speaker teachers of English must be demonstrated. This shows the power of an image, which supports linguistic imperialism and the marketing value of English. Yet, as many trained language teachers have discerned, knowing your first language (L1) and teaching the L1 are very different propositions.

Conversation classes, taught in the evenings by students from the United Kingdom and other countries studying at K-university, were thought of as enjoyable, especially as

they were taught by younger people. This reflects the fact that students enjoyed being able to talk to people of their own age who are 'on the same level' when compared to older teachers who, to the Japanese students, would require more respect. Furthermore, the conversation classes were also considered to be conducive to improving conversational skills by the majority (93%) of students, as indicated by Table 4.3a, which summarises responses to the following item:

- The conversation classes improved my conversational English. (7)

Table 4.3a Conversation classes (Frequency)

Item(s)	Q	Frequency (%) for Likert scale items							
		SD	D	DS	Disagree Total	AS	A	SA	Agree Total
7	C	4.7	0	2.3	7	25.6	27.9	39.5	93

Note. Q: Questionnaire; SD strongly disagree; D disagree; DS disagree slightly; AS agree slightly; A agree; SA Strongly agree.

Table 4.3b Conversation classes (Mean, SD and range)

Item(s)	Q	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Range
7	**C**	*4.9*	*1.23*	*1*	*6*	*5*

Note. SD=standard deviation

Nevertheless, even though the conversation teachers are employed to increase the chances of speaking with locals on campus, the following comment by Chie highlights one of the difficulties with hiring students who are also busy with their own lives and study:

> … conversation teachers do their own thing once they have finished teaching us, so we didn't have much of a chance to talk to them nor other K-university students' (Interview 1, July 2011, original in English).

The forming of friendships between people is not an automatic process; a mutual common ground, for example, a liking of *manga* or playing a particular sport is usually required. Consequently, experiences differed between students who made friends with the conversation teachers, and those who did not.

The majority of the students enjoyed the homestay as shown in Table 4.1a and Table 4.1b. These results were further supported by comments in the free response section and the interviews. Students were motivated because they could use everyday English with the host family. In particular, students felt it was good to be in an authentic English-speaking environment, in comparison to the UKC campus, which was often described as a 'little Japan'.

Other comments in the interviews, however, revealed some further insight into how the homestay is perceived in terms of language learning value. For example, one student mentioned that the homestay, although enjoyable, was not as valuable as the actual English classes in terms of improving English skills. This highlights the fact that formal study of language was sometimes seen by the Japanese students as having more value in terms of measurable learning.

If the homestay family included children, they often played the role of *icebreakers*. Children are less reserved and also less intimidating to the fragile language self than adults, and often use simpler language; thus, conversation can flow more easily. On the other hand, if even a conversation with a child becomes a problem, the L2 speaker might also lose confidence and self-esteem (Pellegrino Aveni, 2005, p.75). The following two comments reveal the differences between staying at a house with children and one without children. Chie described her homestay as 'fun'. She continued '・・・女の子はすごくなつくて、かわいかった。でも小さい子のほ早口からあんまりに聞こえとれなかったたんごは簡単けど・・・でもそのうちに分かっていた。… the little girl was very friendly, the little kid, he used just simple words but spoke so fast so I couldn't catch what he said , but started understanding in time ' (Chie, Interview 1, July 2013, original in Japanese, translated by researcher).

In contrast, the range result in Table 4.1b indicated that the homestay experience was not seen as enjoyable by some participants. The interviews illustrated possible reasons for these responses more clearly. For example, Ayumi described her homestay in the following way:

> ホームステイはどっちかといえば夜の時間しか一緒にいなかったからあんまり話している感じしなかった・・・土日は逆にどこにも出かけない, 家庭によって違うですけど、私の場所は子供いなかったから、ぜんぜんしゃべる話題なくて出かけるのも一緒にしなくて、週末も別々で夕飯はＵＫＣで、帰るのは９時。
>
> Homestay meant just spending evenings together, so it didn't feel like we talked, they didn't go anywhere on weekends, it depends on the family but in mine there were no children, we had nothing at all to talk about, didn't go anywhere together, spent the weekend apart, and on weekdays I ate dinner at UKC so didn't get back until 9 pm (Ayumi, Interview 2, November 2012, original in Japanese, translated by researcher).

The next comment was rather surprising as it seems the homestay family normally communicated and fought with each other in Spanish, although they spoke in English to the student. Considering the aim of the homestay was not only to experience living with a local family, but also to improve communicative English skills, it is no wonder that the student did not think the homestay was enjoyable or valuable.

> I couldn't speak English in homestay, and was in my room every day… I didn't talk to them 何だろう (what can I say) I don't have 自信 (confidence)…my homestay family always けんか (fighting) so 話しかけにくかった (difficult to talk to) (Sari, Interview 1, July 2011, original in both Japanese and English, Japanese translated by researcher).

The home stay issue was also addressed by Tanaka (2007) who found similar divided opinions in his interviews with eighteen Japanese students who spent twelve weeks in New Zealand. Of the students, 50% had negative views of the home stay related to

issues such as a strong non-English accent, lack of opportunities to speak English and lack of confidence to speak English.

This study supports Wilkinson's (1998) discussion of a successful homestay. There are many factors that make a home stay successful and a large part of the success lies with the matching of personalities, and the ability of the participant to blend in well, and being a proactive participant during the homestay. At the same time, the host family must also make an effort to make the experience a success for all parties concerned, making the participant feel welcome and a part of the family rather than just signing up for the host family program for financial rewards.

The comments in the interviews on the whole support the quantitative data results presented in the tables, which indicate that the students were satisfied with, and enjoyed, the classes and homestay. The interviews, however, also revealed the existence of some negative opinions about the daytime classes, for example, some classes being a repeat of secondary English classes in Japan, and negative or average experiences during the homestay, for example homestay families that were difficult to approach or the lack of time actually spent with the homestay family. The insights gained through both the positive and negative comments arising from the qualitative data accentuates the value of using a mixed-methods approach in L2 research.

4.4.1.2 Language gains

The students' perceptions of their linguistic improvement are documented in Table 4.4a and Table 4.4b below, which summarise responses to the following items:

- I felt my English improved at UKC (5)
- I am satisfied with the way my TOEIC score changed (9)
- I am satisfied with my general improvement in terms of English (10)

While the frequency of *agree responses* for item five was over 90%, this was not the case for items eight to ten. Overall only a slight majority of 63.2% students were satisfied with their language gains, and a clear minority with 48.9%, with their TOEIC score improvement.

Table 4.4a Linguistic improvement and satisfaction (Frequency)

Item(s)	Q	Frequency (%) for Likert scale items							
		SD	D	DS	Disagree Total	AS	A	SA	Agree Total
5	C	0	2.3	7	9.3	20.9	23.3	46.5	90.7
9	C	23.3	14	14	51.3	32.6	2.3	14	48.9
10	C	14	2.3	20.9	37.2	20.9	16.3	25.6	62.8

Note. Q: Questionnaire; SD strongly disagree; D disagree; DS disagree slightly; AS agree slightly; A agree; SA Strongly agree.

Table 4.4b Linguistic improvement and satisfaction (Mean, SD and range)

Item(s)	Q	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Range
5	**C**	*5.04*	*1.09*	*2*	*6*	*4*
9	**C**	*3.18*	*1.66*	*1*	*6*	*5*
10	**C**	*4*	*1.67*	*1*	*6*	*5*

Note. SD=standard deviation

Figure 4.1 below shows the TOEIC results for 37 available pairs of participant scores. The participants are ordered according to class level, the first five participants are from the education faculty, followed by participants in classes of students from the English and IT, and tourism faculties. While the beginning and end scores were overall higher for the education students, the range of improvement was equal, if not higher, in some cases in the other two faculties.

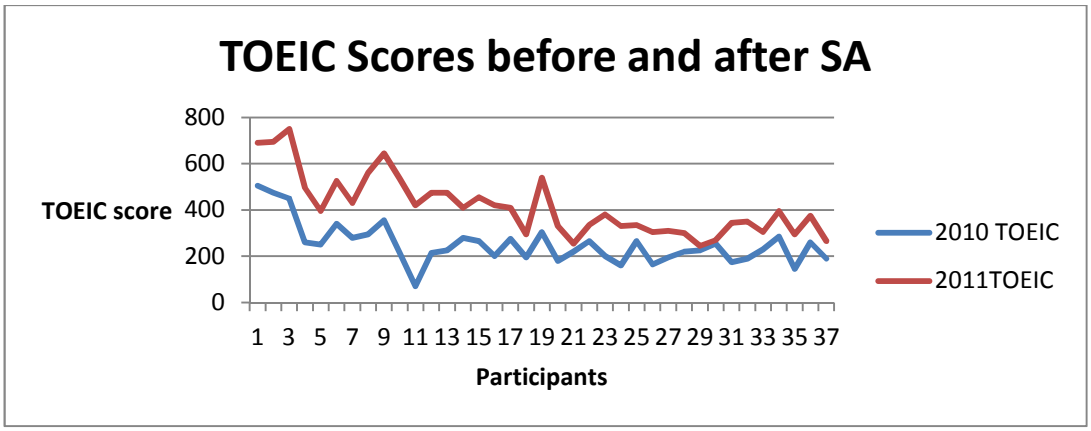

Figure 4.1 TOEIC results for 2010 and 2011

In spite of the lack of satisfaction with their TOEIC scores expressed in Table 4.4a and Table 4.4b, all participants did improve their TOEIC score. The average score increased from 233 to 391 in the tourism and English and IT faculties, while the average score of students in the education faculty increased from 388 to 605. The students from the tourism and English and IT faculties improved more on average at listening (+100) than reading (+53), whereas students in the teacher education faculty improved nearly equally at listening (+101) and reading (+116). Reading and grammar often improve more for education students as their existing English skills at the beginning of the program were often more advanced, and their study abroad featured additional reading and grammar classes. The available TOEIC scores for all the 96 students in the 2010 intake, of which 43 took part in this study, show an average of 254/413 in April 2010/January 2011 with progress scores for listening/reading increasing by 104/62 respectively, so the sample provided by the participants in this portfolio can be considered to be similar in range to the total number of students that took part in the program in 2010.

Some of the free responses partially explain the quantitative results presented above. Some students thought the classes at UKC were too easy, and did not cover enough reading and grammar. Ironically, reading and grammar are the focus of Japanese English language education at secondary school, of which the students voiced negative opinions in Chapter 2. The second part of the TOEIC test relates exclusively to reading and grammar; hence the oral and aural communicative language skills acquired at UKC would not necessarily be of benefit for improving one's score in this section.

While it is difficult to ascertain what level of improvement each learner expected to achieve, students did acknowledge in the interviews that their English skills had improved, supporting the quantitative results. The students also felt that they could acquire English skills naturally; in particular, the students felt that their listening skills improved with little effort on their behalf. Furthermore, there were some students who had high expectations which were not met, as illustrated in the comment below.

> ・・・伸びたことは伸びたけど、まあ、TOEIC のスコア的言うとまだぜんぜん、ほかの人より low level なんて、そこの場面は満足もできないし、やっぱり日常会話の面なんだろう確か友人と話して通じるですけど、やっぱり普通現地の人と話すとまだちょっと・・・
>
> …My English has improved, I suppose, in terms of my TOEIC score, I am still at a low level compared to other people, I cannot be satisfied. As for talking with others, I could communicate with friends but as for normal locals … still have some ways to go (Daigo, Interview 1, July 2011, original in Japanese and English, translated by researcher).

It is possible that for some students like Daigo, the notion of being 'satisfied' with language gains signals the completion of the L2 learning process. By not being satisfied, these students are thus further motivated to continue their English studies at university from second year.

The results in Figure 4.1 above were compared with data from free responses on Questionnaire C, in addition to effort scores and UKC examination results. The triangulation reveals that participants who did not participate in any extra-curricular activities at all improved the least on the TOEIC; they also showed less effort and scored lower on the UKC examination. Thus, improvements on the TOEIC test seem to add a further component to establishing the effectiveness of the study abroad program.

Lastly, the TOEIC score should not be used as the sole indicator of improvements in language skills and the overall effectiveness and importance of the study abroad program. This cannot, and should not, be measured in any language test as the

confidence to use English in daily situation, personal growth, and intercultural skills cannot be measured by an examination.

4.4.1.3 Informal components of study abroad

During study abroad, leaving the UKC campus was an essential step for participating students in using English to interact with the local population. Even though the students were in the United Kingdom, it is clear that some students did not take advantage of this learning environment by engaging in language use outside of class every day.The 'little Japan' syndrome, as results in Table 4.4 below indicate, should thus be of concern to program organizers, as 63% of the cohort thought they used English outside class every day, compared to 36.3% who did not, in response to the following item:

- I spoke English outside of class nearly every day (8)

Table 4.5a Speaking English outside of class (Frequency)

Item(s)	Q	Frequency (%) for Likert scale items							
		SD	D	DS	Disagree Total	AS	A	SA	Agree Total
8	C	12.1	12.1	12.1	36.3	29.2	21.9	12.1	63.2

Note. Q: Questionnaire; SD strongly disagree; D disagree; DS disagree slightly; AS agree slightly; A agree; SA Strongly agree

Table 4.5b Speaking English outside of class (Mean, SD and range)

Item(s)	Q	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Range
1	**C**	*3.79*	*1.55*	*1*	*6*	*5*

Note. SD=standard deviation

Some participants in the free response section on Questionnaire C commented that it was necessary to leave the campus to use English. One participant seemed quite

disappointed with the lack of opportunity to speak English, and also the quality of the interactions, for example when going shopping:

> 友達と行くから逆に英語を使わないもあるし、あとは店員さん日本ではいっぱいくるけど、向こうはあんまり来ないからしゃべらない気がする・・・ＵＫＣに行く前にＫ大学との学生と一緒に勉強すると思ってて・・・行ったら日本人は全部いっしょで、あれ?９月になったらＫ大学のサークルに入ったり、でもそのときに日本人同士に慣れたから‘いいや’。
>
> I went (shopping) with my (Japanese) so didn't use much English, and the shop assistants here (England) do not come and talk to you .like they do in Japan. Also, before I arrived at UKC I thought we would study with K-university students ,but it was all us Japanese together, I thought 'what?' and by the time we could join circles at K-university, I had made Japanese friends and thought 'what the heck' (Chie, Interview 1, July 2011, original in Japanese, translated by the researcher).

The above comment captures a situation where the participant had set expectations of what study abroad entails, which led to disappointment with the reality. Textbooks in Japan may also be to blame for this sense of disappointment, as many situational dialogues, for example those focusing on shopping and buying a train ticket, feature rather longer conversations than used in real situations, and in real life, the use of automated ticket machines require reading skills rather than conversation skills. Imagining yourself in an L2 interaction is thus only of benefit if the image matches the reality. In terms of educational implications, the activities used to assist the emergence of the *ideal L2 self* in an *educational or instructed setting* must be carefully chosen to match the reality.

The participant's final remark, '*what the heck*', highlights the importance of group relationships and social dynamics to the Japanese students. As all participants in this study are first year students from all over Japan, they also want to get to know one another, and form friendships, since they will be studying together for the next four years both during the study abroad and upon their return to Japan. Echoing results by Ayano (2006), and observations by Hofstede (2007), once students have made new

Japanese friends, it may then be more difficult for them to make additional non-Japanese friends, as spending time with their foreign friends can take away time from their Japanese friends and thus create some disharmony. Furthermore the amount of time spent with fellow Japanese during a sheltered study abroad program exceeds time that can be spent with non-native speakers, further complicating this issue not only from a socio-cultural but also from a practical perspective.

Participation in circles, festivals and volunteer activities seemed to be the best way to use English outside of class, and opportunities to communicate in English increased even more if there were not many other Japanese participants. Sachi (Interview 1, July 2011) commented '…I took part in lots of volunteer activities, other people were from other countries (Cathedral camp) so I have to speak English, so my skills improved. I didn't participate in circles, as I had to study', while meanwhile Sari (Interview 1, July 2011) said '… I didn't do volunteering but joined the football circle; it was good for English communication.'

A female participant said that she did not want to participate in circles as going there was hard; the students there were of the same age and 'gave up quickly ' on her if she couldn't communicate. Trying to interact socially with their non-Japanese peers during the study abroad can be challenging for students; a number of female participants said that just building up the courage to join circles was a hurdle to overcome, and if their welcome was less than warm, they felt even more anxious. The male students in the study did not report experiencing the same difficulties, complementing the findings in Churchill (2009) and illustrating possible gender-based differences in the L2 study abroad environment.

In general, participation in volunteer activities was seen as less threatening than joining a K-university circle, possibly because the students could choose to participate as a group or as an individual. The above comments and results illustrate the complicated nature of acquiring a foreign language in different learning situations and settings. It is not just a simple matter of acquiring language skills in an insulated environment, but the varying influences and factors surrounding the dynamic learning environment must also be taken into consideration.

Lastly, even differences in food and general conveniences have to be taken into consideration when investigating the effect of a study abroad program. Full catering is provided at UKC, and while some students do take advantage of the small kitchen on each floor of the residences, the majority eat the food provided as it is easier and cheaper than making a meal. When asked to mention something they did not like about UKC in the free responses on questionnaire D, or how they felt at the end of study abroad, food was mentioned by a number of students, and another was keen to return to Japan because:

> ・・・最後のほうは日本に帰りたくてしょうがない、なんか料理とか環境とかディズニーとか日本のほうがそろっている。
>
> … in the end, I just wanted to go back, the food, the environment, Disneyland …everything is just there (Miho, Interview 2, July 2012, original in Japanese, translated by researcher).

Thus, even simple things like food can be a minor cloud on the horizon and have an effect on L2 motivation during a sojourn abroad.

The exploration of the informal components of the study abroad program revealed some interesting issues. Highlighted was the fact that, for some students, volunteer activities appeared to be a better option for interacting with locals than university sport circles. Other comments indicated that acts like shopping or using public transport, which are often practiced in classroom English situations, actually do not require high-level language ability, and proved to be disappointing in reality.

A further concern was the formation of Japanese cliques during the study abroad, which is also related to the 'little Japan' atmosphere of UKC. The formation of monolingual groups may also affect the incidence of English usage outside of class, as students with lower English skills often rely on their friends with higher English skills when leaving UKC, rather than attempting to use English themselves. It would be more beneficial for students with less confidence in their own English abilities to leave the monolingual group and engage in interactions with the local community independently, but this step must be taken by the student at the student's own pace and not forced in order to be internalized. Thus, in practice, actual participation in

interactions with the local community outside the class depended on individuals, so it cannot be said that similar out-of-class L2 experiences were had by all participants.

4.4.1.4 Reflection on study abroad

The results in this section have shown that students' interest in language learning is not guaranteed, even on a study abroad program (Kinginger, 2011, p. 67). Learner contribution and L2 engagement are essential for L2 acquisition in any learning environment, coupled with self-confidence and language skills. Comments made by the students in the free section indicated that they felt their English *improved naturally* but others knew that improving English skills took effort, … *if you tried you could improve your English*, *self-study was encouraged*, while yet others admitted to *slacking off*. These comments imply that students were well aware of the importance of learner contribution.

In conclusion, many students, when asked about the benefits of study abroad, commented on improving their language skills, being given opportunities to use English to interact with non-Japanese, and broadening their cultural horizons. Others thought they became more positive when faced with challenging tasks; and learnt to deal with situations rather than escaping from them. These opinions thus illustrate how formal and informal components of a study abroad program not only improve language skills, but also personal growth.

4.4.2 Return to Japan (from April 2011)

The student cohort returned to Japan in February 2011, and began their second year of studies at the university in April 2011. Between February and April, on March 11, 2011, the Great Japan Earthquake and Tsunami (*higashi nihon daishinsai*) occurred. Aftershocks continued for months, and radioactive contamination affected the Kanto area as well. Furthermore, until October 2011, electricity restrictions were applied to many areas, including the university. Thus, while not directly affecting language study per se, the return to Japan was also associated with this stressful period. Moreover, students who were newcomers to the area also had to adjust to living away from home again.

This section relates the perception of students about the L2 learning experience after their return to Japan in February 2011. It seeks to answer the last two research questions, by exploring what opinions the Japanese university students expressed about the L2 learning experience in the United Kingdom compared with Japan, and what kind of motivators and demotivators they identified during their L2 experience back in Japan. The results in this section are based mainly on the free comments of students who returned the questionnaire (N=15) and the interviews (N=15).

The results reported in this section may offer current practitioners insights into how students feel about English language learning in Japan after a sojourn abroad, and promote discussion of ways to address learning issues which may be related to having experienced a different L2 learning environment, and furthermore could provide some new directions for future research.

The resumption of English language study in Japan signals a return to the participants' initial L2 learning environment, in which the Japanese surroundings, linguistic landscape and lack of social opportunities to speak English affected L2 motivation. Just being in the United Kingdom, and experiencing the authentic L2 environment, was motivating for some participants, as they could hear real English spoken around them, and could find many opportunities to talk to native speakers of English or non-Japanese, provided they made an effort and possessed sufficient confidence. Conversely, especially for participants who were motivated by communicating with non-Japanese speakers, returning to Japan had the potential to decrease their motivation substantially.

One drawback of the first L2 experience at university occurring in a study abroad environment is that direct comparisons between the two environments in the second year of study are unavoidable, including comparisons between teachers, classes, and the socio-cultural environment.

The students in this study were asked on both Questionnaire C and Questionnaire D to complete the statement: 'My teacher motivates me by …' with eight possible ways in which teachers might motivate them. While only 15 students completed Questionnaire D, the results are similar. A striking difference, however, is the reversal of two items,

namely being encouraging and being well prepared. It appears that when the students returned to Japan, having well prepared teachers was more motivating, whereas showing encouragement was a motivating characteristic of UKC teachers. While the results must be interpreted with caution due to the small sample size, the motivating persona of the native-speaker teachers of English at UKC appears to be stronger than the motivating element of Japanese teachers of English and NESTs in Japan, in particular in terms of teacher enthusiasm.

One possible explanation is language pedagogy. Foreign language pedagogy in the United Kingdom and many Western countries has been geared toward communicative language teaching (CLT) for at least the past twenty years (Pellegrino Aveni, 2005, p.145). This could make classes more motivating for the learner, and hence, the teachers' role also alters slightly. Japanese English education at all levels remains at the beginning stage of using CLT pedagogy; consequently, the motivating influence of the teacher is different. For example, while teachers may aim to include more communicative approaches in class such as using the L2, actual class room practice may differ (Ellis, 2012, p. 129).

Another explanation is the simple motivating power of the native-speaker teacher of English in the study abroad environment. The authenticity of the teacher and of the actual learning environment is a strong motivating force for Japanese students of English (Seargent, 2009, pp. 87-105). In this respect, the native-speaking teacher of English as well as the Japanese teacher of English teaching in the Japanese L2 environment are at a disadvantage, and simply cannot compete with the combination of native-speaker teacher of English and study abroad environment.

Native-speaker teachers of English (NESTs) and Japanese teachers of English (JTEs) are perceived and judged differently by the students; this is apparent in both the free responses on the questionnaires and the interview comments. A study in Japan by Shimizu (1995) found similar differences, and Shimizu concluded that JTEs are respected for their scholarly skills while the NESTs are appreciated for their warmer, personal characteristics. This in turn could have both a positive and a negative effect on L2 motivation. Japanese students may become more intrinsically motivated in the

classes taught by NESTs, but the teachers in turn may feel that they need to be entertaining in order to motivate students; while conversely, a Japanese student may consider these classes trivial in nature. University students thus may be motivated differently by native speakers and non-native speakers of the target language; how these differences can be best employed to increase L2 motivation in students remains, unanswered, hence future studies on this topic are recommended. (See Houghton and Rivers (2013) for a detailed discussion of issues related to '*native-speakerism*' and marketing of NESTs in Japan.)

Furthermore, the training and social standing of Japanese teachers and general power distance (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) within society should also be considered before non-Japanese make judgements and attempt changes in the Japanese L2 learning and teaching environment. As the majority of students are likely to work at Japanese companies upon graduation, where a hierarchical management style coupled with formal language and rituals is still the norm, a further conundrum facing language teachers in Japan is whether encouraging a more relaxed approach to social behaviour in language classes is actually of benefit to students in the long run. The key to addressing these issues lies in the teaching of intercultural skills and the development of *cultural intelligence*, defined by Livermore (2011, p. 3) as '… the capability to function effectively in a variety of cultural contexts', rather than simply the teaching of language skills.

While the effect of the course, teacher and group specific motivational components varied among individuals, some students were quite critical of the differences between English classes in Japan and in the United Kingdom, in particular for example the use of Japanese (L1) in English classes. The ratio of L1 versus L2 usage in the classroom is often the topic of discussion among language teachers and researchers, and the appropriateness and value of L1 usage in classrooms is also frequently debated and challenged by researchers (Ortega, 2009; Kubota, 2012). In classes comprised of diverse nationalities, teaching in the L2 is the only option, whereas in classes made up of one nationality, appropriate use of the L1 can be beneficial. In Japan, the extensive use of Japanese in secondary English language classes is often seen in a negative light by students. In contrast, classes taught all in English may lead to unnecessary

confusion, especially when explaining complicated aspects of English grammar, and thus may be judged in an equally negative manner. Non-Japanese teachers of English who speak Japanese find using Japanese terms when teaching English in Japan is more expedient for quickly explaining a word, phrase or grammar point, rather than spending the limited class time explaining these in the L2. For the teacher to speak in the L1 for the entire lesson, with small 'islands' of English in an ocean of Japanese, is a different matter, and avoiding this is at the heart of the MEXT initiative to have senior high school and university English classes taught in English (MEXT, 2011; MEXT, 2013b). The findings in this study do indicate that an L1 teaching style is employed by some English teachers at the university, so this is an issue which does need to be addressed in the near future.

The following comment by Sari (below) also highlights the administrative and educational problem of starting the first year students on a study abroad program that is run very differently to Japanese university English classes:

> 作業も楽しかった(at UKC).
> Making things at UKC was fun.
>
> でも(but) classes in Japan are really quiet. … but I am also quiet
> (Sari, Interview 1, July 2011, original in English and Japanese, English translations in parenthesis by researcher).

.At Japanese universities, individual English courses are usually only allocated one ninety-minute slot per course per week. Compared to the intensive, multiple sixty-minute classes experienced on the UKC program (Appendix C), this can leave the students feeling that their exposure to English has been drastically decreased in Japan.

Sari's comment also touches on the fact that UKC classes are seen as being more active and 'fun'. Students stay mostly in the same room and the teachers change rooms; hence student work, for example results of interviews with K-university students adorn the walls, and it is easier to work on projects as students can leave their half-finished work in the classrooms. English classes at the university in Japan are

more academic and sometimes text-book-based, and both students and teachers change rooms. In contrast, UKC has the advantage of being an ideal learning environment in many ways, but one that would be very difficult to emulate at any university in Japan.

Sari acknowledges that her own engagement in the learning process was different in the two L2 learning environments. This illustrates that the learner must also take some responsibility for the class atmosphere. It is important to note that this student enjoyed making things, so project-based work rather than textbook-based work may promote *course-specific motivation* and *learner autonomy*.

A lack of knowledge about self-study techniques, also a component of learner autonomy, is common in Japanese students. Concerns about this issue were raised by a student in the interviews. While he felt there was teacher support in class in both learning environments, a sense of worry and insecurity was present when studying on his own. It seems some students lack sufficient independent study skills, as the ubiquitous *juku* and home tutor system many students experience at secondary school in Japan supports the teacher-controlled and teacher-supported learning style, rather than leading students toward the emergence of an independent or self-controlled learning style. Being able to study independently without any structured learning set in place by the teacher is a skill that some Japanese students at the university are still to master, and according to studies and articles reported in Japanese research and media, this is not an issue particular to this university.

Other criticisms of the English curriculum and classes were also voiced by the students. For example, students commented that they were disappointed that they were not able to speak up and have discussions in classes in Japan like they did at UKC. Also the teaching style of the university teachers in Japan is varied, with some styles seen as motivating, whereas others are not. One student commented that being pressed by teachers to improve EIKEN or TOEIC scores interfered with her study and was irritating and demotivating, because either the score changed only slightly, or the student did not take the test in the first place. Other students felt that, unlike classes at UKC where students studied English in small, level-based classes and group cohesion

dominated, there were students in English classes in Japan who were not interested in English. This resulted in poor classroom dynamics and a loss of clear learning goals. Furthermore, students had become accustomed to the communicative or student-centred teaching style at UKC, and then upon their return to Japan were faced with large, teacher-centred classes.

An interesting set of comments described group work, and discussions conducted in English by Japanese students, as demotivating. Teaching communicative language skills without group work and without conversing with fellow language learners is an impossible task in a communicative L2 classroom situation; yet some Japanese learners of English seem to have an aversion to this type of study, possibly implying that the image and value of the other members of the group as role models in relation to one's own ability are also being evaluated within classroom groups. When asked about group and pair work in the interviews, participants mentioned three issues. One was the fact that they felt it was unnatural to talk to fellow Japanese in English; another, that during group work, the division of work can be unbalanced; and furthermore, being matched with someone with much better or worse English skills makes the exercise difficult. Burrows (2008) also observed that students in his class preferred to interact with the (native-speaker) teachers rather than working independently or in peer groups.

The results of the interviews in second and third year following study abroad reveal that students dealt differently with the changing L2 environment. In many instances, students whose English skills continued to improve learned to adapt to the L2 environment in Japan. These students were adept at finding ways to maintain and improve their English skills after returning from the United Kingdom. Activities conducive to English study included watching DVDs, YouTube, and BBC news, communicating with penfriends, using Internet-based social network (web)sites (SNS), for example Facebook, Skype and Share talk, playing online card games, reading books, preparing for TOEIC and EIKEN and studying vocabulary. After their return to Japan, many students kept in touch with their UKC teachers via Facebook, although this interaction sometimes decreased over time. Some participants also found ways to

communicate directly in English by staying in contact with people they had met during the study abroad, who were now working in Japan.

Thirteen of the fifteen students who completed Questionnaire D in November 2012 felt that they used English outside of class. When comparing the free responses from Questionnaire C and Questionnaire D, it is apparent that while the L2 environment changed, the type of out-of-class English study and activities did not change to a great degree. What does seem to be different is the amount of time devoted to these activities, coupled with the loss of the motivating influence from, first, the limited time span of the study abroad and, second, the sense that the students owed it to their parents to try to improve their English skills during this period. The following extracts from Sari's interview illustrate this point. When asked about whether her English will continue to improve she replied '…it is getting worse, because I don't study English now. While Sari did take classes upon her return to Japan, she doesn't study at home, compared to the four hours she studied at UKC every day. When queried why, she said that ''My parents paid 留学費(fees), so I thought I have to improve my English'. She continued:

> …and I have to study tourism, so haven't enough time. Plus part-time job …. twice a week, five, six hours, but summer holidays four times a week.

She thought she maybe would continue to enjoy classes in Japan and also because '…I use English in my job, so communication 面白いから(interesting) (Sari, Interview 1, July 2011, original in English and Japanese, translations in parenthesis by researcher).

The lack of opportunities to use English in Japan was a common topic during the interviews conducted in July 2011. In order to communicate with non-Japanese in English after their return from the study abroad, students have to make the effort to talk to non-Japanese speakers on campus, find work that offers this opportunity, join international circles or clubs, or participate in intercultural events. In this way, they can contribute to their own L2 learning.

Opportunities to use English on the university campus in Japan are limited. While there are overseas students at the university, the dominant language is Japanese. A similar situation at a Japanese university is reported in Aubrey and Nowlan (2013). The number of NESTs the students could chat to out of class were restricted to two full time staff, as the part-time staff leave the campus as soon as their classes are finished.

Interactive communication in English can take place during part-time work or through social interaction. A number of students from the university work part-time at Tokyo Disney Resort or hotels and restaurants frequented by non-Japanese, and these workplaces do provide the students with the opportunities to use English in a real and meaningful manner. Moreover, workplace interactions with non-Japanese were considered by some students less threatening than social situations. While students are informed upon their return to Japan of opportunities and places where they can meet or participate in social activities with non-Japanese living in the Tokyo area, many appear reluctant to actually do so. Engineering social opportunities to use English appears to be more challenging for students than communicating with people as part of their job. It takes more self-confidence to make the decision to approach or join a group of people on a social level in comparison to being approached by non-Japanese customers while working. During the interviews, students elaborated on the issue by commenting that going to bars and nightclubs frequented by foreigners was a bit challenging, and that while they were interested in joining international clubs in Tokyo, the distances, price and time involved were a hurdle. A three-hour return train journey costing around AU$20 can be too high a price to pay for university students to seek English speaking opportunities. These results confirm the complex, dynamic nature of L2 motivation where, for example, a simple lack of funds, lack of obvious opportunities, or lack of learning experiences outside of school can influence the language learning progress of individuals.

When the students return to Japan in second year, they begin to think about their careers. Realising the importance of English qualifications, for example TOEIC, for job-hunting, the university has started to offer substantial monetary prizes for students who do well on these examinations. Thus, financial motivators also come into play in Japan as indicated by Chie, who said:

> EIKEN は単位になる・・・TOEIC 手当てが出，my goal is 750.
>
> EIKEN tests can be used as credits; I can get a monetary prize for high TOEIC scores. (Chie, Interview 1, July 2011, original in Japanese and English, translation by researcher).

A monetary reward for academic achievement may seem like 'dangling a carrot in front of the donkey', but, as shown in the comment above, this system does appear to be effective to motivate students to set new goals. L2 motivation research in Japan, supported by the results presented in Chapter 3, where career-based instrumental motivation peaked at 90% in Questionnaire C, indicate that utilitarian motivation is strong among Japanese students, so this type of incentive is a complementary strategy to keep students motivated.

In many cases, students who were able to contribute actively to their own learning process were considering careers using English and the ideal L2 self based on social interactions began to shift into a career based ideal L2 self.

For example Chie, a student with strong English skills in the English and IT faculty made the following attempt during the interview in July 2011 to envision how her future career persona might use English.

> 今まだはっきりない、行きたいのは外式経営。Speak はできるけど presentation はできない presentation の形式はよく分からないからいまいち想像つかない。
>
> (Imagine future self in a company?) Not, still vague. I want to go to an overseas managed company (in Japan). I can imagine myself speaking, but not giving a presentation. I don't really know how to give a presentation so can't imagine it (Chie, Interview 1, July 2011, original in English and Japanese, translated by researcher).

The responses indicate that the student envisions that her future career self will involve giving presentations in English. In fact, Koike (2009), suggests email, and telephone or video conferences exchanges, are the main tasks for which English is

used in companies in Japan. This particular student was taking a presentation class at the time of the interview, so this may also have affected her response. A participant in the tourism faculty was also vague about his future goals, dividing them into time in Japan when starting out his career, followed by working at the overseas office of a Japanese company when older. This a common pattern at Japanese companies and implies the visualization of a number of *future L2 selves*. His *immediate ideal L2 self* places him in Japan, rather than overseas, and only the *secondary ideal L2 self* is related to living overseas. Exploring how this two-tiered career self affects L2 motivation could be a future direction for further research.

Some students were unable to summon a strong specific future English speaking career self at all. Daigo, a male participant put it rather succinctly

> 今の現状・・・そのイメージは難しい。Considering the current circumstances, that kind of image (using English at a company, talking at a meeting) is difficult (Daigo, Interview 1, July 2011, original in Japanese, translated by researcher).

While many students could imagine themselves in simple interactions and activities during the study abroad, the ideal L2 future self of many students seemed to lack definition, concrete goals, and strategies, indicating that they had not yet fulfilled all the conditions outlined by Dörnyei and Ushioda (2011) for activating the motivational power of an ideal L2 self. The visualization of the self also seemed to be unrealistic. For example, some students imagined they would return to Japan after the time abroad with native-like fluency in English Others envisioned an ideal L2 self completing unlikely tasks in their future careers. Thus, the comments in the interviews reveal that some students at the university require further support in order to envision a plausible, fully functioning ideal L2 self.

In contrast to students from the tourism faculty and the English and IT faculty, the five participants from the education faculty all had comparatively strong ideal L2 selves by the end of study abroad. This is not surprising as students enter this faculty intending to become teachers. In addition, the study abroad in the first year incorporates school visits, both at local schools as well as schools in Germany or

France. The Japanese students go on a tour of the school, observe some classes and teach calligraphy, origami or Japanese language to the local students. In other words, they are provided with actual practice at enacting their ideal L2 selves.

The *ideal L2 self* for these students can be expected to evolve upon their return to Japan as they progress through their studies. Interestingly, one participant from the education faculty said '… I imagine I will need English to talk to AETs in classes.' (Sachi, Interview 1, July 2011). Even though these students are planning on becoming English teachers at secondary schools, this particular participant did not imagine herself using English with her students when teaching. This issue does need to be addressed in teacher training, as senior high school teachers will be expected to teach English classes in English as much as possible following one of the most recent MEXT directives. In addition, if the above information regarding new graduates quitting their job within three years is considered, education is one of the 'danger' jobs when it comes to false ideals regarding working conditions and environment.

For some of the education students, the visualization of their future self caused some consternation during practice teaching sessions, but also resulted in motivation. Eri, a female student felt she does have an image of an ideal L2 self:

> … but sometimes feel the reality is wrong when I do mock teaching. My image is perfect but I can't do that, I think it motivates me because I want to get closer to my image (Eri, Interview 1, July 2011, original in English).

Illustrated in the comment above is the motivating power of the ideal L2 self within practice environments which are close match to the reality, for example, during practice teaching or internships. It is more difficult to project a realistic career-based ideal L2 self without some practical experience and knowledge of a workplace, highlighting the importance of participation in work experience and internships.

For other students, the return to Japan was marked by a regression to the pre-study abroad self, manifested by a reestablishment of negative feelings about English. Even though these students still believed in the value and importance of English, they felt unable to proceed past the perceived difficulties of studying in the Japanese

environment, not only in class but also on their own. The *ought to self*, for example envisioning the consequences of being unable to talk to hotel guests in English for TB faculty students, continued to motivate these students.

While students who were interviewed in second year still believed that English would be useful to their careers, thus providing motivating input, change was observable in third year. What was lacking for many third year students were strategies and self directed volition to improve English skills to the required level in the build up to the job-hunting period. The other problem encountered by students as they began job hunting in third year was that even if their English skills were at the required level, prospective employers also look at the overall persona and achievements. In summary, students must realize that while TOEIC scores are a requirement for some careers, they are only one of the application criteria.

In conclusion, the Japanese students on their return to Japan first undergo a period of adjustment, before settling again into the Japanese L2 environment. The success of the adjustment is determined by strategies on how to deal with the L2 environment in Japan, in particular whether types of L2 motivation gained during study abroad, as identified by the key motivation constructs presented in Chapter 3, can be replaced by the learner with similar, though adjusted methods of motivation, and more importantly, whether these motivation types can be maintained. Furthermore, from third year, career goals and directions dictate English study, and if English levels are not sufficient for job hunting at this stage extrinsic motivation decreases dramatically. Overcoming these issues effectively requires both learner contribution and adjustment, as well as the integration of the study abroad English within the compulsory English curriculum in Japan in order to make the changes in the two environments as smooth as possible within the bounds of reality.

4.5 Implications

The student comments reported in Study 3 are somewhat mixed, contradictory and individualistic, in particular those related to the teaching of English at the university in Japan. Nevertheless, the responses provide valuable insights into L2 learning

experiences during study abroad, and upon the students' return to Japan; the issues raised provide possibilities for future qualitative and quantitative research. While some of the factors that cause L2 motivation and demotivation, for example, the ease or difficulty of finding opportunities to interact with non-Japanese, use of Japanese in English classes, and the choice of teaching materials, can be clearly identified as geographical or curriculum based in source. Other factors appear to be internal and self-imposed, requiring a shift of attitude or increased confidence or effort on the part of individual learners. This corroborates Sakai and Kikuchi (2008, p. 58) findings that Dörnyei's definition of demotivation as the '… specific external forces that reduce or diminish the motivational basis of a behavioural intention or an ongoing action' (Dörnyei, 2011, p. 129) needs to be expanded to include the learner's own internal role in the L2 learning process. Furthermore, learner contribution is also an important factor when exploring the reasons for success, or lack of success, of the L2 learning experience in both study environments.

Several implications may be drawn which relate predominantly to the teaching of English, and to clarifying the overall purpose of acquiring English skills in Japan.

First, apropos the comments directed at teachers by students in this study, language teachers need to be encouraged to reflect on whether their individual teaching styles promote motivation or demotivation in their students. Changing an ingrained style of teaching may be a challenge for some educators, but with growth of Japanese-based research on demotivation, teachers must take note of the voice of students, and accept some responsibility for demotivated students, as must secondary schools, universities and companies. On a positive note, it is easier for educators at the tertiary level to make changes to their teaching styles, as they have greater freedom in regard to the choice of teaching methods.

Second, universities and companies continuing to choose students or candidates based on the results of examinations which rely exclusively on multiple choice items, taught mainly through the grammar-translation or reading method, will not support a change in teaching methods to a more communicative teaching style. Students are also caught up in this issue, as their future is decided on the outcome of the examinations. Other

students feel they require an examination for L2 motivation. In this way, the status quo of the learning environment in Japan may not easily change, and the bilateral use of English, one for examinations and one for communication will remain.

Students at the university must also make an effort to keep alive the 'remotivation' process begun during the study abroad and to be active contributors in the English acquisition process. This means students need to make a conscious decision to continue building on the English skills acquired during study abroad and to seek a means of keeping English in their immediate surroundings. Furthermore, ongoing comparisons between UKC and Japan, in terms of study context, curriculum and teachers, need to be reconceptualised by the students in order to make the most of the two study environments. This is not always the case. For example, weekly elective conversation classes in Japan for students in the English and IT faculty and the tourism faculty have been taught by native speaker teachers of English for the past five years, and these classes have also been introduced to students in the education faculty over the past three years. Enrolments in these classes, however, do not reflect the importance assigned to this type of class by the students themselves in the interviews and the broader student body. Instead, classes aimed at improving TOEIC or EIKEN results are popular. In this way, students return to the pre-study abroad mindset of valuing qualifications or examinations over practical language learning. Furthermore, although there is a room called the English Education Centre, only a minority of students use this as a place for private study or for opportunities to speak English to the native-speaker teachers of English, whose offices are positioned at either end of the room. A larger number of students do seek out NESTs to practice EIKEN interviews after having passed the first section of the test, but this also links English usage to examinations rather than to spontaneous communication. EIKEN interview practice is teacher-controlled, and hence is more familiar to the student. Results in this study also indicate that both time and a lack of knowledge of self-study skills may explain the limited use of this room. While the time issue is difficult to address, self-study skills and academic skills workshops could be run by the university.

Finally, changing career choices also account for learner contributions to L2 motivation to shift in third year. For example, many students in the tourism faculty

aspire to work at the airport. In order to do so, a minimum TOEIC score of 600 is usually required and is set as a goal by students. If the students do not see their TOEIC scores improving to this level by the middle of third year, a shift to career options that do not include a required TOEIC score is the result. Thus, successful English study upon the return to Japan is often propelled by career choices and commitment; the presence or absence of learner contribution to L2 motivation is indicated by the level of interest, effort or time on the part of the student. In this way, students can also be co-contributors of the slow extinguishing of L2 motivation.

The visualization of the ideal L2 self, a component of the L2 motivational self-system, should be carefully analysed and monitored amongst university students who are intending to use English in their future careers. The comments made by the students indicate a possible concern that students or well-meaning educators, may contribute to setting university graduates up for disappointment in their first career destination unless the ideal work-related L2 self, often a part of university English classes, is a realistic match for the type of English work situations in which the students may find themselves after graduation. Further research might explore and analyse whether university level textbooks support the creation of a viable ideal L2 self for future English-using professionals in Japan's workforce.

4.6 Conclusion

The study presented in this chapter has given an account of the L2 experiences and perceptions of Japanese university students in two learning environments: the United Kingdom and Japan. Study 3 set out to explore the role of student expectations and the realities of the formal and informal components of the study abroad program, and their link with L2 motivation, thus, also acting as an evaluation of the components of the study abroad program from an L2 motivation perspective. The final aim was to investigate the effect of the changing L2 experience in the two environments on L2 motivation.

A number of insights and implications drawn from the data may add to knowledge that can be used to improve professional practice. This chapter suggests that teachers have

a strong effect on motivation, and on its opposite, demotivation. It can be argued that the items on the questionnaires are more related to effective teaching than motivation; nevertheless, sometimes a motivational intervention by the teacher simply involves an improvement in teaching quality (Dörnyei, 2001, p.26). The results further indicate that the enthusiasm of teachers plays a strong motivating role in L2 learning, and that the majority of students seem to prefer the small, ability-based classes at UKC campus to the larger, multi-level English classes in Japan. Results further indicate that communicative teaching and learning styles and practical activities were favoured by students by the end of study abroad. Class-based pair- and group-work with fellow Japanese students, and chatting in English with Japanese peers outside of class, were viewed as unnatural by a minority of students. In addition, teacher-centred or lecture style English classes, where students just listened to the teacher, typically did not seem to match the English learning preferences established at UKC, and hence had a negative impact on the students' L2 motivation in Japan. Thus, the importance of professional development, ongoing teacher reflection and peer observations is also highlighted.

The importance of learner contribution to L2 acquisition and motivation was demonstrated after the students returned to Japan. In this learning environment, it was up to individual students to choose how much time and effort they put into study outside of class; in particular, what use they made of the resources and opportunities to use English provided by the university, or opportunities to use English available within a two-hour train journey or via online technology, in order to have a similar level of authentic communicative interaction to that experienced during study abroad. Learner contributions are also linked to learner goals and learner investment; many of the students interviewed began adjusting their career goals by third year, and those who realized that English would not, or could not due to low scores on TOEIC or EIKEN, form a part of their job hunting process lost the motivation to contribute to their own English learning.

Furthermore, academic, social and environmental issues, not related exclusively to English study, did have an impact on L2 motivation and language study when the students returned to Japan. Academic issues, for example studying new and

challenging courses, social issues, for example, friends, family and part-time jobs, and environmental issues, for example, long commutes to and from university and the aftermath of the March 2011 earthquake, were all issues which did not interfere with the time and commitment to English study while the students were in the United Kingdom.

Some issues which arose from Questionnaire D and the interviews could be addressed by changing curriculum and staff, for example increasing the number of English classes and NESTs, or teacher-oriented change, such as using English in class. However, other issues which became apparent in the interviews, for example, practical aspects related to having time and money to interact with non-Japanese, and the mental aspects, relating to self-confidence, may prove to be more challenging to overcome. A further essential point is for the students to understand the differences in the two learning environments and to acknowledge that the program at UKC is special and, while it is not impossible, establishing a facility along the lines of an 'English village' run by another Japanese university to replicate the study abroad experience in Japan, is not on the university planning agenda.

Finally, an important issue which emerged from the results reported in this chapter is the observation that myriad factors can influence each individual's experience, and that generalizing trends, while meaningful, should be accompanied by information about the study program at the individual level. Even food seems to have had an effect on the L2 learning experience. While complaints about food seem to be unrelated to L2 learning, it is a peripheral facet of motivation for integrating or living in another culture. Similar to being homesick, a craving for Japanese food can have a negative effect on study in the United Kingdom.

The first three studies presented in this portfolio have focused on the group of Japanese university students to provide a macro view of L2 motivation and language learning processes in two learning environments. The final study presented in Chapter 5 investigates the changing nature of L2 motivation at the micro level through the experiences of three individuals. The aim of the three case studies is to contextualize L2 motivation to a greater degree, and to explore its dynamic nature within the

complexities of each participant's specific learning experience; in other words, mapping their individual language learning journeys.

Chapter 5

Individual journeys: A multiple-case study (Study 4)

Portfolio Outline Guide			
Chapters	**Timespan**		
	Phase 1 Prior to April 2010 Before SA (Japan)	**Phase 2** April 2011 to February 2011 During SA (UK)	**Phase 3** April 2011 to February 2013 After SA (Japan)
Chapter1: Portfolio Introduction			
Chapter 2: Pre-university study of English in Japan: Exploring L2 motivation prior to entering university (Study 1)			
Chapter 3: Study abroad for Japanese students: Changing motivation (Study 2)			
Chapter 4: Studying English in the UK and Japan: Exploring the expectations and reality of English study abroad and at home (Study 3)			
Chapter 5: Individual journeys: A multiple-case study (Study 4)	◎	◎	◎
Chapter 6: Portfolio Conclusion			

イギリスに行って自分自身で勉強しよう Going to the UK, I was motivated to study from within myself (Yuri).
… the most important thing is to keep on liking English (Ken).
I want (native) teachers to teach me ordinary conversational English (Taka).

5.1 Introduction

Acquiring a foreign language (L2) can be likened to a journey. Most learners commence their journeys in an instructed setting in the home country. The continuation of the journey varies between individuals. For some, the journey may end in the classroom, whereas for others it may continue in and out of the classroom, sometimes defined by various itineraries and goals. On the way, learners may encounter people, situations or circumstances which influence the subsequent direction of the journey in a positive, neutral or negative manner. Moreover, learners may also digress, wandering off the path or having a rest on the way. Even though individuals may begin their journey in a similar environment, learners create and follow their own journeys. Thus, a longitudinal case study is presented as the most suitable vehicle to explore each person's L2 journey.

The research questions and findings presented in the previous chapters focusing on a cohort of Japanese university students are re-addressed and foregrounded in Study 4 in relation to three individual students. Findings of the studies reported in the previous chapters highlighted a number of issues related to the English learning trajectory of the cohort.

Study 1 reveals that the L2 experience prior to study abroad was considered by the cohort as average at best. Study 2 findings highlight *international posture* and *English*

for personal use as key motivation constructs, augmenting for this cohort the overall motivating effect of the study abroad program itself. Changes recorded in the students' L2 motivation were related to the key motivation constructs, and, as the trajectory unfolded, the 'agree' responses for frequency steadily increased for some constructs, whereas others showed a 'U' or reverse 'J' curve for the three-points on the trajectory.

In Study 3 the mismatch between expectations of a study abroad program and the subsequent realities was highlighted. Furthermore, the *L2 experience* following the cohort's return to the Japanese L2 environment was seen by many students as 'second best' in contrast with the learning experience in the United Kingdom. While this result was expected, it illustrates the importance of the students' own contribution, strategies and goal setting in the L2 setting after the return to Japan, and gave insights into the motivating strengths of both learning environments. Findings in Study 3 also highlighted the key issue and problem behind this inquiry: How do students maintain L2 motivation after their return to Japan and how can the maintenance of L2 motivation after their return be supported by the university?

While the three studies of the student cohort have provided a general backdrop, a case study provides an opportunity to contextualize, add detail, and aid interpretation of the complete picture. Language learners are not a homogenous group, and even if they have a similar background, each learner brings their own learning experiences and personality to the learning situation (Benson, 2004, p. 3). To enhance the study abroad experience, and to support further development of the English skills of Japanese university students upon their return to Japan, an investigation of individual students, focusing on the relationship between L2 motivation, language learning goals, and learning environments, is required. The case studies personalize the L2 experiences and animate key L2 motivation constructs as each student's individual journey toward graduation and their future career is tracked. Thus the multiple-case study presented in this chapter offers a more holistic view of the complex interplay between educational, geographical, professional and social factors influencing the L2 motivation of three Japanese university students from secondary school to university graduation.

The chapter is divided into five main sections. A review of research focusing on longitudinal studies is followed by the aims and research questions of the multiple-case study. The third section outlines the setting and introduces the three participants, followed by the fourth section, instruments and procedures. The investigation of the language journeys of the individual students, divided temporally into pre-study abroad, study abroad and post-study abroad comprises the fifth section. The links between the image and the realities of the two L2 environments and L2 motivation and student goals are discussed within each section, followed by a concluding section in which the overall implications of the case studies and directions for further research are proposed.

5.2 Tracking the experience of individuals over time

The previous chapters indicate the abundance of SLA research focusing on study abroad, L2 motivation, and socio-cultural differences. The preceding chapters have targeted research regarding pre-university education in Japan, study abroad and key motivation constructs. The research presented in this literature review focuses exclusively on studies which address individual learners and are longitudinal in design.

Longitudinal studies can be conducted using both quantitative and qualitative approaches in real time or through retrospective or cross-sectional techniques. Longitudinal inquiries in SLA usually cover a period of three months to six years, depending on either biological or institutional timescales, and aim to illustrate changes over time or a particular transition period (Ortega & Iberri-Shea, 2005). They may explore development and changes in a number of areas: for example, identity (Block, 2007); investment (Norton Peirce, 1995, 2000); L2 motivation (Irie & Brewster 2013; Ushioda, 2011); learner autonomy (Little, Ridley & Ushioda 2002); and sojourns abroad and the self (Ayano, 2006; Kanno, 2003; Jackson 2008; Pellegrino Aveni, 2005).

Some longitudinal and cross-sectional longitudinal studies have been conducted in Japanese EFL settings over the past 25 years. The majority of these studies, for

example Berwick and Ross (1989), Koizumi and Matsuo (1993), and Watanabe (2013) were quantitative studies focusing on secondary students for a period of one to three years. Results generally indicate that motivation to learn English decreased over time, as class content became more challenging.

An example of a longitudinal case study focusing on Japanese secondary school students is Churchill (2009). In this study, it is suggested that male students participating in study abroad may show greater gains in language skills, and that host contexts are constructed by learners in individual as well as gendered ways (Churchill, 2009, p. 154).

A study of the bicultural identity of four Japanese returnees (*kikokushijo*) and evidence of this identity in their language use (Kanno, 2003), surpasses the present study in both the time span of the study (ten years), as well as the actual length of time the students spent on repeated overseas sojourns. Moreover, the four students experienced integration and reintegration into mainstream secondary schooling alone. This is not the case with the three students in this study, who were a part of a Japanese cohort of students studying and living in a group during the study abroad in the United Kingdom, and who continued their university studies together in Japan. Thus the students in this study had a strong support network. Nevertheless, some of the observations and issues discussed in Kanno (2003) are also identifiable, albeit in diluted form, in this study. These include the negotiation of identity in non-Japanese language and cultural settings, the re-entry into the Japanese education system after a period spent abroad, and the ramifications of these.

Further examples of longitudinal case studies tracing the L2 learning trajectory of Japanese university students during and after a sojourn abroad appear to be few in number. However, some studies are ongoing, exemplifying the comparatively new focus on these types of studies in Japan. Tracking the development of the *ideal L2 self* in university students in an ongoing study, Irie and Brewster (2013) found a study abroad program plus a strong *ideal L2 self* resulted in a transfer to a US university for one student. Students with realistic goals appear to be more likely to improve communicative competence during a study abroad (Sato, 2012), although

there is no follow-up study. Moreover, the importance of reflection during the study abroad, and follow-up and recycling of experiences after the return to Japan, is illustrated in Nakayama, Sixuan and Mann's (2013) interviews with Japanese university students three months after a return to Japan from a six-week study abroad program in the United Kingdom.

Longitudinal studies also common reveal transition points in the learning trajectory. In one such study six turning points, or temporal patterns, were identified by Shoaib and Dörnyei (2004). These were: maturation and gradually increasing interest, a standstill period, a move into a new life phase, internalization of external goals and imported visions, relationship with a significant 'other', and time spent in the host environment. This study supports the argument that motivation is a fluctuating dynamic process, and that participants were exposed to a variety of motivational influences which motivated or demotivated them during their L2 learning. It also highlights the importance of initial conditions as precursors of L2 development. The value of a non-linear and dynamic system approach in L2 motivation research was further commented on by Dörnyei (2005, p.86), in his discussion of the shortcomings of the process model he developed with Ottó in 1998 (Dörnyei & Ottó, 1998).

The transition period between high school and university was the focus of a two-year investigation of Japanese university students conducted by Johnson (2013), in which many engineering students were found to experience a drop in motivation prior to entering university. The study suggests that English teachers at university need to be made aware of inspirational potential of their teaching efforts. Furthermore, while an overall decrease of L2 motivation appeared in second year, students with clear and specific future career aspirations were motivated by the future value of English skills. Other students, while aware of the benefits of English for seeking jobs upon graduation, were not motivated sufficiently to put in the required effort. Moreover, the value and authenticity of English classes were also questioned (Johnson, 2013, p.201). As the studies in this portfolio suggest, the perceived value of English needs to be combined with teacher-specific motivation and explicit goals in order to create effective and sustainable L2 motivation in students at Japanese universities.

Furthermore, longitudinal studies focusing on non-English majors at university are also required to understand better this segment of the student population.

A further element of L2 motivation pertinent to this study is the maintenance of motivation and the setting of goals. Dual goal orientation was investigated by Hayashi (2013), who focused on two Japanese university students, one exhibiting a strong preference for learning English for international interactions (social dimension), but a somewhat negative attitude toward formal classroom-based or exam-focused English study (academic dimension), and the other showing the opposite combination. Results suggest that being able to shift smoothly between the two dimensions is '… an important developmental path' to achieve balanced and stable motivation (Hayashi, 2013, p. 89).

While positive attitudes toward formal English study (academic dimension) can be effective within academic settings, the image of an ideal L2 self (Dörnyei 2005, 2009), a key L2 motivation construct described in detail in Chapter 3, is often envisaged by students in interactions with non-Japanese in a professional or informal capacity (social dimension); such a future self is difficult to project for students whose conceptualizing of L2 learning is dominated by formal, classroom-based learning (academic dimension). On the other hand, social aspirations in international settings need to be combined with clear goals within learning situations (academic dimension) if students are to be motivated. The ability of individuals to adapt to the learning situation and avoid over-dominance of either the social dimension or the academic dimension, plus the setting of realistic goals, are therefore two essential components for successful English study at university in Japan.

As suggested by the above review, qualitative longitudinal real-time studies of individual students on their language learning journeys at university continue to be rare in the Japanese EFL context. Those studies that have been undertaken tend to focus on one particular motivation construct or study environment only. Even rarer are comprehensive case studies which investigate the L2 experiences of Japanese university students in second and third year, following a study abroad program in first year.

To understand the complex nature of L2 motivation and to plot the transitions in each individual's L2 journey, including the establishing of antecedents and an exploration of consequent relations, there is a need to conduct longitudinal, multi-focus case studies of university level English and non-English majors in Japan, as they move toward graduation and their future careers. Drawing on the strengths of a case study approach, this final study in the series examines the L2 learning journeys of three Japanese university students. It encompasses three main transition periods – from secondary school to university, from study abroad in the United Kingdom to study at university in Japan, and the build-up to job-hunting from third year of university – focusing on the evolution of L2 motivation throughout these transition periods. The temporal and comprehensive scope of the data and the micro-level focus makes the present study a possibly unique contribution to Japanese EFL research.

5.3 Aim and research questions

The multiple-case study reported in this chapter had three main aims. First, it aimed to explore L2 motivation at the individual level, to gain a deeper understanding about how individuals interpret their own language learning and how they engage in the learning process and maintain L2 motivation in the two learning situations that is, during study abroad and upon their return to Japan. Insights into the impact that life circumstances, the socio-cultural environment and future careers have on individual students can help practitioners understand the L2 learning experiences and choices made by students. Second, recognizing the dynamic and temporal nature of L2 motivation, the study aimed to confirm whether the motivation-specific temporal themes proposed by Shoaib and Dörnyei (2004) can be applied to Japanese university students, and whether any new themes, possibly specific to the Japanese EFL setting, could be identified. The third aim was to build upon the learner prototypes presented in Chapter 2 and observe how these different prototypes evolve throughout tertiary study.

The results of the multiple-case study have the potential to cast new light on the diversity underlying L2 motivation, and to lead to the establishment of fresh paths for future research, of interest and benefit to educators, to students intending to be English

language teachers in Japan and to Japanese students studying overseas. Thus, by drawing on a variety of data, this study will be used to address the following research questions:

How do three individual students who participated in study abroad explain and interpret their involvement with the formal and informal components of the study abroad program?

How do the three students adapt to changes in their L2 learning situations?

How do the three individual students maintain L2 motivation in the years after their return from the time abroad?

What is the relationship between goals and the L2 learning situation for each participant?

This multiple-case study is a micro-level inquiry, spanning the entire 34-month period of data collection on which this portfolio of studies was built.

5.4 Participants

The multiple-case study, Study 4, took place at in a small liberal arts private university near Tokyo (hereafter referred to as the university) and this university's UK campus (here after referred to as UKC). The two settings are described in Section 1.6.4. The three students who consented to participate in the study entered the university in April, 2010 and graduated in March, 2014. Due to practical constraints, the multiple-case study participants were a convenience sample. The following conditions had to be fulfilled for individual students to be considered for the case study.

- Participants had completed all four questionnaires: Questionnaire A, Questionnaire B, Questionnaire C and Questionnaire D;
- Participants had been interviewed in second year;
- Participants had enrolled in at least one of the second year classes taught by the researcher.

The pool of students who met all of the above conditions was small (N=5), and ultimately three students chose to take part in a second set of interviews in their third year of study.

All names are pseudonyms, and some participant details have been generalised to protect the identity of the students.

Two students were from the tourism faculty and one student from the education faculty. The two students from the tourism faculty, Taka (male) and Yuri (female) were from prefectures in northern Japan, while the student from the education faculty, Ken (male) was from a prefecture in western Japan. All three students turned 19 in 2010.

Like all study abroad program students in the 2010 intake, they spent just one week at the university campus near Tokyo for pre-departure guidance, and then left for the United Kingdom. This means that the greater Tokyo area, where the university is located, was unfamiliar to all participants upon their return to the university in second year.

At the beginning of the study abroad program, the English skill level of the students varied. Taka had the lowest TOEIC score (215) and was placed in Group 2 at UKC; Yuri's score was in the middle (280) and was placed in Group 1. Ken had the highest TOEIC score (475) and was in the education class.

In Chapter 2, four basic student prototypes were identified; some students were a blend of these types. Ken and Taka, for example, matched the first prototype, the *confident/ positive experience prototype*, but in combination with the *interest in study abroad prototype*: they had both enjoyed English study at secondary school, as they realized they were quite good at English or gained confidence in their own English skills, and so both looked forward to the study abroad. In contrast, Yuri combines aspects of three types, as her English learning experiences prior to entering university were both positive and negative in nature, and she was also interested in study abroad.

Taka and Yuri were both outgoing and friendly students from the tourism faculty who lived on campus in their second year and moved out in third year. The participant from

this faculty, Ken too had an easy-going, gregarious personality and often visited the researcher's office for 'chats' from second year. Like all students in the education faculty, he lived on campus until graduation. All three students enjoyed sport and had part-time jobs: Taka at a hotel, Yuri at a pub and Ken at restaurant. Both Taka and Yuri expressed interest in working with non-Japanese or using English after graduation but Yuri remained undecided about her career goals until fourth year.

In contrast, by third year, Taka intended to find work in the hotel industry upon graduation, so he applied for a one-year hotel internship in Guam in third year, and left Japan for the island at the beginning of his fourth year of study in May 2013, as he had gained sufficient credits bar the ones he could complete off-campus (by special permission). Thus, he was able to complete the one-year internship in the US territory even though he was actually enrolled as a fourth year student.

Ken wanted to be a secondary school English teacher; indeed, the students enrolled in the education faculty are nearly 100% certain that they want to be teachers. Their study schedule involves not only day-time classes but also night-time classes, which range from teacher-centred classes to self-study.

5.5 Instruments and procedures

The instruments and procedures were designed to provide multiple data sources for the case studies over three years so as to triangulate data, and to give multi-perspective and vivid illustrations of the students' language learning journeys. The main data sources were qualitative, including student essays, class observations and interviews. The quantitative data consisted of students' responses to the four questionnaires described in Chapters 1 to 4, and formal assessment results.

The data collection and analysis of questionnaires and interviews for this multiple-case study followed the same procedures as outlined in Chapter 4. Each participant in the case study was interviewed at least once on their own and once in a pair or group of three. The pair and group approach allowed students to bounce ideas back and forth, as well as jogging and refreshing memories of their SLA journeys. Questions related to issues raised in the questionnaires, and the students' own perceptions of themselves as

L2 learners and users. In addition, participants were encouraged to chat 'off the beaten track' in order to discover interesting or hidden anecdotes and experiences.

The teaching of the students in some classes by the researcher allowed observation of each participant's classroom-based persona. Observations of relevance to the research were noted after class. The function of this data was to enrich the multi-dimensional image of the students and to address the call by Ushioda (2013b, p.336) for future SLA research '… to build an integrated analysis of motivational processes and practices at work'. These observations were not digitally recorded due to time constraints and ethical concerns. Recordings of the six classes, each lasting ninety minutes and multiplied by fifteen weeks, were beyond the scope of this study. Moreover, such recordings would also have been invasive and unethical, as the classes included students who had not signed consent forms at the outset of the study in 2010. Limitations related to issues of objectivity and powers of recall were thus unavoidable for this part of the data collection; but as Van Lier (1988, p. 46) observes, no matter the approach, objectivity in observation-based research is difficult and problematic. Table 5.1 is a summary of the timing of the interviews and observations. Further interview details can be found in Appendix M.

Table 5.1 Timing of observations and interviews

Name	Classroom observations	Timing of interviews
Taka(M)	English Conversation I/II	July 2011
	Business English 3/4	July 2012
	(Semester 1 & 2, 2011)	January 2013
	Business English 5/6	
	(Semester 1 & 2, 2012)	
Yuri (F)	English Conversation I/II	July 2011
	(Semester 1 & 2, 2011)	July 2012
Ken (M)	Essay writing (Semester 1, 2012)	July 2011
	Team Teaching (Semester 2, 2012)	February 2013

In addition to interviews, the following were collected: classroom observations, pre-departure essays, UKC results and follow-up TOEIC and EIKEN test results. These additional data were unique to the multiple-case study. The students' two-page pre-departure essays, written in Japanese during the orientation period in Japan in early April 2010, outlined their ambitions and thoughts as first year university students before they left for the United Kingdom. UKC results and average scores given for effort in class contributed to the language learning profile of the participants while in the United Kingdom. While all students take the TOEIC test prior to leaving for the United Kingdom and at the end of the study abroad, taking the TOEIC and EIKEN tests before and during the job-hunting period is also common for students who wish to use English in their future careers. Apart from the formal data referred to in the above section, social interactions with participants took place informally on numerous occasions over the past four years.

5.6 Results and discussion

This section reports the results of the data collected from the three participants over the full 34-month period. Echoing the temporal design of the macro studies, the L2 journeys reported in this chapter focus on the three students' English language learning experiences in three successive environments and time periods: prior to university and the study abroad in Japan, the study-abroad period in the United Kingdom in the first year of university, and the post-study-abroad period in Japan during the students' second and third years at university. The final section discusses how the multiple-case study argues the methodological advantage of qualitative inquiry over purely quantitative results when attempting to capture changes in L2 motivation.

5.6.1 Prior to study abroad in Japan

As indicated by the results presented in Chapter 2, the prior learning experiences of students in the cohort varied. Parallel variation could be observed in the three focus participants. The L2 experience was positive at both junior high school (JHS) and senior high school (SHS) for Taka. Although initially extrinsically motivated to study English in order to do well on examinations, his results on examinations and ease of learning English led to a love of English, consistent with integrative motivation at the language level, self-confidence at the learner level and course- specific motivation at the learning situation level, all components of L2 motivation identified by Dörnyei (1994). The lack of emphasis placed on the acquisition of oral communication skills in secondary English classes was highlighted by one of Taka's comments; '… as a high school student, I didn't, couldn't, speak at all' (Interview 1, July 2011); supporting Kikuchi (2013) who found the senior high school subject 'Oral Communication' did not actually appear to cover speaking skills.

A different L2 experience at JHS and SHS was revealed by Yuri, who identified teachers and a trip to the USA as influences on her L2 journey. Yuri disliked English at JHS, attributing this to the 'bad' Japanese teacher of English. Conversely, L2 motivation was promoted by the cram school (*juku)* teacher who had lived in the USA and was respected by Yuri. Even though the teacher was Japanese, she had resided in

the USA for a long time, so she had cultural and linguistic knowledge credentials close to those of a native speaker of English. The importance accorded to authenticity and English ownership colours the comment below:

> … the teacher was very good for me because she has stayed in the USA for 10 years. I wanted to learn about life in America or another country so I knew (understood) American lifestyle, another country's lifestyle, 国のすばらしさ、歴史(wonders of a country, its history), 私はその先生であったからもっと英語を話したいと思っていた。Because of her I thought I wanted to speak English more (Yuri, Interview 1, July 2011, original in English and Japanese, translated by researcher).

Two aspects of L2 motivation are exemplified in Yuri's next comment. Her realization during the short stay abroad in the USA during senior high school that '… if I can speak English, I can not only talk to Americans but also other country's people [sic]', (Yuri, Interview 1, July 2011, original in English) provides a concrete example of the L2 motivation construct international posture (Yashima, 2002) related to using English to communicate with non-Japanese. Moreover, a trip abroad is also identified as one of six transformational motivational episodes by Shoaib and Dörnyei (2004), as outlined in Section 5.2.

While Yuri's L2 motivation seemed to be propelled neither by the employment benefits of being able to use English, nor by any particular social pressure (the ought-to L2 self), Yuri did think that English was important to know as an international language, another facet of international posture:

> English is most spoken [sic] in the world, so I study English, 中国語も必要になると思うけど居間は英語を勉強したいまだ主要言語になって but I think more Chinese is spoken, I think Chinese will become necessary, but at the moment English is the main language (Yuri, Interview 1, July 2011, original in English and Japanese, translated by researcher).

Even though Yuri initially indicated a liking of talking to people (in English) and felt neither social pressure nor career pressure, she raised the point that knowledge of other languages is necessary as well. The contradiction apparent in these utterances highlights the complex nature of L2 motivation. Furthermore, international orientation (Nakata, 1995, 2006), or international posture (Yashima, 2000, 2002), may not be exclusive to English, inviting further research into this L2 motivation construct as it is manifested among Japanese students in relation to other languages and cultures.

While Yuri was motivated to learn English by the cultural and linguistic knowledge of her cram school teacher, teacher-specific motivation is not restricted to language learning itself. Teachers can also influence career choices. Even though Ken wanted to become a teacher from junior high school, he was first attracted to the career as he was attracted by the image of teaching students tennis, followed by thoughts of becoming a social science teacher. An encounter with an English teacher in senior high school changed his mind:

> … but when I was in the first grade of senior high school I met a great English teacher, I respected her and I thought I wanted to become an English teacher at junior high school (Ken, Interview 1, July 2011, original in English).

Thus, the motivational episode that set Ken on the path to becoming an English teacher involved a positive role model of a Japanese teacher of English during secondary school.

These experiences form the antecedents of L2 experiences and career goals at university. While study abroad provides a fresh L2 environment in first year and acts as a transition period and boost for motivation, it is the antecedents prior to university in combination with the transition period on their return to Japan, which are more likely to impact most on L2 motivation and how the students approach the study of English from their second year of university.

The possibility of completing a four-year degree incorporating a study abroad program attracts students to the university from all over Japan. Study abroad is often vividly

envisaged as an opportunity to use English through meaningful social interaction during engagement with the host L2 community. The short essays written by the students during pre-departure guidance offer some insights into how individual students visualized study abroad and beyond, and whether they had concrete strategies to make the most of the opportunities offered by study abroad.

Strategies for attaining L2 goals is one component required to activate the motivational effect of the ideal L2 self. Compared to other pre-departure essays, Taka gave more detailed information on how he would approach study abroad, thus indicating the presence of concrete strategies or a roadmap for attaining his goals. He wanted to focus not only on improving his English language skills, but also on seeking cultural exchange opportunities by venturing beyond the UKC campus. In this way, Taka hoped to engage with the host community and get to know the people, customs, culture and language, while also growing as a person. Although the formation of his long-term future career self was still hazy, he did write that he wanted a career that allowed him to be in contact with non-Japanese every day. Consequently, apart from a mention of *feared possible self,* conditions were met for the establishment of an ideal L2 self to act in a motivational capacity (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011). A review of this essay in September 2014 showed that Taka took the exact path he outlined in April 2010, from study abroad to the internship in Guam, and finally to his choice of career upon graduation, a position at a well-known international hotel chain. In Taka's case, motivational constructs such as *international posture* (Yashima, 2002), goal-setting (Locke & Latham, 2002) and a strong image of an ideal L2 self (Dörnyei, 2009) aligned positively, and propelled him smoothly through his tertiary studies.

While Yuri entered the university in order to improve her English skills, her essay reflected a wish to change her overall approach to study. Included were intentions not to stay in her room during study abroad, to complete her studies without absences, being late for class or leaving early, and not to sleep in class. These comments seem to indicate the motivating manifestation of an 'ought-to' possible self', rather than an 'ideal possible self', as Yuri is afraid of repeating her secondary school experience and approach to study during study abroad, and in subsequent years of study at the university in Japan. She later said in the interviews that at secondary school she had

spent more time in the nurse's office than in the classroom. Japanese schools have a first aid room staffed by a nurse, which often becomes a refuge for students who for any reason do not want to be in the classroom. These reasons can include bullying, difficult personal relationships and/or simply an escape from study.

Apart from making an effort to leave her room, Yuri's study abroad goals included communicating with locals, trying to make friends with UK university students as fast as possible, and making the most of the stay abroad. The only native speakers of English in Yuri's learning environment at secondary school were AETs, illustrating the lack of opportunity for authentic interaction with non-Japanese in rural Japan. Being able to talk freely with various locals in the community is one of the attractions of the study abroad program.

The limited time and the cost of the study abroad programs also had a motivational effect. The time limit spurs participants to make the most of the stay, as does a sense of obligation to their parents. While reasonably priced at approximately A$ 14,000 for flights to and from the United Kingdom, ten-months' tuition, accommodation and three meals a day, the compulsory study abroad component still adds an extra expense for parents. By promising not only to enjoy positive aspects of tertiary study but also to embrace the challenges and difficulties as well, Yuri wished to ensure that her parents did not spend the money in vain. Prior to leaving Japan, Yuri's career goals were still unclear, but she mentioned obtaining a job where she could make use of English. It remains to be seen the extent to which English skills will be a part of her future job in a hotel near Tokyo. Furthermore, her goals indicate a wish to reinvent her study persona at university, changes that go beyond L2 study and motivation, but with a direct influence on both.

While Taka and Yuri, the two students in the tourism faculty, tended to have vague goals regarding their career, Ken's pre-departure essay strongly alluded to his future career-based self as an English teacher. This single career goal requires effort and dedication; students can appreciate the concrete value of every step outlined in the faculty brochure, supporting a sense of investment (Norton Peirce 1995) as they construct their budding social identity and professional future self as teachers from the

first year of university. Apart from the benefits of the study abroad program, Ken also referred to the importance of the university's curriculum to assist him in achieving his goals. These include observation and volunteer activities in schools from first year, as well as an evening study program aimed at helping the students pass the prefectural teacher exams at the end of the first semester in fourth year. The strategies and steps required to be a teacher are clearly outlined by the university, and assist the students in planning their studies.

Like Taka, Ken set himself the goal of communicating actively with people in and out of class during the study abroad period, aiming to experience a variety of cultural contact, with the end result of being able to communicate freely with native speakers of English and to teach in English. Ken also aimed to obtain a TOEIC score of over 900 or to pass the EIKEN level 1 exam by graduation. The latter goal is also related to teaching, as a pre-level 1 EIKEN qualification exempts pre-service teachers from having to complete the English section of teacher examinations for some prefectures. Thus, clearly laid out steps and concrete goals are present from the outset for students in the education faculty.

The above analysis has shown how qualitative data has been used to add another subdivision to the prototypes reviewed in the participant profile section (Section 5.4.1), namely the presence of concrete strategies and goals for the time abroad and after the return to Japan, and goals with an English focus encompassing both study and career.

Taka, Yuri and Ken were looking forward to spending time abroad, capturing aspects of international posture and integrative motivation. The attraction of study abroad programs lies in their target language setting and in the opportunities for social interaction with non-Japanese. Willingness to communicate (WTC) is considered an effective tool to predict communicative language improvements. In their pre-departure essays, all three students showed a strong desire to communicate and to make the most of their study abroad. The following section presents insights into how the three participants progressed through the study abroad period in the United Kingdom.

5.6.2 During study abroad in the United Kingdom

5.6.2.1 Formal components of the study abroad program

The study abroad program is taught exclusively by native speaker teachers of English and the extended contact with these teachers during daytime classes left a strong impression on participants. For example, Taka remembered one UKC teacher fondly, often reminiscing about these classes, for example, using the teacher's name when asked to find a name for a character in the business writing classes back in Japan. The teacher in question was a male close in age to the students, who saw him as funny and friendly, and Taka remained in touch with him using Facebook and Skype. The sense of 'friendliness' and a reduced power distance in England allowed the establishment of more informal contact between students and teachers.

In general, Yuri felt that UKC classes were easy, and supported the building of communication skills. However, she did mention a lack time in class focusing on reading, thus, capturing the inherent contradiction of L2 acquisition in the Japanese L2 context, where communication may well be a goal, but where English reading comprehension is examined using multiple-choice questions.

As shown in Chapter 4, not all students in the cohort were happy with their home stay experience; and for some, expectations failed to match the reality. Taka and Yuri, on the other hand, enjoyed the homestay and were happy about their gains in English. Ken, however, thought that while the homestay was a good experience, the daytime had more value in terms of improving English language skills. As the next section will show, the ongoing judgement of L2 interactions also occurred during the informal components of the study abroad program.

5.6.2.2 Informal components of the study abroad

The most challenging part of the study abroad program for students wishing to communicate with the locals was the sheltered nature of the program. Students, who were sufficiently confident to take up opportunities to participate in interactions with non-Japanese people of all ages, generally felt this had a positive impact on their L2 learning experience.

Taka, Yuri and Ken all made an effort to join sporting circles run by the nearby UK university and all participated in volunteer activities. Taka joined a rugby circle, Ken, tennis and Yuri volleyball. While Taka and Ken did not mention any difficulties in joining the circles, Yuri's comments below about these out-of-class activities were revealing in terms of both apprehension and disappointment in relation to joining a circle comprised of multiple nationalities.

> … volleyball circle, but なんだろう そんなに 英語話す人がいなかったから、フランス人とアジア人 … they didn't speak English fluently so ただ楽しい …何か話しかけるのが怖くて… なんかべつに welcome な感じであっちも何もニコニコしない、笑わないしすごい見下す感じがして、怖くて、話せなかった感じ９０％ … volleyball circle but, there were not many English speakers, more French and Asian students, they didn't speak English fluently so it was just fun. It was scary to talk to (approach) people, even though they seemed welcoming, they didn't smile, I looked down a lot, it was scary and I didn't talk 90% of the time (Yuri, Interview 1, July 2011, original in English and Japanese, translated by researcher).

Initially the circles were viewed as an opportunity for English learning, rather than an opportunity to exercise. However, the students in the club did not speak English fluently; hence they were not viewed as authentic role models, highlighting the perceived value of interactions with native speakers of English versus non-native speakers of English. Thus, rather than becoming an English learning experience, as she did not talk a lot, this experience for Yuri was just fun, and at times, scary. Moreover, the nervousness and apprehension learners feel when initially joining circles was clearly showcased, capturing the challenges students face when trying to interact socially with their non-Japanese peers during study abroad. A similar comment was made by a Japanese participant in Kanno (2003, p. 51), who felt it was rude to try and join a club when he could not speak English. Pellegrino Aveni (2005, p. 35) also notes that due to a lack of communication skills in the L2, a learner's fragile L2 social self can be easily wounded.

Participants in a sheltered study abroad program may also experience a socio-educational barrier. In the study abroad program investigated in this portfolio, the UK campus of the Japanese university (UKC) is located within the grounds of a large university, and while some students from the UK university do live at UKC, it is a separate institution. This situation is similar to separate ESL classes located within a mainstream school (Kanno, 2003, p. 137). While this cognitive approach may be beneficial for building language skills, the effect on the social realm may not be so positive, and may lead to increased anxiety, a sense of isolation and a feeling of separation between the local student population and the foreign learner. Social separation of this type, and related issues, were experienced by the Japanese students on the UKC program. When students live in a contained and protective environment, they can find it difficult to integrate and interact with new groups, like students at the local university (Compare Kanno, 2003), and the degree to which they venture into the local area, and further afield, in order to gain this extra interaction depends on their character, confidence and levels of motivation.

The three participants in the multiple-case study were active in the volunteer program run by UKC. Volunteer activities include cheering and marshalling at marathons and cleaning local beaches and historic buildings. While joining a sporting circle made up of people of the same age was a threatening experience for Yuri, she felt that the volunteer participants were more welcoming.

> I enjoyed volunteer because I used English to talk to people … バレーの人はあれをする、ボランティアの人は気が合う、みんな同じ気持ちでボランティアをしているから優しい人かな. Maybe the volleyball club members were just interested in volleyball, I got on well with other volunteers, we had a kindred spirit, (and) because they did volunteering, they were friendlier, kinder … (Yuri, Interview 1, July 2011, original in Japanese and English, translated by researcher.)

The comment by Yuri highlights the complicated nature of acquiring a foreign language in different learning situations and settings. Language is a social phenomenon, yet successful participation in social interactions in natural settings

requires above all self-confidence, and a welcoming, non-threatening atmosphere. Sound L2 skills can give students some confidence, but language skills alone are not sufficient for interaction on a deeper social level. Moreover, while seeking opportunities to communicate in English in natural settings, students also need to consider that even though social interactions may be seen as learning opportunities by them, being coerced into a teaching role may not be acceptable for the other participants in the social interaction.

For Ken and Taka too, volunteer activities and sporting circles provided opportunities to make many non-Japanese friends, and both thought their English improved through both these activities echoing findings by Churchill (2009). Neither Ken nor Taka made comments similar to Yuri in nature, possibly because confidence levels were higher or because they saw circles and volunteer activities as valuable activities in their own right, where they could use English, but not as a means of learning English. Further research needs to be done to ascertain the effects of gender, and a 'use versus learn' mentality when approaching social interactions, and L2 acquisition.

5.6.2.3 Travelling

International posture is also manifested in the desire of students to travel to other countries in Europe. Like many of the students, Yuri went to continental Europe over the summer vacation. In the interviews, Yuri gave the impression that she was interested in learning about other cultures, not just by eating the food and seeing the sights, but also by communicating with the locals. In spite of going with a group of Japanese friends, she tried to use English and described attempts by a policeman to flirt with her as memorable. Some study abroad research (Polanyi, 1995; Twombly, 1995) focusing on cultural issues experienced by American women during study abroad programs in Latin countries and Russia found that sexual harassment was seen as rude or inappropriate by these women. In fact, Yuri was the only participant in this study to comment on this type of encounter. It is possible that, in the United Kingdom, these kinds of encounters than in Latin countries, or they were simply not mentioned by the participants in the interviews.

5.6.2.3 Language gains during study abroad

The main aim of this study abroad program is to improve students' English skills, and the language gains of all students are monitored throughout the first year of study at UKC. As can be seen from the data in Table 5.2 below, Taka, Yuri and Ken all achieved above average TOEIC and average UKC subject scores at the end of the study abroad program.

Table 5.2 TOEIC and UKC results

Participants	TOEIC before SA	TOEIC after SA	UKC subject	UKC effort	UKC exam	UKC classwork
Taka	215	475(+260)	82	74	75	73
Yuri	280	430(+150)	78	73	81	71
Ken	475	695(+220)	75	67	77	78
Cohort:						
Average	254	413	*76/82	*72/79	*60/74	*69/85
Maximum	*415/505	*645/750	*86/90	*79/86	*75/89	*79/85

Note. *In these sets of numbers, the first (asterisked) number refers to results for the student cohort in the English and IT, and tourism faculties, and the second number to results for students in the education faculty. Effort scores refer to the amount of effort students expended in daytime subjects, as judged by their teachers. The score in the table refers to the average effort score for all daytime subjects.

The results presented in Table 5.2 indicate, however, that the language improvements of the three participants varied, in spite of completing the same study program. For example, Taka, with the lowest score on the TOEIC test of the three participants at the beginning of the program, showed the greatest TOEIC improvement, and also had the highest effort subject scores of the three participants. It is findings such as these that drive research into individual differences in study abroad outcomes, and lead researchers to undertake qualitative studies investigating study abroad from the

students' perspective (Kinginger, 2011, pp.59-60). It appears that the quality of students' interactions and L2 input and output may have contributed to the differences in results and may explain the different rate of progress. Yuri was in the top class at UKC, yet her UKC exam results and TOEIC scores were lower than those of Taka and Ken, suggesting that classes were in fact not particularly easy for her. Yuri was, however, reasonably satisfied with her TOEIC improvement at the end of the study abroad.

The study abroad period provided all students with the opportunity to use English in and out of class. Yet results reported in Chapter 4 indicate that the expectation and reality of the formal and informal components of the study abroad program resulted in both satisfying and disappointing experiences. The overall motivating effect of the study abroad program was supported by opinions expressed by the participants. In particular, the possibility of being able to use English in an authentic setting was motivating. Taka, for example, felt that his motivation increased during study abroad:

> … because I enjoyed speaking English and I was always thinking I could speak more and more English, it was fun so as I got better I enjoyed it more (Taka, Interview 1, July 2011, original in English).

Once students realize they can do something successfully, the feeling of success can help them to move onto the next level. In the same way, perceived failure or a negative view of one's own abilities can lead to low self-confidence, which in turn leads to a lack of enjoyment and a sense of failure (Johnson, 2013, p. 198).

5.6.3 Return to Japan

The first face-to-face encounters with the participants took place in classes taught by the researcher and in the university English Centre from April 2011. Taka and Yuri from the tourism faculty were in the researcher's classes, whereas Ken from the education faculty visited the English Centre for a 'chat'.

When interviewed five months after their return to Japan, all three participants were positive about maintaining their English skills. Individual differences in how they approached their studies, however, became apparent during the interviews and

through their choice of English language classes. In general, Taka and Yuri were both motivated by communicative classes taught by native English-speaking teachers (NESTs). Ken took a balanced approach, choosing classes taught by both NESTs and non-native speakers of English, partly because most compulsory English classes in the education faculty are taught by the Japanese staff and fewer elective classes were taught by NESTs in this faculty in 2011 than in 2014.

One strategy for maintaining English skills was an attempt to recreate the UKC environment. Taka's approach consisted of avoiding classes taught by Japanese teachers of English. He said in the first interview (July, 2011, original in English) '…because they speak Japanese English'. Furthermore he felt that Japanese English '… depresses, represses me'. For students like Taka, the teacher's accent was of prime importance, and he enjoyed classes which focused on improving accent and pronunciation. A preference for the teaching style of NESTs was also reported by Taka, as these teachers were seen as more skilful at facilitating English communication between students and encouraging a lively atmosphere. In general, Taka felt that there were not enough native teachers of English at the university.

A key concept in English language teaching (ELT) is native-speakerism, in particular in Japan. The concept is defined by Holliday (2006) as a situation where native speakers of English are considered the owners and teaching experts, and non-native speakers are viewed as deficient. While English is regarded as an international language by students in Japan, the ownership, and preferred accent, of this international language is conferred on native speakers from Inner Circle English countries (Matsuda, 2011. p.39). Taka even stated that if given a choice, he would prefer to be taught by a bad native-speaker teacher of English rather than a good Japanese teacher of English. Additionally, Taka maintains his L2 motivation in Japan by listening and reading: 'Every day, I am listening to English by DVD, You Tube and I am reading an English book' (Taka, Interview 1, July 2011, original in English).

The engagement with English in-and-out-of class was maintained by Taka in third year. He allocated more than an hour a day to watching movies, reading English books, listening to songs and sometimes speaking to friends in English. He perceived

well-known and popular movies and books, for example *Harry Potter* and the *Twilight* series, as being more attractive, and was less interested in minor films or books. These comments draw attention to two distinct points that relate to English study in Japan. First, Taka sometimes used English to communicate with Japanese friends for practice, yet at another time he said that he preferred to talk to non-Japanese students in English as it was more 'real'. This view highlights the value Taka placed on 'authentic' exchanges, but also illustrates that students can be adept at creating situations for practicing English amongst themselves using self-regulation and autonomy. Thus there is a contrast between students' self-regulated behaviour, the choice to communicate outside the class in English with friends, and activities forced upon them by teachers in classrooms, where students may be asked to talk to people with whom they feel they have nothing in common, or may even actively dislike.

Students in the Japanese student cohort who were mainly motivated by interacting socially in the L2 found it more difficult to adapt to L2 learning on their return to Japan. Yuri certainly associated speaking in social situations in the L2 with motivation, stating that if she doesn't talk she would become lazy in July 2011, and further commented that the realization of her long-held goal of studying abroad, which had motivated her before and during study abroad, left her without direction upon returning to Japan. The sense of '*akogare*' or yearning, many Japanese experience for studying abroad had been assuaged for Yuri, and L2 motivation strongly associated with study abroad, in particular international posture and integrative motivation, had also peaked, leaving a void on her return to Japan. It was necessary for students who were motivated primarily by the study abroad experience itself, to set new goals when they returned to Japan to continue their English education there. In the second interview, however, Yuri explained why she was not able to set another L2 goal when she returned to Japan in the following way:

> '・・・去年、ここの生活に慣れるのは精一杯。…getting used to life here took all my energy and effort last year' (Yuri, Interview 2, July 2012, original in Japanese, translated by researcher).

Later comments by Yuri also indicated that time for English study among daily activities, for example work, also affected L2 motivation, as did various social distractions.

In summary, accepting the differences between the two learning environments, one in the United Kingdom and the other in Japan, is the first step for students who return to Japan from abroad. The second step is for them to find ways to adapt to the university environment in Japan and to set new L2 goals, or re-evaluate existing goals. At the same time, career options, and requirements related to employment, need to be considered. For example, if a career incorporating English skills is sought by students, the goal of a TOEIC score of over 600 or at a minimum EIKEN level 2 needs to be achieved by the start of the official job-hunting season or, at the latest, by the time graduates commence work. While communication is considered important, the English qualifications required by companies in Japan remain focused on the receptive skills of listening and reading; thus, many students also learn to value the examinations that assess these skills over communication skills.

5.6.4 The role of the teacher

One motivating feature of the study abroad learning experience for Japanese students is being taught by native-speaker teachers of English. The cohort results in Study 4 attest to the strong influence of *teacher-specific motivation* within the study abroad L2 environment when compared with the Japanese L2 environment. As indicated in Figure 5.1 below, however, individual differences also occur within the domain of teacher-specific motivation. These differences emerged in responses to the following items:

- creating a positive environment in class (1)
- getting on well with students (2)
- encouraging participation (3)
- being well prepared for class (4)
- showing patience (5)
- having enthusiasm (6)
- choice of authentic teaching materials (7)
- giving students individual attention (8)

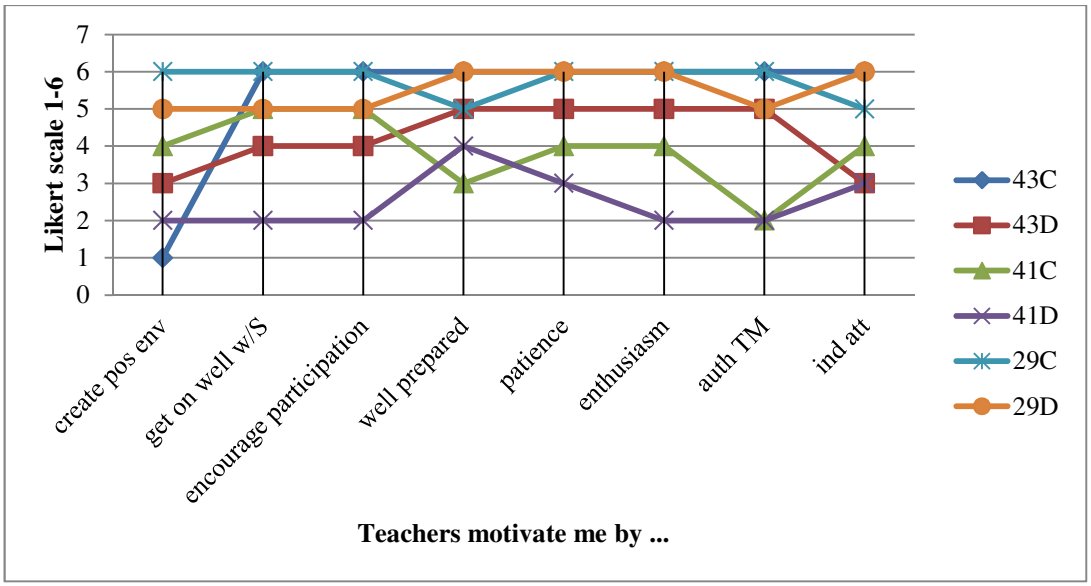

Figure 5.1 The influence of the teacher on motivation

Note. 43: Taka; 41: Yuri; 29: Ken (C) Data collected at end of first year at UKC. (D) Data collected at end of third year at the university in Japan.

The most striking result to emerge from the data presented in Figure 5.1 above is the difference between teacher-trainee Ken (29) and the two students from the tourism faculty, Taka (43) and Yuri (41). The differences in teacher-specific motivation between the study abroad environment and the Japanese L2 environment were less for Ken, the pre-service English education major, and the motivating effect of the teachers was rated higher, than for the two students from the tourism faculty. One conclusion which can be drawn from this data is that for Ken, teacher-specific motivation was not influenced by teacher nationality and learning environment to the same degree as for Taka and Yuri. Furthermore, being able to be motivated by teachers regardless of study environments also points to easier adjustment to study after returning to Japan. It is also a possibility, however, that the particular combination of teachers for each of the three participants is reflected in the results. In this case, further research is required on the teacher-specific motivation of individual teachers on individual students.

Learning preferences and teaching styles also need to align in order to promote motivation in the L2 classroom. Moreover, learners often possess an image about how a language is best acquired. If the learning environment does not match this dominating image, it may have an adverse effect on SLA (Ellis, 2012, p. 327). Classes

taught by native-speaker teachers of English at the university tend to focus on communicative English skills, or the social dimension, whereas classes taught by Japanese teachers of English focus on the equally, if not more important, employment examinations, and grammar teaching skills (both academic dimensions).The image and ownership of English for communication is strongly linked to native-speaker teachers of English in Japan. For example, the marketing strategies used by universities, schools and English conversation schools rely heavily on the use of non-Japanese teachers conversing with Japanese students (Toh, 2013, p. 186). Conversely, the image and ownership of the academic dimension is linked to Japanese English teachers. This division of ownership between these two groups of English teachers in Japan, and its accompanying image, can thus have a substantial effect on L2 motivation, depending on the learning preferences of the students.

Whether the social or academic dimension of L2 use dominates the mindset of the individual Japanese learners may affect language learning in Japan. Both Taka and Yuri had a preference for learning English through and for communication (*social dimension*), rather than grammar-based instruction (*academic dimension*), whereas Ken seemed to have a more balanced approach to both the social dimension and the academic dimension of L2 use. The study by Johnson (2013), reviewed in Section 5.4, suggests that the ability to switch between and balance the mindset operating behind these two dimensions leads to more stable and long-term L2 motivation. Discussions about this issue in the interviews with Ken highlighted that for students in the education faculty, both native teachers of English and Japanese teachers of English are necessary in order to prepare and support the students for their future careers as English teachers in Japan.

For case study participant Ken, the study abroad program was beneficial, but he continued to view his English education in Japan as personally rewarding, and in fact necessary for his career as a teacher, and thus is able to balance the two dimensions. This stance may also be influenced by this career goal, and a different future use of English skills to Taka and Yuri. In contrast, the change in L2 environment and teachers resulted in Taka and Yuri becoming less motivated to study English in classes taught by Japanese teachers of English, on the university campus in Japan, and in

Japan in general. The results indicate that the effect of returning to the Japanese learning environment is moderated by future career options, as well as by existing or newly established learning preferences.

5.6.5 Careers goals and the ideal L2 self

Concrete goals are important for establishing and maintaining L2 acquisition. When in the second interview the discussion returned to goals and aims for the future, Yuri said she just wanted to go back to her home prefecture, but not for any purpose in particular, just to go back. As for envisioning her future self, Yuri made an interesting comment:

> 夢はないとはっきりした想像、自分のなりたい想像はないと、何をしてもだめ。
>
> If you don't have a dream you can't imagine a solid future image, if you don't have an image of what you want to be, no matter what you do it will be no good (Yuri, Interview 2, July 2012, original in Japanese).

This comment reveals that Yuri cannot imagine her future self at all, and speaks quite succinctly about the impact of not being able to project a future self. While, as discussed in Chapter 3, having an unrealistic future self may result in problems in the future, a lack of a future self is also a concern. Yuri's priorities at the time of the second interview (July 2012) were first to go back to her home prefecture, second to gain employment, and third, to obtain a driver's licence. In a way, these priorities could constitute Yuri's future self. As to why she really wanted to return to her home prefecture, approximately 400 km from the university, Yuri's reply suggested that she was actually homesick, because, due to the geographical distance and her part-time job and circle activities, she could not return to her home town as often as she thought she could. She also felt being at home was 'normal'.

A preference for living in inner circle countries could be observed in some of Taka's comments in the first interview. For example, he said: '…I am interested mainly in English speaking cultures; want to speak English with English speakers. I could live in a group of English speakers.' Taka continued: '…I just I love English, so I want to spend my time with English speakers, so I study English.' He saw the career value of

English, but this was moderated by a yearning to live overseas. He could imagine himself working overseas using English but on the whole did not feel any social pressure: '… I just want to study English [for myself]' (Taka, Interview 1, July 2011, original in English).

In the second and third interview he saw his future self as a hotel employee. This prediction played out in reality when he participated in a hotel internship in Guam from May, 2013 to May, 2014; he now works in a hotel in Tokyo. In summary, the various motivating forces for learning English in Japan, comprise a blend of motivators such as jobs, personal satisfaction, integration and the visionary power of the ideal L2 self. Taka did not seem to be affected by social pressure and showed a clear intrinsic and integrative motive for learning English.

Ken's language learning experiences during the study abroad period and after his return to Japan appeared to be mainly positive. Some aspects of his L2 motivation or experiences were similar to Yuri, whereas others were more closely aligned with Taka's experiences. For example, it seems that not only his future career as a teacher played a role but also an awareness of family finances, mirroring Yuri's motivation:

> Our parents paid a lot of money, so I should study English, improve my ability, that's why. It's the main reason. The other is that we really want to improve English because we want to become English teachers and we should teach English in the future (Ken, Interview 1, July 2011, original in English).

Ken made another interesting comment about whether being able to speak a second language meant one was a well-educated person, saying that it was a matter of perspective. If a person was born to non-Japanese parents in Japan, then naturally he or she would acquire both Japanese and the home language. This however, did not make that person 'well-educated', whereas learning an L2 in a more 'artificial situation' would do so, as this requires effort and study.

The above discussion of the interview data reveals that all students reported a positive and continuing English learning experience and strong intrinsic and integrative

motivation. As can be seen from the comments above, myriad factors act on individuals, and their motivation and goals for study, a career and learning English. Each individual has different experiences and responds differently to these experiences; consequently the paths they take are equally diverse.

5.6.6 Gender

The maintenance of L2 motivation and the envisioning of future selves were linked with gender in a comment made by Yuri in her second interview in third year. At this time, the students were preparing for the official start of the job-hunting period in December 2013. While Yuri felt she needed to get a job, it did not have to be a career-track job.

Researcher: ・・・でも就職しないとどうする？

… but if you don't get a job what will you do?

Yuri: それは・・・主婦、女は逃げられるから主婦・・・楽。

Well, that… women can escape (from work and) become housewives … it is easy and comfortable (Yuri, Interview 2, July 2012, original in Japanese, translated by researcher).

This opinion is not uncommon among Japanese women; becoming a housewife is considered a suitable and even preferred life choice by even the current generation of female university students from both a traditional and a personal perspective. Many young women aspire to being housewives as they see this choice as being both fulfilling and comfortable: looking after the house and children is preferable to spending long hours at a company. Hashimoto (1993) has found that in Japanese culture, and paternalistic society, males tend to be more goal-orientated when learning an additional language whereas women may learn a language for more intrinsic reasons, because they do not feel the same pressure to succeed as males. This implies that gender-specific types of L2 motivation may be one of the factors influencing language learning.

The comment by Yuri also has implications for future self-imagery. First, it relates to the envisioning of possible selves, which Markus (2006) suggests can enhance

academic achievement, career expectations, motivation, self-confidence and the development of identity. In Dörnyei (2005) possible selves in L2 are reconceptualised in the L2 motivational self system, and a number of activities to envision and foster the ideal L2 self-image are presented in Hadfield and Dörnyei (2013). One suggested activity is for the students to write a letter from a future self (Hadfield & Dörnyei, 2013, p.205). If female students imagine the future self as a house wife with three children, then there may be a lack of concrete future career goals and motivation to study English, and the strength of utilitarian motivation discussed in this and previous chapters, as well as in other research, become less effective. Thus, gender can also be seen as a socio-cultural component affecting the maintenance of L2 motivation for female university students in Japan.

5.6.7 Continuing contact with non-Japanese

Study abroad offers students the opportunity to meet non-Japanese. In an ideal situation, these encounters would lead to meaningful and lasting friendships, which could in turn maintain L2 motivation even after the students return to their home countries. Advances in technology have made it easier not only to maintain, but also to establish new social connections. Facebook, for instance, is popular among students at the university for keeping in touch with friends in Japan and abroad. Actual usage, however, depends on the individual. Some students regularly post messages in English, others in Japanese, while still others just read posts.

Initially, all participants were motivated to use Facebook, while some continue this use. Ken, for example, still communicates with friends he made during study abroad on Facebook and Skype. He is also still in touch with some of his UKC conversation teachers who are now teaching English near Tokyo, and they sometimes talk on the telephone in English as well. As mentioned previously Taka initially communicated with friends from the study abroad period, but this contact was reduced in third year. The internship in the Northern Marianas provided Taka with an opportunity to make new friends, thus providing a fresh burst of motivation to communicate online after his return to Japan. Yuri seemed positive about using Facebook in second year, but said regular contact decreased as time passed.

The challenge of maintaining social relationships online, or through regular postal channels, lies in the effort required. According to Ken (Interview 2, February 2013), it is only possible for people '…who really want to communicate, really want to keep in touch.' The challenge of maintaining online communication also depends on the nature and depth of the relationship, and the effort put in by both parties; superficial interpersonal relationships or relationships established and maintained solely for supporting language skills are less likely to survive the test of time. A more detailed exploration of this phenomenon associated with a study abroad and return to the home country may shed further light on this issue.

5.6.8 Maintaining L2 motivation in practice

Factors related to geographical distance and time play a large role in the difficulty experienced by Japanese students after returning from a study abroad program in terms of keeping in contact with friends or teachers met while studying abroad. It also highlights the fact that while Skype is a good way to communicate soon after the return to Japan, after a certain period of time, using technology to keep in touch is not as satisfying as face-to-face contact. Some students and staff from UKC, in particular a young male IT technician who also played soccer with the students during their study abroad, have stayed in touch for over six years. This is made possible because they stay in touch via Facebook and this particular person also comes to Japan about once a year to catch up with the graduates.

The temporal factor contributes to the sense of growing separation, and unless a strong friendship existed or was able to evolve through further chances to meet in person on a regular basis, it is more difficult to sustain such a relationship. It requires effort and persistence by both parties, and even then, speaking from personal experience, there is a chance that you will grow apart.

Maintaining L2 motivation in Japan post-study abroad proved most challenging for Yuri. In the second interview, which took place in July 2012 with two friends present, she said she was not able to stay motivated to learn and use English, because she wanted to do many things and have fun. While she was still interested in studying English, her priorities had changed; this was because she felt that her head was about

to burst just by being in Japan. This was not a comment related exclusively to study, but also to other things happening in her life. The result of her break from English study can be observed in the lower TOEIC score in December 2011. Thus, even though Yuri was aware of the need to improve her TOEIC score, other things in her life took priority and her English skills, as measured on the TOEIC, decreased.

In line with her comment above, Yuri in third year indicated that she proceeded with her studies without really thinking about her future career, and that her mind just goes blank when thinking of the future. In this way, she illustrates the wide ranging effect of a number of socio-environmental issues, which although not immediately related to acquiring another language, nevertheless have a significant impact on L2 motivation and English study. First of all, many of the students at the university are not from the greater Tokyo area, as the university attracts students from all areas of Japan. Consequently students may experience two distinct adjustment phases, the first phase in the United Kingdom followed by the second phase in an unfamiliar place in Japan. Their lives are already full without seeking out English encounters or spending extra time on English study. It appears the 'let's try and go out and speak English and make the most of our stay in the United Kingdom' mentality, which could be observed during study abroad causes the peaking of L2 motivation in first year. Upon the return to Japan, however, L2 motivation is overshadowed by the need for familiarization with university life in Japan and new living arrangements. Furthermore, reverse culture shock and new activities, such as university circles, study of other subjects apart from English and part-time jobs in Japan, also add to the diminishing value and time allocated by the students to English study.

5.6.9 English classes in Japan

English classes on the university campus in Japan provided opportunities to observe the case study participants' classroom demeanour, including how they tackled different learning tasks (Table 5.1). In classes comprised all Japanese students, Taka and Yuri both showed a preference for talking to the teacher in English rather than to fellow Japanese students; and Taka seemed to prefer to communicate in English with non-Japanese students in classes where both Japanese and non-Japanese students

were present. Ken showed a preference for discussion over writing tasks in English classes. Willingness to communicate (WTC) is a L2 construct that focuses on communication behaviour. While WTC is strongly supported by the study abroad environment, the return to Japan seems to have led to the creation of a hybrid WTC at the university, dominated by selectivity.

Taka was enrolled in six courses taught by the researcher during second and third years. One reason was the aforementioned preference for taking classes taught by NESTs. Conversation classes comprised Japanese students only, and Business English classes included both Japanese and non-Japanese students from Sri Lanka and China. In each class, Taka exhibited similar classroom demeanours: Listening attentively, responding to teacher questions but not interacting with other Japanese students unless specifically asked to do so. In conversation class, Taka sat on his own in the middle of the classroom, while in Business English classes during 2011 and 2012, he always sat with the same friend (male) at the front left or right of the class displaying a preference for working either with his friend or with the overseas students rather than other Japanese students. This selective aversion to pair and group work also stood out in the Taka's responses in the questionnaires and interviews, covering both the study abroad period and the return to Japan. Taka explained his classroom demeanour in the following way:

> …with Japanese I don't like (group work) with (students from) other countries like Xue (a Chinese student), yes or Dina (a Sri Lankan student) it is going to be fun. …just talking to Japanese seems only to be like '遊んでいる' (having fun)', doesn't seem to be good for study in terms of English (Taka, Interview 3, January 2013, original in English and Japanese, English translations in parenthesis by researcher).

Speaking English to other Japanese students was not considered useful by Taka because their English level is about the same as his and everyone speaks Japanese English. In other words, more value is placed on speaking to non-Japanese people, if speaking to native speakers of English was not a viable option, confirming the

findings of Sakui and Gaies (1999, p. 482) that students did not feel that they could improve their English with fellow Japanese classmates.

Despite his views about speaking English with other Japanese students, however, Taka did not sit with the overseas students on any occasion in the class, always sitting in the same spot whether his friend was there or not. A possible explanation is that he felt comfortable to approach the overseas students when there was an activity to complete, but not to sit with them for the entire class. Conversely, teacher-centred interaction was similar in all classes, and he voluntarily responded to questions. Thus, Taka's preferences were for listening, followed by speaking and then reading or writing. He was very interested in English, but on his own terms, which included a strong inclination for practising and using English with non-Japanese. He also exhibited a great interest in different socio-cultural business norms. It appears that for Taka, English was not a subject to be studied, but rather a means of facilitating interaction; thus, research-based writing tasks were not as motivating for him.

In many ways, Yuri's classroom demeanour was similar to that displayed by Taka. Although she seemed interested in the conversation class, she sat near the back of the room, and interacting much with the other students in English unless specifically asked to do so. On the other hand, she was motivated to speak with the teacher on a one-on-one basis in class, and appeared more animated when the discussion included the entire class. She was participated happily in this study and displayed a vivacious and chatty persona in the interviews, and during chance encounters outside of class. Class dynamics are a possible explanation for this seemingly contradictory behaviour, as Yuri often appeared somewhat annoyed and made faces when another student (Chie, also interviewed for this study and from the same prefecture as Yuri) monopolized class and teacher time. Thus, she displayed quite different communicative personae depending on the situation, illustrating personality traits of class members need to be added to the complex group of factors affecting L2 motivation.

For students who prefer spontaneous oral communication, set written academic tasks can be challenging. For example, Ken sometimes seemed happier to discuss the possible contents of the essay topics or projects than to begin the writing process by

putting pen to paper. The image of Ken emerging from these observations is of a learner who preferred oral communication to writing. As the first stage of prefectural teacher recruitment examinations involves writing, however, Ken is also aware that he must build the relevant writing skills to pass these examinations.

Attributing a lack of success in English to Japanese teachers of English and the Japanese education system in general is common among Japanese students of English. While Yuri (Interview 1, July 2011) felt that if she did not improve at English it is her own fault and responsibility, she also attributed blame to the Japanese English teaching system at schools because 'many teachers teach the textbook "manual" only, I don't like that. I hate these 'manual' people'.

Yuri's reasons for disliking textbook English related to authenticity, namely that she wanted to hear 'natural English' and the teaching styles related to teaching styles of assistant language teachers (ALTs) and Japanese teachers of English (JTEs). She felt ALTs have their own style, and don't use the textbook. JTEs just say you have to study something because it will be on the test and tend to teach to the textbook. She thought the teachers at UKC were encouraging and tried to create a 'lively' class atmosphere, even though they also used textbooks. She concluded by that she did not think of 'slacking off' in classes taught be NESTs, and maybe that she just doesn't like the JTEs teaching styles.

The above opinion touches on two issues that have plagued language teaching in Japan for decades, but which must be considered against the backdrop of MEXT initiatives and policy, as well as the entrance examination study environment. First, ALT classes in secondary schools are not bound by the same rules and regulations as regular classes, where the textbook is the actual syllabus, and examinations are based on the content of the textbook and/or the content of senior high school or university English examinations. This forces the JTEs into a situation of little choice about what and how they teach, whereas ALTs have more freedom to create interesting classes, provided they have the experience and, inclination, and are allowed by the institution to teach in a more communicative manner. Second, the two teaching styles are placed in direct competition, the traditional grammar- translation approach versus the contemporary

communicative approach, and, in the case of Yuri and the other participants in the study abroad, they further experience a teaching style based on the contemporary approach in the United Kingdom, which suits their 'natural learner' persona, resulting in the resistance to taking Japanese-style classes after their return. Unlike the results of a study by Luppescu and Day (1990, cited in Sakui & Gaies, 1999, p. 488), which concluded that Japanese students have no particular beliefs about language learning, Yuri and Taka appear to have internalized sets of beliefs and preferences that are personal. For example, Yuri seems to favour a more democratic approach with shared power, more autonomy, and recognition of individual learner preferences. This does not fit well with the traditional Japanese teaching style, which closely resembles Oxford's (2001, p. 88) autocratic approach, described as featuring teachers in a strong power position, extrinsic rewards and being useful for learning facts. The current generation of students may indeed have stronger learner preferences when compared with students twenty-five years ago, towards the end of the Japanese bubble era (1986-1991) when there was possibly an overall more satisfied and positive population in general in Japan.

Yuri further asserted in the first interview (July 2011) that she may make less of an effort and that her English skills will possibly stagnate with a Japanese teacher because classes taught by a Japanese teacher are teacher-centred, and provide limited opportunities for verbal exchanges. Like Taka, Yuri did not like learning about English grammar, a dislike carried over from her high school years, nor did she have a particularly good impression of Japanese teachers across all subjects. This is probably because of the focus on grammar at secondary school and teaching to the textbook or passively listening to lecturers at university. When asked whether her motivation will decrease, Yuri felt that it may with a JTE and also:

> 座っているだけで、書いている。発言は少ないから日本の大学は特に講義聴いているからそが
>
> I don't like Japanese university lectures just sitting, writing, no conversation, I don't like that (Yuri, Interview 1, July 2011, original in English and Japanese, translated by researcher).

Within these comments it is also possible to discern a false expectation of what university classes entail. Large lecture-style classes are the norm in many universities, both in Japan, and elsewhere, and students are expected to listen to the lectures and take notes. Thus, a study skills course for tertiary level classes may need to be considered by the university.

Both Yuri and Taka indicated a dislike of grammar as it was seen as difficult and requiring effort to master. English, as it is traditionally taught in Japanese schools, is disliked by students for its emphasis on grammar (Sakui & Gaies, 1999, p. 485). The tendency of L2 learners in Japan to dislike the aspects of language learning that they find difficult is common (Sakai & Kikuchi, 2009), but in some cases this dislike may lead to extra study. In contrast, both Taka and Yuri chose the 'dislike so will avoid it' stance. Their preferred learning style is what could be called a 'natural learning style'; in other words learning in the way a child learns a first language or an immigrant picks up a second language with less emphasis on form, and more guessing and trying out of language items. Both students resemble the Japanese immigrant in Hawaii, described by Schmidt (2010, p. 721) as ' … an adult naturalistic and uninstructed learner type' who is highly communicatively competent, but with limited development in grammar and syntax.

The career-based ideal L2 self may also assist in motivating students to overcome their weak points and to form images of their own future teaching styles. For example, students in the education faculty must also be able to explain grammar when they become teachers. While Ken values communication over grammar and writing, he is aware of the fact that he will have to teach grammar when he becomes a teacher. His dislike of teacher-controlled classes stems from his own experience as a secondary student, so his future goal is to teach classes where he speaks 20 % of the time and allows students to speak 80% of the time: '…I like doing activities in class because just listening to teachers talk makes me feel bored and sleepy.' (Ken, Interview 2, February 2013)

The ought-to L2 self is thus also having a motivating effect, as Ken does not want to be an English teacher who bores the students.

In the second interview, Ken mentioned that over the three years at university, he started liking English. Even though he was good at English in secondary school, and was happy and satisfied when he received a good mark, he did not actually like the English language. The study abroad acted as a springboard for promoting an active liking of English:

> … now I feel the sounds of English are really comfortable, through the study abroad experiences I noticed how happy I could [be] communicating with foreign people, I can enjoy talking with them….I think if people are interested in English even a little bit and they haven't been to a foreign country where people speak English, they [people in Japan] should go to a foreign country because it is difficult to say...in Japan, most of people don't speak English and it is so difficult to feel what English is[in Japan] …and if people talk with foreign people and they can make themselves understood, people will feel happy (Ken, Interview 2, February 2013, original in English).

According to Ken, the most important thing for students to do when they return from study abroad is to read books, listen to music and watch DVDs, involving personal motivation as discussed in Chapter 3, and simply to keep on liking English, that is intrinsic motivation. Still, he thinks that this takes effort as it is easy to forget English in Japan, and harder to keep going. Thus, for Ken it is a matter of how students prioritize different aspects of their life back in Japan, if part-time work and circle and other study are a student's priority, than a decrease in English skills is a natural result. Similarly to Taka and Yuri, Ken's motivation relates to Yashima's (2002) international posture, but also encompasses the *ideal L2 self*.

> This may be the most thing that I really want to say, hmm, by speaking English I really want to talk with many people, if I can speak English I will be able to talk with people who can't speak Japanese and if I can talk with them my vision will widen [sic] (Ken, Interview 2, February 2013, original in English).

What differentiates Ken from the other two participants is a relative lack of negativity about learning English in the Japanese environment. He feels his English is still improving and even though he lives in Japan, he does have opportunities to use English. When asked to expand on this comment he said that while there were fewer opportunities to speak English, he had got used to the surroundings and decided to make the best of them, communicating with available teaching staff and making an effort to stay in touch with friends from study abroad.

However, he did concede that some challenges existed. For example, asked whether it was possible to speak English out of class in Japan, his interview response was rather humorous: '…every day? No, impossible. Hmmm, if I talk to myself, possible' (Ken, Interview 2, February 2013, original in English).

On the question of what Ken felt was necessary to increase language use in Japan, he replied that it was difficult:

> …many people think they want to speak English, but you know (its) in Japan, if I talk with my friends in English other people look at us as a little bit strange (Ken, Interview 2, February 2013, original in English).

This was illustrated by Ken's discomfort using English with friends outside the boundaries of the educational realm; hence he uses Japanese.

Taka also alluded to a similar feeling when he said that it felt strange to use English with fellow Japanese in class, although he did make 'English time' with his friends. Appearance and how one is perceived by other people, are important to Japanese people.

5.6.10 Language gains and goals

Gains in English language skills as measured by the TOEIC and EIKEN examinations could be observed over each case study participant's learning journey at university. Taka and Ken showed steady improvements on the TOEIC; Ken also passed EIKEN pre-level on the third attempt. Improvements in TOEIC scores are usual by the end of the study abroad, but students' scores after returning to Japan sometimes decrease, as

in Yuri's case. Results and discussions in the following section illustrates why this might occur.

A varying range of gains immediately post-study abroad, and during second and third year, can be observed in the general student population at the university. For example, Taka's TOEIC score increased from 475 at the end of the study abroad (January 2011) to 655 by the end of second year (December 2011), which is a relatively large gain. Taka's second score also fulfils the minimum requirement for many companies wishing to hire university graduates with English skills in Japan. Taka showed a greater improvement on the listening section (+140) than the reading section (+40), no doubt due to the fact that he enjoys listening to English music and watching DVDs daily, in addition to formal classes at university. A further TOEIC result (January 2013) also showed a slight increase to 670, implying that Taka was able to maintain and improve his English skills in spite of returning to Japan. The internship in the Northern Marianas acted as a motivator and goal for Taka, as applicants need to pass an oral interview and are expected to have at a minimum, a minimum TOEIC score of 500.

In spite of improving his TOEIC score, there are fewer opportunities for using English in Japan, and Taka feels that this impeding the progress of his communication skills and, even though he worked at a hotel part-time, it seemed that he did not have an opportunity to speak English to customers. Thus, for Taka, the satisfaction caused by a gain on English tests did not outweigh the perceived negative aspects of the Japanese L2 environment.

Ken, the student from the education faculty, was also able to continue improving his English skills after returning to Japan. The largest TOEIC improvement for Ken, from 505 to 690, took place at the end of the study abroad, by December 2011 Ken did obtain a score of over 730 and passed the pre-1 EIKEN grade in third year. Attaining a pre-1 EIKEN qualification is a requirement for secondary school English teachers, as stipulated in the 2014 MEXT English education reform plan (MEXT, 2013b). Finally, unlike Yuri who was left without a goal after the return to Japan, Ken is aware of the importance of goal setting and observed that it is better never to be satisfied with

language skills. Referring to the TOEIC, he said that if he becomes satisfied with his TOEIC score, his improvement will stop, and that he always needs to challenge himself to go further and set a new goal.

Both Taka and Ken had concrete goals involving L2 usage. Yuri, however, continued to have only vague goals for using English to communicate. Her overall TOEIC score decreased in the year after her return to Japan, although her listening score improved. The challenge for Yuri was to maintain L2 motivation despite the distractions of normal university life and without concrete L2 goals to guide her. Students with similar L2 journeys to Yuri are not uncommon at the university, and in fact gaining insights into why these students find it difficult to maintain L2 motivation and improve their language skills was one of the reasons this research was initially undertaken. The results in this study indicate the importance of updating or re-evaluating existing goals, setting new goals, and establishing concrete goal achievement strategies, to maintain language learning momentum throughout the four years of university.

5.6.11 The third year of study

After the shared study abroad experience in first year, and in second year growing used to study at the university and life in an unfamiliar location, by third year, each participant was now progressing along their diverging individual trajectories. Preparations for the hotel internship in the Northern Marianas were becoming the focus of Taka's student life, whereas for Ken, study and preparation for the teacher employment examination dominated. For Yuri, the general job-hunting period had also commenced. Thus, the nature of their career goals also dictated the effort expended in maintaining and further improving English skills in third year.

The maintenance and further improvement of their English skills in third year was an important factor in seeking employment for Taka and Ken. English for Yuri, while an asset, was not as essential for job hunting. Taka's chosen activities for maintaining English skills included reading, and watching movies and TV dramas in English. Ken contributed to improving his English skills by reviewing class work, reading books,

listening to music, and posting on Facebook. An insight into Ken's thinking behind his selection of self-study material was visible in his choice of reading matter:

> I like reading stories (fiction) if it is written in Japanese but to read stories in English is a little bit difficult, so recently I read a book about education (Ken, Interview 2, February 2013, original in English).

For students in the education faculty, education is a familiar field of study, so Ken could relate to the content, and it seems he finds it more difficult to follow and visualize an unknown storyline. This may also be a wash-back effect from the type of reading passages used in formal English examinations.

In general, the return to Japan had an adverse effect on Yuri's English skills, as evidenced by a drop her TOEIC score from 430, in January 2011, to 405 in December 2011.Interestingly, contributing to this drop her reading score decreased by 55 points, but her listening score increased by 30. By third year Yuri reached a standstill in her English studies, exemplified by her comment that she was just happy to 'float along' in her studies. Another burst of L2 study, however, took place in late 2013, and Yuri achieved EIKEN level 2 in February 2014.

In her third year at university, Yuri had a JTE as a general study supervisor, and often went to his office for extra preparation study for the EIKEN test. This seems to indicate that she saw JTEs as 'good teachers' too, when it came to test preparation focusing on grammar and reading. The appeal of NESTs lie in their encouraging teaching style, their ability to 'liven up' the classroom atmosphere, and to teach outside the textbook, and, of course, the fact that they are native speakers of English and their focus is on teaching communicative English. The results presented in this study further point to the clear division which exists between the functions assigned to different groups of teachers of English in Japan, adding to the results presented in Study 3.

By third year at university, many students have completed their required English credits, hence maintenance and improvement of English skills is heavily dependent on learner contributions and their career goals. If such concrete goals are not present, this

period of study at the university is often characterized by an atrophying of English skills in students.

The final interview in third year included a reflection on the learning process over the past three years in the two learning environments: study abroad in the United Kingdom and study at university in Japan. In relation to study abroad, personal growth, and subsequent study over the following two years, Taka expressed the opinion that study abroad had broadened his horizons and, made the world clearer and improved his English skills. Upon his return to Japan, however, despite a steady increase in his TOEIC score, he felt his English skills stayed the same or even decreased, in particular his grammar skills. He was more positive about maintaining listening skills because of his effort in spending time watching DVDs and TV. Taka also watched the BBC news on his smartphone, but thinks students who did this were in the minority. In the first interview in second year, Taka was using English to communicate with people on Skype and Facebook; however, 18 months later contact with the UKC teachers and friends in the United Kingdom had become intermittent. Thus, maintaining social contact appears to be a challenge that even the latest technology may not solve.

When asked about studying at university, and what changes he would like to see, Taka replied that he wanted to have more opportunities to speak with many NESTs and to be taught the type of everyday conversation heard on the streets. This again indicates that Taka is a naturalistic learner type and, for him, language learning is interesting when taken outside the boundaries of the classroom, with no assessment and the opportunity to communicate in a natural manner.

When asked to reflect on her study abroad experience, and subsequent study in Japan, Yuri said study abroad had widened her horizons because she had been able to experience other countries and talk with many people in English; and overall it was an enjoyable experience. Unlike English classes at secondary school, she liked and attended English classes at UKC where the program was of substantial benefit to her personally, because she felt that she herself wanted to study and speak English, and to establish control of her own learning. Thus, conditions of autonomy - described by

Little, Ridley and Ushioda (2002) including learner empowerment, learner reflection and appropriate target language use - were fulfilled during the study abroad period.

Unfortunately, being back in Japan in a different study environment had a negative effect on Yuri's studies:

> Yuri (Y): UKC に行ったのはすごくプラス、だけど今分からない。
> Going to UKC was a plus, but now I do not know.
>
> Y: study or party, 考える必要なかったけど、こっちに帰って自分うまく整理とかできない、ボーっとする study, circle, friends work'…
>
> Just study or party, we didn't have to think. Returning to Japan, unless you are able to organize your time effectively, time just passes you by, study, circle, friends, work…
>
> R: You are busier here?
>
> Y: ぜんぜん busy じゃない、けどやらないだけ・・・やるきスイッチほしい。I just don't study here, studying is a bother,…I want a 'turn on' switch' (Yuri, Interview 2, July 2012, original in Japanese, translated by researcher).

Yuri said her mind 'just drifted' in Japan, possibly as she did not set concrete goals once she returned to Japan. In addition, encouragement by the university to improve her English and TOEIC score also resulted in some resistance on Yuri's part, as she felt pressured, rather than encouraged. Depending on the teacher, she did not like being told that she had to do something; but preferred to study of her own accord. As Yuri also expressed a desire for a 'turn on' switch, it appeared that while the *idea* of autonomy was present, Yuri lacked strategies for its *realization*.

The above section highlights the importance of settings and their impact on L2 motivation. Being in an English speaking country for a limited time, and focusing exclusively on English study, is a very different prospect to being interested and motivated in acquiring the language as a part of 'normal life' in Japan. Furthermore,

teachers in Japan need to consider whether their way of encouraging students to improve their English skills may actually have the opposite effect.

While the university is close to Tokyo (50km), the opportunities for students to use English informally are limited. Options include going to bars frequented by non-Japanese and joining interest groups with international members. There are also 'international' parties, but more often than not, these are designed for Japanese women to meet non-Japanese men, and so are rather competitive in nature. Yuri said there were not many chances and opportunities to meet people but that also she was not making an effort to seek out these kinds of opportunities either. Maybe she would go if others went too, as going alone was a bit 'scary' and if she did go, she thought she would talk to people she met; yet the problem remains that she does not go in the first place. I asked her whether she knew about the international volleyball club in Tokyo and she said 'no'. As to whether she would actually go, she also said 'no', because it is too far, but that maybe if she lived in the area, she would go. When asked whether she had looked up opportunities for international circles in the local area she again said 'no'. Thus, Yuri was not making an active effort to seek out opportunities to use English as she had done in the United Kingdom, and coupled with the 'scary, far and expensive' problem, there is little likelihood that seeking communicative opportunities in English will be a part of her life in Japan. Asked how these issues can be overcome in the second interview (July, 2012), she said 'difficult'.

Reflecting on his UKC experience and subsequent study, Ken reported that study abroad had had a positive impact on his life, both in terms of English study and personal growth. By the end of third year, Ken had a strong future image of himself as a teacher. This included standing at the front of the class and teaching, but tempered by an additional comment about his immediate future plans:

> …but now there are many things I want to do which I have on my mind, so sometimes I think of different futures from teachers, I think, but all of the things on my mind are related to teaching (Ken, Interview 2, February 2013, original in English).

Ken was considering future post-graduate study in an English speaking country at the time of the second interview, but he still envisaged a future career as a teacher in Japan. As a pre-service teacher, his observations about the study of English were insightful, for example on the relationship between communication and mistakes:

> …everyone makes mistakes so I think as for English, without speaking English, speaking ability will not improve, I don't like hesitating to speaking English and its and also in most classes I don't like hesitating to say my opinions. Many people in Japan hesitate to say their opinions, … even when they have splendid opinions (Ken, Interview 2, February 2013, original in English).

Ken thought that this hesitation was linked to anxiety; many Japanese people are afraid of making mistakes, whereas most of the time he did not mind making mistakes, and more importantly feels he learns by making mistakes and having them corrected. Thus, anxiety and willingness to communicate are concerns in Japanese EFL generally, which are also expressed by these Japanese students.

5.6.12 Methodological advantages of qualitative data

The following section explores three sets of trajectories based on the three participants' responses to the questionnaires (A to D). The trajectories indicate changes in the students' motivation in relation to L2 motivation constructs.

Five motivation constructs - interest in language, interest in culture, integration, university requirements and job-seeking - were introduced in Chapter 3. In this chapter, the focus is on changes in the L2 motivation trajectory of the three case study students into third year of university, illustrated by both qualitative and quantitative data. These changes are presented in Figure 5.2, Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4 below, based on the students' responses to the following questionnaire items, organised in relation to five motivation constructs:

Interest in English

- English doesn't interest me at all (reversed item) (1)

- I think learning English is interesting (2)
- I think English is an interesting language (3)
- I like English (4)

Interest in culture

- I enjoy learning about English-speaking countries and cultures (5)
- I enjoy learning about the history and geography of English-speaking cultures (6)
- I enjoy learning about the people living in English-speaking cultures (7)
- I enjoy learning about the history and geography of English-speaking countries (8)

Integration

- I would like to live in an English-speaking country one day (9)
- I like native English speakers (10)
- I would like to take part in activities where English is the main language spoken by participants (11)
- I would like to be part of a cultural group in which English is spoken (12)

University requirement

- If a foreign language was not a required course I would not study English (13)
- If I had the choice I would prefer to study other subjects than English (14)

Job

- I want to try and find a job using English (16)
- I have to improve my TOEIC EIKEN etc. score so I can get a job in a particular industry (17)
- I need English to find a job (18)
- English is a requirement for the job I want to do (19)
- I think English will be useful for my career in the future (20)

The striking feature of Figures 5.2, Figure 5.3 and Figure 5.4 below is the comparative lack of change in motivation in relation to each of the five constructs over the three years for all three participants.

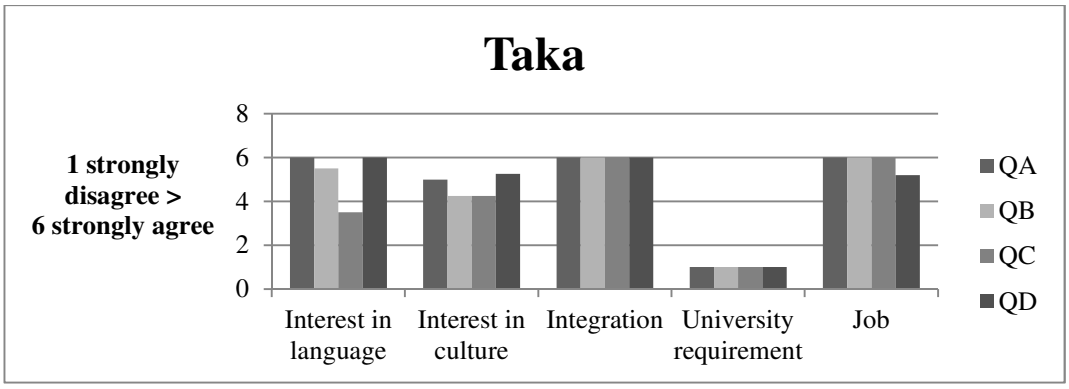

Figure 5.2 L2 Motivation trajectory (Taka)

An exception is for Taka's 'interest in language' (Figure 5.2) which surprisingly was low at the end of the study abroad program. Taka explained in interview 1 (July 2011) that in the last months at UKC, he preferred to use English for communication rather than for studying the language formally, so he ranked ***learning*** *English* (item 2) low. In this case, interview data was able to explain the quantitative results by giving a reason for the response.

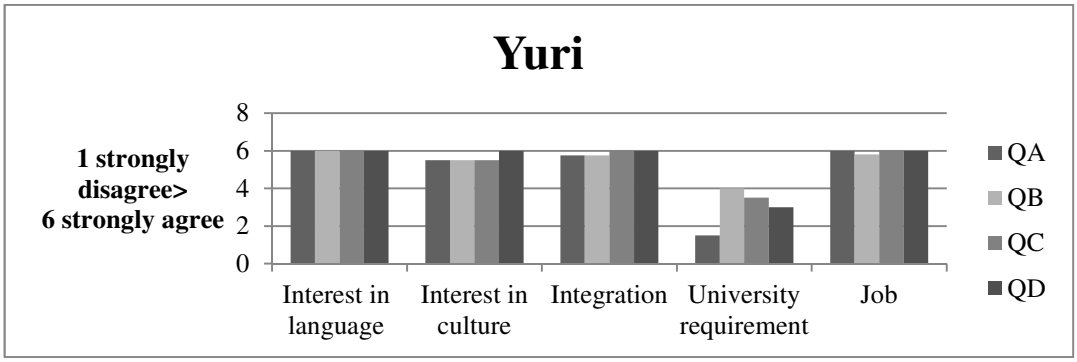

Figure 5.3 L2 Motivation trajectory (Yuri)

On the other hand, the qualitative data from the two interviews (July 2011 and July 2012) suggests that, for Yuri (Figure 5.3), the positive intentions indicated by responses in Questionnaire D were not translated into goals and actions. In this example, quantitative data was not a match for the interview results. Thus, the responses students choose on self-report scales, and what they actual do, may not necessarily be equivalent.

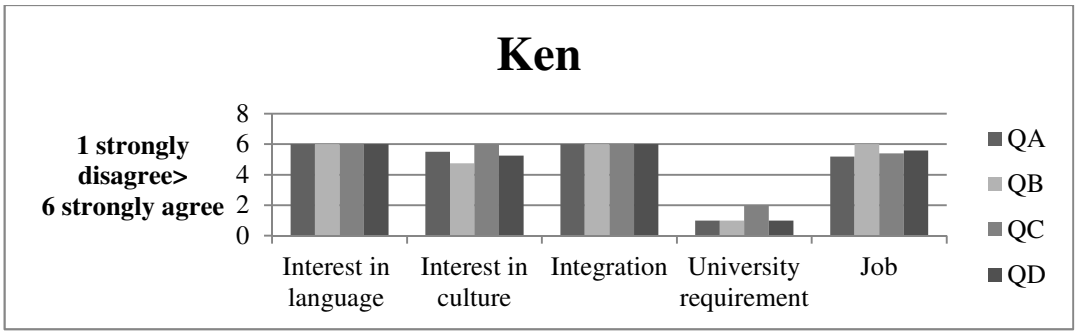

Figure 5.4 L2 Motivation trajectory (Ken)

For Ken (Figure 5.4), the student from the education faculty, the interview data could be used to explain and add to the quantitative results, and provide concrete example to illustrate the responses made in the questionnaires.

Through the use of qualitative data, the responses to the closed items on the questionnaires could be verified and explained. Furthermore, discrepancies between results lead to further exploration of the issue at hand. In this way, qualitative data enabled quantitative data to be interpreted more effectively.

5.6.13 Post-script: Fourth year and career goals

By the fourth year of university study, many students have obtained most of the study credits required for graduation, resulting in a light academic load. They commonly spend this final year on job hunting, working part-time, preparing for examinations, and writing a graduation thesis.

Three months prior to Taka's departure for Guam in May 2013, when asked about his main reasons for applying for the hotel internship in the US territory, he said that he applied to study English, and to experience English. Thus, rather than viewing the internship as a means of gaining future career-related hotel skills, it was the opportunity to live in an English-speaking environment once more which made the internship program attractive. When invited to expand this comment, Taka added that it was also for future job-hunting purposes and for fun. At the end of March 2014, Taka came back to Japan for the graduation ceremony, but returned to Guam to complete the last two months of the internship, before taking up a position in Tokyo in June 2014, at a hotel run by a well-known international hotel chain.

It is often easier to find a job in the more populated greater Tokyo area than in rural prefectures; nevertheless during the interviews in July 2012, Yuri was keen to find a job in her home prefecture. By April 2013, however, she had given up on trying to find a job in near her parent's home and was looking in the Chiba area instead. As to why Chiba and not Tokyo, Yuri replied 'less cockroaches!' Yuri has now found a job at a well-known hotel in Chiba prefecture. During the final job interview, the interviewer commented on her low TOEIC score; this comment initiated a new L2 motivation burst, resulting in Yuri being able to gain EIKEN level 2 by February 2014 before commencing her new job in April, 2014.

Prefectural-level teacher examinations for pre-service teachers in Japan commence in July of third year. While intending to be a high-school English teacher, Ken also applied for a fast-track recommendation as an elementary school teacher in Kyoto city. Although he passed the interview, he did not pass the final stage in August 2013, comprising a mock elementary school lesson on social studies. In 2014, Ken graduated and took up a contract teaching position at a senior high school in his home prefecture in western Japan. He is currently re-taking prefectural teacher examinations in two prefectures in order to obtain a permanent position.

5.7 Conclusion

Study 4, a multiple-case study, was used to explore the L2 motivation of three Japanese university students studying at a small private university near Tokyo. The longitudinal multiple-case study, drawing on interviews supported by a wide range of data collected over 34 months, used a dynamic systems approach to examine the study of English in three periods: pre-study abroad in Japan, during the study abroad in the United Kingdom and post-study abroad in Japan. The interviews presented learners with the opportunity to voice their opinions, and allowed the educator-researcher to 'accompany' them on their experiences, and thus to find ways in which to motivate all our students to become successful English learners.

In summary, the results of the questionnaires, interviews and observations revealed interaction between individual differences; learner styles; motivation related to prior

educational experiences, priorities, social and geographical issues; and goals and future career aspirations of each participant within complex individual L2 motivation profiles during their L2 learning journeys. In retrospect, these profiles may have acted as predictors for how their relationship with the English language evolved, and how it will continue to evolve after entering the workforce.

For Taka and Yuri, lecture-style and grammar-translation-style L2 learning environments did not match their individual learning styles and their future, communication-based careers in the hospitality industry. Entry into this sector, however, is often dependent on TOEIC or EIKEN scores, extending the potential mismatch between future usage and hiring requirements in this sector. Taka was able to improve his TOEIC score by taking subjects taught by NESTs and to contribute to his own learning by watching English TV dramas or reading books in English. Yuri, in contrast, continued to experience difficulties in adjusting to many aspects of the L2 learning experience in Japan, leading to a loss of motivation to enhance her English skills after she returned from the United Kingdom. Students like Yuri would benefit from continued online contact with UKC to maintain the link with the English-speaking study abroad environment. In addition, skills to adjust and adapt to a learning environment in general would be of benefit. For Ken, the pre-service teacher, JTEs, and more traditional teaching methods, were accepted and still valued, he was the student who found it easiest to adapt to the changes in the learning environment while also seeking the means to contribute to his own learning. Thus, while career destinations were instrumental in guiding the students and setting long-term goals, determination and learner contribution, supported by university English classes, were ultimately the key to maintaining L2 motivation over the full four years of university study.

5.8 Implications and directions for future research

A number of implications for future research have emerged in this final study. L2 motivation comes largely from within the learner, and each individual has a different set of motivating triggers. The teacher's role is to provide support and make an effort to come to know students' needs without being overbearing or intrusive. Furthermore,

stimulating the students to think about the role English will play in their future lives, and encouraging and promoting goal setting is essential. The role of practitioners and institutions is to provide guidance to students a way that creates an L2 learning environment where self-regulation, learner contribution and autonomy are valued and able to flourish. Furthermore, teachers must also be aware that L2 learning motivation is influenced by many aspects of the students' life not directly related to language learning, thus limiting the L2 educators influence.

One aspect of L2 research that became very clear as this longitudinal study unfolded is the importance and value of qualitative data in order to gain a detailed understanding of each individual's antecedents and prior experiences before, during and after study abroad. Ethnographic-based research allows the researcher to observe and analyse multiple perspectives in order to interpret behaviour (Ellis, 2012, p. 43). While each of the three students showed a similar preference for communicative language use, each stage of their L2 learning journey was directed and affected by diverse individual traits and experiences, for example, learner contribution and ultimate career goals. In this way, the multiple-case study supports claims by Ushioda (2009, p. 219) that linear cause and effect models are insufficient to capture the dynamic and idiosyncratic nature of individual L2 learning motivation.

In Study 4, experiences during the study abroad period were revealed through retrospective interviews and the three questionnaires completed at three-month intervals. Further means for researching the L2 learning experience during study abroad could include regular Skype interviews combined with narrative diaries to obtain real-time data.

To observe the long-term impact of a study abroad program and the impact of learning English in two very different environments, it is necessary upon the students' return to Japan to learn more about them through interviews and in the classroom. Each student reacted in individual ways to their return to Japan. At that point, the setting of goals, the development of language learning strategies and the visualization of future selves were essential for L2 motivation to be maintained. While two students, Taka and Ken, were able to achieve this, Yuri was left without goals and was

overcome with settling back in to life in Japan. As many students have similar profiles to Yuri, when the students return to Japan from study abroad, an intervention program could be implemented to set goals and develop language strategies as a means of enhancing L2 learning motivation in the Japanese L2 environment, similar to the successful intervention reported in Magid and Chan (2012).

A number of the comments made by the students during the interviews indicate that the three participants judged L2 interactions with Japanese and non-Japanese according to their English learning value. Whether ongoing judgements of the learning value of L2 interactions is detrimental to L2 success, and to the ability to make and maintain friendships, is an interesting question that deserves future research.

The contribution of the three participants in this study has been invaluable for obtaining insights into what motivates and demotivates students a cohort of Japanese university students to learn English, and how they coped with English study upon their return to Japan after spending ten months in the United Kingdom. By presenting their journeys using a variety of data, including student essays, interviews, observations and questionnaire responses, it is hoped that a holistic portrayal of the three participants' L2 experiences from university entrance to graduation has been given. The multiple-case study presented in this chapter is the final study in the series. Chapter 6 reflects on the results, implications and insights gained over the course of the research period. It also offers suggestions for professional practice and future research.

Chapter 6

Portfolio Conclusion

Synthesis of results: Key issues and implications

Portfolio Outline Guide			
Chapters	**Timespan**		
	Phase 1 Prior to April 2010 Before SA (Japan)	**Phase 2** April 2011 to February 2011 During SA (UK)	**Phase 3** April 2011 to February 2013 After SA (Japan)
Chapter1: Portfolio Introduction			
Chapter 2: Pre-university study of English in Japan: Exploring L2 motivation prior to entering university (Study 1)			
Chapter 3: Study abroad for Japanese students: Changing motivation (Study 2)			
Chapter 4: Studying English in the UK and Japan: Exploring the expectations and reality of English study abroad and at home (Study 3)			
Chapter 5: Individual journeys: A multiple-case study (Study 4)			
Chapter 6: Portfolio Conclusion	◎		

Time is not a line, but a series of now-points.

Taisen Deshimaru, Zen monk

6.1 Introduction

The concluding chapter draws together the findings of the individual studies which make up this portfolio. It revisits the aims and research questions, followed by a summary and synthesis of the key findings reported in Chapters 2 to 5. The significance and implications of the findings for practical application and research are discussed, and limitations of the findings clarified. Future directions and recommendations for further research are suggested in the final section.

6.2 Revisiting aims and research questions

This portfolio has investigated the English language learning experiences of a cohort of Japanese university students. The individual studies focused on the students' English language learning experiences in three successive environments and time periods: the pre-study abroad period in Japan during the years of schooling in Japan, the study abroad period in the United Kingdom during the students' first year at university, and finally the post-study abroad period in Japan during the students' second and third years at university. In order to capture L2 motivation from multiple perspectives, the first three studies in the portfolio followed the L2 learning experiences of the whole cohort, while the final study narrowed the focus of the inquiry to the experiences of three individual students. To explore the changeable and dynamic nature of L2 motivation through multiple lenses, a longitudinal mixed methods approach and a case study approach were adopted. The data collection processes included questionnaires, interviews and observations, spanning a real-time period of almost three years.

The four thematically-linked studies presented in this portfolio were designed around three primary aims. The *first aim* was to integrate three recurring themes in SLA literature: L2 motivation, study abroad, and the socio-cultural environment. The *second aim* was an attempt to track, and gain insights into, the L2 experiences of Japanese university students studying English through a longitudinal mixed-methods research design in order to consider how L2 motivation can be maintained over the four years of university. The *third aim* was to review existing knowledge from a fresh, and longitudinal, perspective in an attempt to bring new knowledge to the field of SLA research, and to find ways of improving practice.

Each study was designed to stand on its own, and separate research questions were posed for each individual study. The following is a summary of how these questions were addressed, and the key findings from each study.

Study 1 focused on exploring antecedents by answering the question of how the students evaluated their language learning experience prior to university. Language learning is a journey and for the cohort featured in this portfolio the journey commenced at the beginning of their secondary school years, at least six years before they entered university, or even earlier. This study revealed the participants' mixed perceptions and experiences of English study at school, which led to the identification of three learner 'prototypes'. Some students, the 'confident/ positive experience prototype', had started to enjoy English study at secondary level, as they realized they were quite good at English, or they had gained confidence in their own English skills. In contrast, other students, the 'low self-confidence / negative experience prototype', still carried negative 'baggage' from school that initially accompanied them on their study abroad experience. Other students, the 'study abroad inspired prototype', in spite of positive, negative or neutral experiences at secondary school, were interested in participating in the study abroad program. A blend of the three types, exemplified by one participant in the multiple-case study presented in Chapter 5, could also be identified. A fourth type comprised students who did not want to study abroad, but participated in the program as it was a compulsory component of the English curriculum within the faculty they had enrolled in. The degree to which students belonging to each prototype were able to make use of the ten months in the United

Kingdom, the extent to which negative experiences were overcome (or not) during the study abroad and beyond, appeared to depend on individual factors. These included a simple lack of interest in English study, compounded by future career aspirations which did not require English skills. For those students who intended to use English in their future careers, learner contribution and the setting of concrete goals supported by images of an ideal L2 self were essential to maintaining L2 motivation.

Changes in motivation during a study abroad program in the United Kingdom were addressed in Study 2 in relation to key motivation constructs. The temporal aspect of the study captured the fluid and changing nature of the constructs, resulting in U-shaped and reverse J-shaped graphs, representing change over time of the ideal L2 self (Dörnyei, 2009) and international posture (Yashima, 2002), as presented in Chapter 3. As pointed out in the subsequent interviews, students found they could not always use their English skills to communicate in European countries they visited over the summer vacation, thus highlighting the 'butterfly' effect, an integral concept of Dynamic System Theory (DST). Changes in motivation in relation to other motivation constructs measured in the study, for example, an interest in the culture of English speaking countries and an interest in integrating with non-Japanese, showed a steady increase throughout the study abroad period, reflecting the positive effect of the program. The results also indicated the presence of strong motivation related to constructs such as English for personal use and international posture. Furthermore, this study illustrates the necessity for multiple quantitative data collections and the importance of supportive qualitative data to capture and explain the changes in L2 motivation.

The focus of Study 3 was the L2 learning experience in the two environments: study abroad in the United Kingdom and the university in Japan. Learner perceptions provided the key for answering the first two research questions regarding the expectations and perceptions of the formal and informal components of the study abroad program. While student responses on the questionnaire indicated satisfaction with the study program overall, some discrepancies, for example in the comments regarding homestay, were uncovered in the interviews. Other finding related to the students emotional responses, for example the sense of disappointment caused by the

mismatch between expected and achieved improvements in communicative English skills, as well as the imagined and realized opportunities for interaction with the local community, and the quality of such interactions. The results illustrated the importance of a pre-study abroad orientation, and ongoing evaluations of study abroad programs.

The third question was designed to capture the impact of the two learning environments. Language learning does not take place as an occurrence isolated from daily life. The study abroad environment provided an environment surrounded by distractions, but which also involved the L2. The return to Japan and the 'normal life' of a Japanese university student, however, resulted in students being busy with subjects other than English, as well as with circles and sporting groups, and part-time jobs, where English was not usually required.

Study 4, a multiple-case study, placed three individual students at the centre stage of the inquiry. This study spanned the entire 34-month period of data collection. Through the use of retrospective questioning in the interviews, the learning journey of the individual students commenced with their earliest recollections about formal English study, followed the students through their university studies and culminated with their career choices upon graduation.

The value that longitudinal qualitative studies bring to the L2 research field was highlighted in particular in the multiple-case study. A number of insights related to the individual nature of L2 motivation could be gained, for example, the impact of English teachers and their teaching styles, L2 goals, the extent of learner contribution, and the effect of the socio-cultural environment. The study also highlighted the challenge and effort the participants faced in order to seek opportunities to use English in the United Kingdom and in Japan. The ability to adapt to different L2 learning environments and to make the most of possible L2 learning experiences, coupled with concrete L2 goals and strategies, and career choices featuring the need for English mediated by learner contribution, were all essential for students to maintain L2 motivation after the completion of the study abroad program. Furthermore, subsequent issues, related not only to academic study and the educational setting, but also to the

general lifestyle of students in the Japanese socio-cultural environment post study abroad, contributed to knowledge of issues impacting L2 motivation.

6.3 Synthesis of key findings

Two significant findings that emerged from the studies are the scope of the interrelated nature of the diverse components of L2 motivation, and the importance of longitudinal qualitative research to capture the individualized, dynamic and changing nature of L2 motivation. L2 success during the study abroad, and continued L2 maintenance and improvements after students return to Japan, are shaped by both socio-cultural and individual factors, and above all, the learner's individual contribution. Investigating change through time, and other factors, is one of the tenets of DST; thus, temporal and individualistic issues that arose could be addressed within DST.

The interrelated impact of the L2 learning experience, the learning environment, and career goals on L2 motivation is underscored throughout the studies presented in this portfolio. The importance of the temporal nature of SLA is also illustrated in the fluctuation of L2 motivation over time. The temporal aspect of the study, and its setting in two learning environments, foreground the fluid and dynamic nature of L2 motivation in both the student cohort as a whole, and in the experience of individual students. The fluctuation measured using the key motivation constructs suggests that L2 motivation is sensitive and susceptible to changes in the learner, and in the learning environment. Thus, L2 motivation cannot be studied in isolation, and any model of L2 motivation needs to be multi-faceted, multi-levelled, and temporal in order to address both the dynamic and idiosyncratic nature of motivation, and the impact of the surrounding learning environment and the learners themselves.

The relationship between the individual learners and their prior English learning experiences affected their subsequent approaches to language study, especially in the Japanese L2 environment. While the majority of students were motivated to improve their English skills during study abroad, prior negative English learning experiences could resurface after the return to Japan and affect subsequent approaches to language study.

The nature of language goals in the two learning environments was also different. During study abroad, the authentic L2 environment and the daytime program of intensive classes were strongly linked with, and supportive of, language learning goals. The link between L2 goals and the L2 environment became fragile, and sometimes broke once the students returned to Japan. In order for the link to remain solid, new and concrete L2 goals needed to be set, and as the supportive nature of the L2 environment weakened, learner contribution became essential. In addition, career goals also played a substantial part in maintaining L2 motivation. This was clearly illustrated by the motivating impact of clear, early-established career choices for pre-service English teachers compared to the wavering, vague career destinations of students in the other faculties. The disparity in the motivating impact of the study abroad environment compared to the L2 study environment in Japan cannot be ignored. Thus adaptability, coupled with the aforementioned concrete goals, and learner contribution, are required of students who intend to study English back in Japan and to use English as part of their careers. Finally, the overall impact of the two distinct learning environments (Japan/United Kingdom), and the economic, educational, geographic and socio-cultural environments in which the language study took place also affected L2 motivation.

The diverse factors which exert an influence on L2 motivation have been conceptualised in Figure 6.1, a diagram adapted from the process model developed by Dörnyei and Ótto (1998) and the L2 motivational self system (Dörnyei, 2005). All sections of this diagram are interrelated as indicated by the two-way arrows, and act on the L2 motivational loop. The L2 motivation loop is represented by three diamond shapes, based on the three stages in the process model (Dörnyei & Ótto, 1998). The diamonds work in sequence, but are also individually influenced by outside factors at all stages. At the *pre-actional* stage, motivation is generated by key motivation constructs, for example international posture or personal motivation, leading to the making of choices, the setting of goals and the commencement of actions. In this phase, success, coping potential and future selves are imagined. In terms of the students in this study, the choice to participate in the study abroad program resulted in various

images, such as speaking English to locals, and learning about the United Kingdom, and was then replaced by images of social or career options.

At the *actional stage,* motivation is realized, maintained, protected and appraised for the period of the action, for example, study abroad. During this period, students move closer to realizing previously held expectations and goals, or find that their expectations cannot, or were not matched by reality, or required more effort than initially believed. The effort expended is also related to perceived L2 investment, and the perceived value of the task. In this phase in particular, expectations are met or fall short, and students experience various ups-and-downs through exposure to various influences, which help or hamper their progress.

At the *post-actional* stage, the student evaluates the action, images or experiences, and distance from the initial goal or self. Formal evaluation, such as TOEIC or grades are also received. In this stage, the students attribute causes to explain why they were, or were not able to achieve their goals. Goals, images and future actions are reassessed, and the next action is initiated. This next action may well exclude L2-based goals, resulting in an L2 standstill period. For Yuri, a participant in the multiple-case study in Chapter 5, the main L2 goal at university was participation and enjoyment of the study abroad program, and this was replaced upon her return to Japan by goals relating to normal student life, rather than L2 focused study. In this way, English study faded into the background of her student life.

The *L2 motivation loop* signifies the ongoing repetition of the above three phases. At any one time, the students may be going through multiple phases (image, realization or evaluation) related to their L2 experience. For example while the expectation of making friends with locals may have been achieved, the goal of improving TOEIC scores cannot be processed until the end of the study abroad. Because L2 motivation has been shown to be an interrelation of many different factors (as discussed throughout the portfolio), Figure 6.1 is designed to present a multi-dimensional model. Within these interconnected dimensions, the L2 motivation loop is placed within the self-organizing proto-motivation system, a system that resonates with the principles outlined in dynamic systems theory (DST). These include interconnectedness

between the system and the surrounding environment and the ability of the system to instigate change within itself, as well as through complex reactions to initial and long-term conditions (Nitta, 2014).

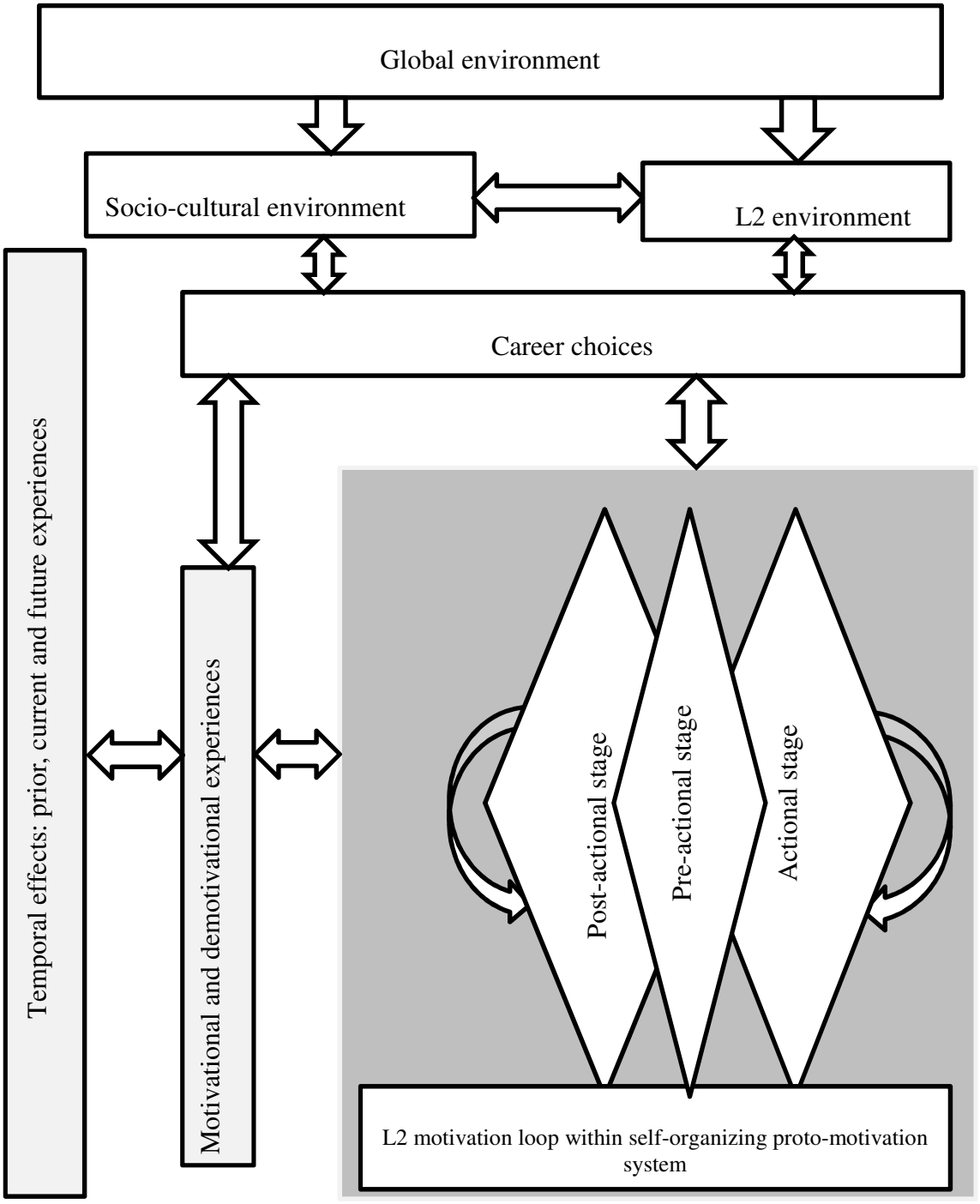

Figure 6.1 Dynamic nature of L2 motivation

Identified in Figure 6.2 below are the assorted factors (motivation constructs) which were shown to influence the overall success of the study abroad program in this portfolio. While the institution is responsible for providing formal program components supportive of L2 learning, and providing opportunities for interaction with locals, it cannot take full responsibility for the success of the program. Thus, what learners bring to the study abroad and how they adapt to the learning environment in the United Kingdom also contribute to the success of the program.

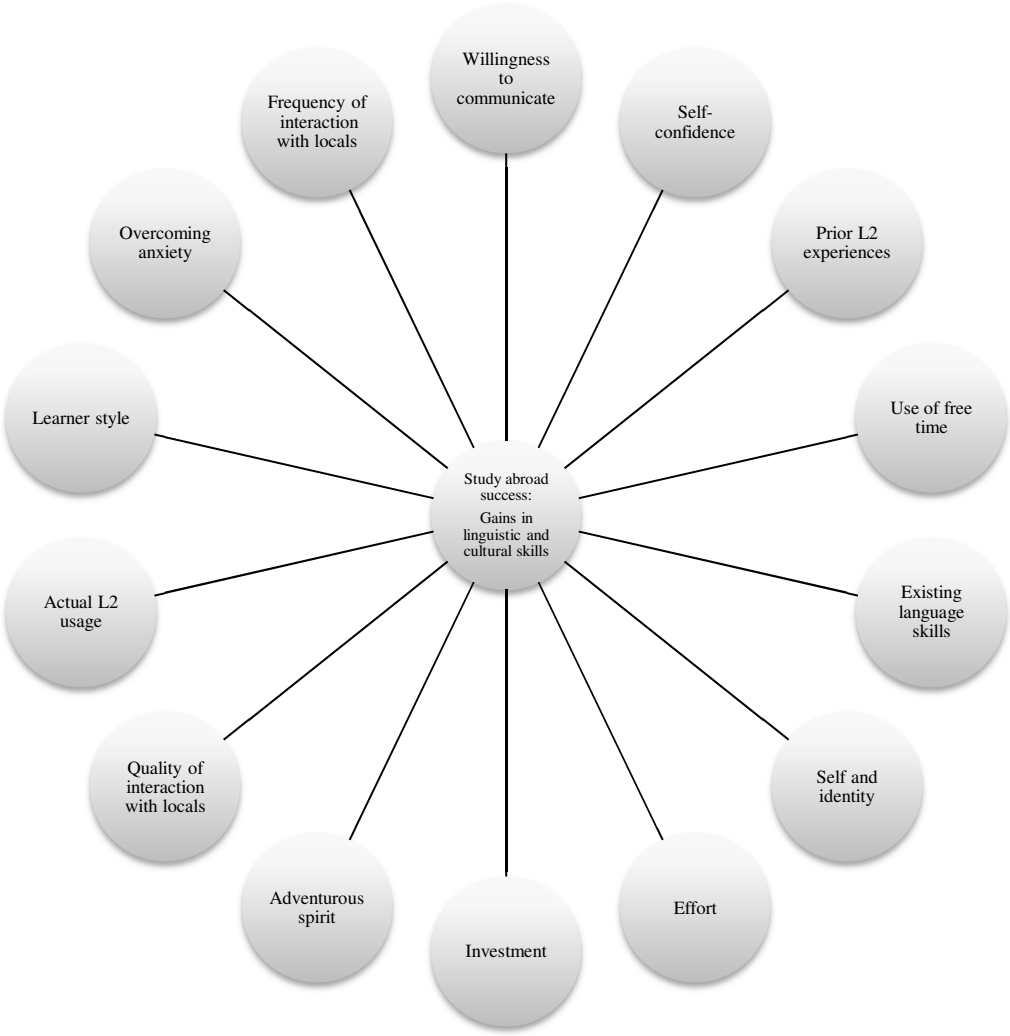

Figure 6.2 Ring of study abroad success

Maximum study abroad success depends on the majority of 'spokes' in Figure 6.2 being activated by the students, in addition to their active participation in the formal class program. Not all participants were able to obtain the maximum benefit, but even

those students who only used their free time to play a sport with the locals, gained confidence with communicating in English.

This portfolio of studies has contributed to theory and practice in a number of ways. It has presented original longitudinal data, drawing attention to both internal and external factors which can impact on varying aspects of motivation present among L2 learners both during study in the home country and study abroad. Highlighted is the importance of exploring the L2 learning experience, one of the elements of the tripartite L2 Motivational System proposed by Dörnyei (2009), from the learner's initial contact with the L2 through to the future image of the Ideal L2 self. Furthermore, the portfolio supports both socio-cultural theory (SCT) and dynamic system theory (DST) by capturing how the L2 development of a learner is closely integrated with the socio-cultural environment. While individuals may be exposed to similar L2 experiences, the unpredictable, variable and multi-directional L2 development of the participants discussed in the portfolio supports and demonstrates the existence of a self-organizing system, which operates within the surrounding socio-cultural environment. In this way, L2 motivation can be understood as emanating from a multi-faceted internal motivation system or *proto-motivation* present within individuals, which in turn is responsive to cognitive, social and environmental factors.

6.4 Implications

In reviewing the results laid out in each chapter, it is essential to define what value these may have for L2 motivation research, study abroad programs and foreign language pedagogy. The findings presented in this portfolio have a number of implications in relation to theory, methodology, and above all, to practice. Professional doctorates serve the purpose of improving practice, and it is hoped that the implications presented in the following sections can achieve this aim.

6.4.1 Implications for SLA theory and research methodology

This portfolio is designed to illustrate the importance of dividing the concept 'sojourn abroad' into different categories. Within sojourns abroad a number of categories can be identified, and comparisons between studies can only be attempted once these categories are defined clearly. For example, the students in this study could not be considered *kikokushijo* or returnees, as their stay outside Japan was limited to ten months after they had graduated from high school; their identity as a 'Japanese' had been firmly established by the time they left for the United Kingdom. Consequently, some of the traits of *kikokushijo* observed in Kanno (2003) or Ford (2009), may not apply to, or may only apply in diluted form, to a study abroad cohort of university students. In the same way, attention must also be paid to the length and type of study abroad programs.

Studies focusing on the L2 acquisition of immigrants, for example, Norton Peirce (1995), or studies focusing on bilingualism and English as a second language, rather than English as a foreign language are again in a separate category; the participants in such studies have left their home countries permanently, and usually only return to their original countries as short-term visitors. For many immigrants, connections with the local community are a direct investment in their future, and the level of engagement on the part of the community also tends to be more substantial as the potential relationship between the immigrants and their new neighbours are more permanent in nature.

Second, as discussed in the introduction in this section, language learners, language learning and L2 motivation are multi-dimensional, interrelated, dynamic and individual, and it is necessary for research to 'connect the dots'. Furthermore, the impact of time, changes and the socio-cultural environment must be taken into consideration when conducting motivation research. The above can only be achieved through inquiries which incorporate the possibility of non-linear L2 motivation pathways being explored in a longitudinal design.

Third, longitudinal research is prone to high rates of attrition. Incorporating tokens of appreciation for participation in the original study design may encourage participants to remain in the study. The studies presented in this portfolio relied on good will, resulting in a high attrition rate, which consequently led to limitations being imposed on the analysis and interpretation of the quantitative data.

6.4.2 Implications for ELT practice in Japan

A number of implications regarding ELT learning and ELT practice in secondary and tertiary institutions in Japan arose while the individual studies were being conducted. They range from the socio-cultural and socio-geographical aspects of L2 acquisition and the image of English in Japan, to the management of study abroad programs, and the visualization prowess of those concerned with the teaching and learning of English in Japan.

A common complaint of students studying English in Japan is the lack of opportunities to experience and use English meaningfully. While the amount of English loanwords, often disguised by their *Japlish* (Japanese English) forms, is high, and visually stimulating signs, posters, brochures, billboards and products featuring English abound, English usage by Japanese can vary dramatically. Seargeant (2009) gives a detailed account of how English is conceptualized in Japan, from English as a global language to English education in schools and theme parks. The participants in this portfolio do not seem to consider that Japan or Japlish itself is in any way beneficial to their English study, unless they can experience authentic encounters with non-Japanese living in Japan, or go to places run or frequented by non-Japanese.

The image of Japan as a place where English cannot be experienced at all must be re-conceptualised by learners with support from educational institutions. Seeking out opportunities to use English authentically does, however, take effort and imagination. For example, there are international sporting, social and volunteer groups in the Tokyo area, although it must be acknowledged that participation poses difficulties in terms of effort, time, anxiety and money as discussed in the preceding two chapters. Famous tourist destinations also offer opportunities for authentic interaction with non-Japanese people. Opportunities for reading and listening to English also exist, and can aid the

students' English studies. For example, free magazines, train announcements, bilingual TV shows, billboards and signs can all complement classroom study. It seems that the image of Japan as a place where it is impossible to experience English is a mindset of the participants and the general public in Japan, but one without justification in the greater Tokyo area at least. Most comments in the interviews supported this negative image and students further propagated this image by not seeking out opportunities and resources that were available.

Nevertheless, Japan is not a multicultural country, nor a country with land borders, across which travelers routinely pass on their travels, as in Europe; nor has Japan been colonized by a European power. This means the Japanese environment must be considered on its own terms. It is a fact that the majority of the population is Japanese (126,393,679, 2013 census), and as of 2011, there were only 2,078,508 non-Japanese people registered in Japan, over one third of this number from other Asian countries, notably China, Korea and the Philippines. There are still rural areas in Japan where the sight of non-Asian faces is rare, and in fact, some people may have never met in person a *hakujin* (literally *white person*, meaning Caucasian). Students returning from the university to their hometowns may not have either the need or opportunity to use English in their future lives, and the necessity and motivation for learning English fades accordingly.

It will be interesting to observe the kinds of changes that will occur in the lead-up to the Tokyo Olympics in 2020. At this stage, the introduction of English as a formal subject from Grade 5 of elementary school from 2018 has been confirmed and further interventions are planned as part of the MEXT Globalization strategy for elementary and secondary school English education, and for the Global 30 program for large and well-known Japanese tertiary institutions. Furthermore, improving the communicative English skills of the general population and service and tourism industries, hiring additional labour from outside Japan for construction work on limited-term visas and standardizing tourist signs are forming part of the preparations for 2020. In this way, the linguistic landscape and image of Japan may also undergo changes which will aid and support L2 motivation.

6.4.3 L2 experiences prior to university

English language acquisition in Japan does not commence at university. Even though this portfolio has focused on university-age students, the importance of dealing with antecedent experiences at the secondary, if not primary level of English education in Japan cannot be ignored. How the participants felt about English at the commencement of their tertiary education (Chapter 2 of this portfolio), alongside the findings of recent studies conducted at the secondary level by Inaba (2013), Kikuchi and Browne (2009) and Rapley (2010), all suggest the presence of continuing problems in secondary English education in Japan.

6.4.4 Study abroad programs

The study abroad program at the university has been a drawcard for over twenty years and the program continues to be adapted. While the university has extended pre-departure guidance from 2015, post-study abroad debriefing is also important, and should be an integral part of the program as a means of making students a part of the decision-making process. This task should be tackled systematically by study advisors attached to students according to faculty, and language teachers in Japan. Comparisons with similar programs, such as the hybrid study abroad program combining English instruction with architecture classes conducted by Japan-based lecturers due to be launched by an engineering university in Tokyo, may also lead to further innovations.

One important practical implication that deserves consideration is the timing of the study abroad experience. The program which was the focus of this portfolio was run in the first year of a four-year university degree. If students are exposed to an L2 environment and learning experience which they feel is more suitable to their own personality and L2 goals, the likelihood of becoming negative and dismissive of their home culture L2 environment and learning experience is high. This unfortunate side effect of study abroad can have a demotivating effect on further study and future careers in the home country.

Related to the above issue is the peaking of L2 motivation, English skills and interest in English in the first year of university. For many students, the study abroad program

acted as an L2 *motivator* or *re-motivator*, and was the 'highlight' of their university English study. This means that for some students, no subsequent English learning experiences in Japan were able to compare with the L2 experience abroad, and thus for some students, L2 motivation decreased and the return to Japan resulted in the reappearance of the pre-study abroad mindset.

The ten-month program in the first year, which was the focus of this portfolio, has now been replaced by the university with five-month programs. From 2015, students will choose to study abroad in first, second or third year, for a maximum of ten months. If students choose the program in the first year, similar problems may continue to occur and will need to be addressed. Thus, participation in the program from the second year may be of greater benefit to the students overall. There are three reasons for this, supported by the findings in this portfolio. First, English programs at the university in the first year can build English skills and strategies prior to departure, and prepare the students for study abroad later in their course. Second, if the peaking of motivation is delayed by a year, this high level may be sustained into the third year of study. Finally, delaying study abroad by a year would allow students from other areas in Japan to settle into university life in the local area, leading to fewer adjustments problems.

The timing of the study abroad programs is also dependent on the underlying curriculum and study program in each of the four faculties and on the use of UKC facilities. While the second semester of first year seems to be ideal in terms of timing as the students can undergo extensive pre-departure guidance for the new five-month program, gain credit points in other courses, while still allowing them to prepare for job hunting from the latter half of third year, UKC facilities are used by secondary schools at this time of year, leaving the first semester of first, second or third year as the only available options. Furthermore, unlike programs where individual or small groups of Japanese students study at local universities overseas, the UKC campus is a part of the Japanese educational foundation, and students from Japan support the employment of the majority of local staff. Thus, the timing for the study abroad program needs to be carefully considered so it can be of benefit not only to students but also to staff.

6.4.5 Maximising the impact of study abroad

The interviews conducted in the third year of study with individual students for the multiple-case study showed that the students viewed the study abroad program as a valuable, once in a lifetime experience. Efforts should be made to maximize the motivating influence of the program, both pre-departure and post-return, rather than running the program in isolation. At present, the link between UKC and the university campus in Japan is not exploited to its full potential. A minority of students is involved in open campus activities where they recall their study abroad experience for the benefit of prospective students. Debriefing sessions are also run by some teachers, but these are not formally organized.

One essential step in maximizing the study abroad period is the introduction of pre-and post-study abroad courses. The program for the pre-study abroad course could offer an introduction to culture, a comparison of Japanese and British culture, academic skills and educational advice for classes, a discussion of cross-cultural manners and communication styles, how to engineer social opportunities to interact with locals and lastly discuss common differences in expectations and reality. The post study abroad program should aim to build upon the students' emerging global mindset, and be offered to both Japanese and the, mostly Asian, international students studying at the university. Dialogue between students of different nationalities within Asia could enhance the understanding of cross-cultural issues and offer a bridge for communication and exchange for both the international and local students. The Japanese students could also act as 'culture and language guides' to first year international students.

A link between the Japanese university and UKC may be provided by technology or specific projects. The establishment of virtual classrooms and the possibility of taking credits online offer one possible way of extending the study abroad environment to Japan on a permanent basis. The majority of students returning from UKC are keen to stay in touch with teachers, and recent advances in technology could thus be used to run 'virtual UKC classes' via satellite links. At present, a satellite link with UKC is only active for an event run during the university festival. This technology could be a

way of maintaining an official academic link between the university and UKC for students, rather than relying on the current expectation that students will maintain contact informally without assistance. As the time difference between Japan and the United Kingdom may pose difficulties, pre-recorded UKC lectures and online study may also offer possibilities to maintain an active link between the study abroad and home L2 environments. A project, for example involving the students in preparing a study abroad guide, could also aid in maintaining a post study abroad interest in English and intercultural studies. In fact, the writing and publishing of such a book will commence from November 2014, and this opportunity may also contribute to the consolidation of and reflection on the students' learning experiences while abroad. These sessions may also be used to encourage the setting of new goals for the continuation of English studies in Japan.

6.4.6 Autonomy, motivation and learner contribution

While the link between autonomy and motivation has been clearly established in research, autonomy is one of the most challenging concepts to introduce into the classroom in Japan (Stewart & Irie, 2012). Creating supports and networks to enhance autonomy depends on learners wishing to be active and responsible participants in their learning. At the same time, it must also be acknowledged that reactive autonomy, rather than proactive autonomy, may be preferred by students in both western and Confucian L2 learning environments (Noels, Chaffee, Michalyk & Sugita McEown, 2014, p.142). Students who continue to view the Japanese environment upon their return as one that cannot facilitate English study, or attribute their lack of improvement in English solely to the Japanese learning environment, have not adapted to the changes in the learning environment. Thus the students need support to work on creating virtual or real, meaningful and satisfying opportunities to use or study English, which in turn require the ability to act autonomously. Furthermore, a balance between the academic and social dimensions of English study may assist the students in coming to terms with differences between the learning environments.

The question that must be asked is how institutions can support the learners, for example encouraging adaptive skills and autonomy. While the complete answer remains elusive, changes supportive of the above are possible in a number of areas. A lack of learner contribution and autonomy is not only a concern in English education in Japan, but also in other academic subjects. The importance of self-study skills and academic skills should be an integral part of university orientation programs, as well as being supported in class. If an increase in non-Japanese students on campus is a difficult proposition, one possible way forward is using technology to extend the borders of the Japanese L2 environment and create classroom-based virtual language learning opportunities to support both the social dimension and academic dimensions of language learning.

While learner contribution had a substantial impact on L2 motivation during the study abroad in the United Kingdom, its importance after the return to Japan became even more apparent. Some students saw themselves as a container to be filled, or a baby animal that simply waits to be fed rather than beginning to search for its own food, signalling a mindset that learning is a one-way process, and that knowledge is simply received, rather than sought. The result is limited autonomy, few concrete goals and practical strategies, and a weakened resolve to succeed in English. Students with a negative experience at secondary school and low English ability were particularly susceptible to falling back into this 'teacher-centred Japan' mode upon their return. Other students felt they were an active contributor to their own learning, and maintaining their English skill by integrating out-of-university activities into their English study schedule.

The insights presented in this portfolio indicate an interrelation between learner contribution and the setting and resetting of goals. Students and staff need to ask how and whether concrete (and realistic) short, mid- and long-term English learning goals are defined, and how these goals can be translated into self-directed achievable learning goals.

Furthermore, students may commence university as minors under Japanese law, but graduate as adults. Adult learning is not simply a passive process but also one that

indicates a desire to be in the language classroom (Igoudin, 2013, p.204). The students have made a choice to be at university and, while some English classes are compulsory, students should begin to exhibit responsibility for their success, or lack of success, in terms of study. While the students are ultimately responsible for their own learning, this requires independence and autonomy. The institutions, educators and students all need to operate in accord in order to achieve this outcome.

Educators and institutions need to consider not only students' language learning goals but also the forces generating these goals. With these forces and student input in mind, a suitable educational environment which balances Japan's cultural traditions, corporate reality and international needs with the students' learning styles and career aspirations can be created. This means we need to be aware of, and acknowledge, the social-educational environment and the interrelationship between each student and ourselves as educators within this environment, in order to support the students in achieving their career goals. We also need to create a learning environment that encourages autonomous learning suitable for a variety of cultural environments, in other words *cultural intelligence* as well as language skills.

6.4.7 Balancing act

The research participants' return to Japan and the 'normal life' of a Japanese university student, busy with subjects other than English, circles and sporting groups, and part-time jobs, had an effect on L2 motivation and the L2 learning progress. The time allocated to English study, the English study environment, and the overall use of English in everyday life underwent changes. In addition, career choices and options also influenced L2 study post study abroad. Results in the studies showed that students who were able to make the best use of the study environment were able to adapt to the type of learning offered in each learning environment. Participants in study abroad programs need to be willing to contribute to their own learning experience by acknowledging and understanding that education systems work alongside the socio-cultural practices and geographical environment in which they are set. The universities might offer comprehensive pre-departure guidance sessions and

post-study abroad debriefing sessions in order to encourage the maintenance and growth of L2 motivation.

6.4.8 Assessment of L2 skills

The importance attached to obtaining qualifications in Japanese society is deeply ingrained. As long as formal assessment of English does not equally address the four macro-skills, namely reading, listening, speaking and writing, then a more communicative approach to language teaching is not likely to be valued by the majority of learners, who need the qualifications to pass the initial stages of job applications. At the same time, students who wish to improve their English skills for social purposes may not be satisfied with an L2 environment where too much importance is placed on multiple-choice assessment over communicative skills.

6.4.9 The L2 self

The expectations and the realities of study abroad, and later of careers, are related to being able to visualize realistic outcomes. Results in this and other studies indicate that if all the components, detailed in Chapter 2, of an ideal L2 self are present, this combination can motivate students to work towards their English goals at university and for job-hunting. Introducing activities into language classes aimed at enhancing the *ideal L2 self* have been suggested in the literature. For example, activities for interacting with the L2 community abroad, such as shopping and travel, have been recommended by Hadfield and Dörnyei (2013). The participants in the study abroad program, however, have already been doing these things in reality, so the next logical step consists of envisioning their ideal L2 selves in a professional environment. This will require careful analysis of future workplaces by students and teaching staff alike, and the design of an appropriate English curriculum which matches workplace criteria to avoid a 'fake' ideal L2 self can be a double-edged sword. The creation of realistic professional L2 selves may also be supported by work experience, teaching rounds and internships, for example, those experienced by Taka and Ken in their fourth year at university. If internships pose a logistic concern, a return to the workplace setting of situated learning and Communities of Practice (CoP) (Lave & Wenger, 1991) may act as a key to aid the visualization of realistic future L2 work

environments within the university–level EFL classroom. The imagined community may aid in the construction of learner identities (Miyahara, 2014, p.209). A course of study may thus be built around such an imagined community of practice, and at the same time open the door for an action research inquiry.

Unfortunately, due to the limited length of this study, it is not possible to comment on the relationship between career choices and continuing evolution of the ideal L2 self for the cohort of students in this study. Following the career paths of the students, who took part in this study, is a possibility for a future research project.

Finally, the insights gained throughout the studies presented in this portfolio may provide guidelines for students, practitioners and institutions alike to consider the impact of studying English in two study environments, and to extend their understanding of language learning journeys. Mapping learner journeys across all disciplines might also offer teachers and students in education faculties, such as was the focus of this study, insights into the learning journeys of students they may teach in the future.

6.5 Limitations

A number of limitations were recognized after the study was commenced. These limitations include the small sample size, which prevented the quantitative data from undergoing a number of statistical procedures, the use of a convenience sample, the timing and absence of the researcher during the initial data collection in the United Kingdom, the use of self-reports and retrospective accounts, and the unique educational setting.

Each year, the student intake varied, so the pool of possible participants fluctuated accordingly. When the initial plan for the research was approved, the number of first year students in the program was much higher than in the year when the research commenced. For example, in 2008 the number of students participating in the study abroad was nearly 200 students, yet in 2010, this number contracted to 105 students.

While it would have been ideal to have the entire intake for 2010 participating in the questionnaires, only 43 participants had completed all three questionnaires by the end of the study abroad (Questionnaire A: N=72 > Questionnaire B: N=50> Questionnaire C: N=43 > Questionnaire D: N=15). This may indicate that participants who completed all three questionnaires were of a certain type and may have not have the same characteristics as those students who did not elect to participate in the study. It should be stressed that participation in any part of the study was entirely voluntary, did not involve any kind of payment or reward and no conscious effort was made to coerce any participants to complete any part of the data on which this portfolio is based.

Information based on data from closed item questionnaires related to ability in particular may involve some cultural bias. The notions of self-enhancement and/or self-promotion are perceived in a negative manner in Japan and Hong Kong, among other countries. In contrast, an open display of one's strong points is considered the norm in American culture and evaluated in a positive manner (Markus & Kitayama, 1991, p.242). Studies by Heine, Takata & Darrin (2000) and Wada (as cited in Markus & Kitayama, 1991), have found that questions or feedback reporting on one's own abilities actually encourage a self-effacing or modesty bias in answers by Japanese students. In contrast, results by Yamagishi et al. (2012) indicate that a significant cultural difference was present only if a 'bonus payment' was not involved. This raises the question of conducting questionnaires with or without monetary benefits.

The smaller intake in 2010, in addition to the number of actual respondents, affected how the statistical analysis of the quantitative data was conducted. Although items on the questionnaire had been tested in previous Japanese EFL research, the limited sample meant that a confirmatory factor analysis after the initial questionnaire was not possible. The sample size also prevented the possibility of discovering any causal relationships, and consequently data analysis, with the exception of the Friedman test, was restricted to largely descriptive statistics. If the number of participants had been higher than 100, a further statistical test such as a one-way ANOVA could have been calculated and if the student numbers had been over 500, latent growth analysis

modelling could have been run. The above-mentioned limitations of this portfolio could in turn be addressed in future research.

As indicated in Section 1.2.2, the studies in this portfolio were carried out at a private university in Japan and at its United Kingdom campus. The study abroad program itself is an unusual addition to the English curriculum in Japan, as all students, regardless of English language skills or specific course enrolment, excluding the teacher education faculty students, can participate in the study abroad program. A similar program does not seem to exist anywhere else in Japan in exactly the same form at the tertiary level. This makes it very difficult to replicate the quantitative results; but on the other hand, the qualitative results, and the multiple-case study in Chapter 5, can be used as a point of comparison for similar studies of individuals.

In addition, the range of academic and English skills at the university varies greatly which, if seen as a positive, gave the study its diversity. Moreover, apart from students in the education faculty who wished to become English teachers, students who participated in the study abroad program were not exclusively English majors. Students at top private and national universities in Japan, or those who are English linguistics or literature majors, may have responded differently to the questionnaires and interviews, and their overall English proficiency at the start of university may have been higher. Again, this factor of student ability is worth considering in future research.

Limitations related to timing and the researcher not being physically present initially affected data collection. Students in the 2010 intake left for the United Kingdom within a week of the entrance ceremony. Due to this tight timeframe, collection of questionnaire and interview data could not be attempted during this short period. The collection of questionnaire data in the United Kingdom was carried out by a colleague, thus direct interaction between the researcher and the participants did not occur until the second year of study in Japan.

Furthermore, a number of limitations regarding the use of self-reports, retrospective accounts and interviews have been noted in research. The former two in particular may be subject to inaccuracies related to recall (Featherman, 1980; Tourangeau, Rips

& Rasinski, 2000, p. 82), and while it may be said that most data was retrospective in nature, the length of time participants were asked to recall in the studies varied from months to over ten years. Limitations related to situational context may also have occurred. For example, it may have been easier for female students to answer questions in interviews with a female researcher. Social desirability (Schwarz, 2007, p.283), or need to present oneself in a favourable light, are also potential sources of bias, as are the intensity of experiences. Furthermore, the difficulty in ascertaining and comparing the exact combination of teachers and classes that prompted student responses in Questionnaire C and Questionnaire D and interviews is an issue in this type of research. Finally, the nationality and language use of the researcher may also have resulted in responses of a different nature than if the researcher had been Japanese.

If a similar study were to be repeated, a number of points might be addressed differently. First, rather than participant responses being based on memories of high school and elementary English classes, ideally the inquiry into learning trajectories should commence when Japanese students first encounter English formally in elementary school. Second, the researcher should be in close contact, preferably in person, during the university study abroad phase. If this is impossible, Skype and other technology may be employed. Third, questionnaires, used to collect quantitative and qualitative responses, should be computer-generated and collected online. Fourth, an intervention or active research component should be included in the research design. Intervention techniques may take the form of visualization and imagery training as introduced in research conducted recently by Chan (2014) and Magid (2014), or such techniques could be customized for this particular setting, including to study the effect of an online program run by UKC after the students return to the Japanese campus.

6.6 Directions for future research

Reflecting on the formal data collected over the past 34 months, from April 2010 until February 2013, and the informal chatting and interacting with the students, culminating in the their graduation in April 2014, the researcher concludes that the

multiple-case study, and the variety of qualitative data collected throughout the research period, are the most illuminating and insightful. In retrospect, it would be of great value to the practice of language teachers to obtain this type of information routinely, for example, through narrative journals, as a possible means of gaining further insight into the complexities of an individual's L2 motivation over time.

Study abroad programs vary in type and duration. Further research to investigate student perceptions of a variety of programs can aid in the development and implementation of study abroad programs which support the development of language and cultural skills. In particular, there appears to be a need to monitor and explore changes in L2 motivation relating to the adjustment and readjustment phases of the learning journeys of students participating in study abroad programs using both small and large scale studies.

While the studies presented in Chapter 2, Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 of this portfolio attempted to explore the L2 motivation of a single cohort of Japanese university students over three years, this was a small, exploratory study. A need remains for, in particular, more longitudinal case studies in order to observe, understand, explain and address fluctuations in the L2 motivation of university students in Japan over time.

The need to address the gap between learner expectations and subsequently experienced reality was raised in Chapter 4. Determining the extent to which study abroad brochures, and English language textbooks used in elementary, secondary and tertiary English classes in Japan, reflect realistic study abroad experiences and the realistic use of the target language in various social or business situations both abroad and in Japan, may assist in narrowing this gap.

For the majority of students in Japan, university English classes are the final stage of learning English in a formal classroom setting. It is not, however, the end of the language learning journey. Exploring how adults have maintained L2 motivation and used English through their working life may be of assistance in encouraging students at university to set realistic goals and visualize ideal L2 selves.

Thus, the use of a three-tiered longitudinal model tracking students from secondary school, through university to the time they enter the workforce and beyond could investigate whether images gained in classrooms of L2 usage in chosen careers match the reality, and observe other socio-cultural factors that impact L2 users in the workplace. Knowledge gained through real-time or retrospective data could in turn inform practice at the tertiary level and allow insights into longer language learning journeys. While this study has concluded in October 2014 with the submission of the portfolio, tracking the three students introduced in the multiple-case study in Chapter 5 by keeping in regular contact throughout their language learning journeys would be a suitable and valuable starting point for post-doctoral research.

Finally, socio-cultural differences not only between countries, but also within Japan, may affect L2 motivation. Regional customs, cuisines, dialects, ways of thinking and adaptability differ even now, as Japan is grappling with its identity in a globalizing world. There is a marked difference between Japanese people from the Kansai area, including Kyoto and Osaka, who are seen as more lively, warm and outgoing, to Japanese from the Kanto area, who are seen as being more formal, serious and reserved. There is a possibility that the outgoing and chatty nature of the student Ken, introduced in Chapter 5, who did not worry too much about making mistakes when communicating, was not only due to his character, but also to being raised in the Kansai area. Furthermore, the English skills needed by individuals differ according to the prefectures and towns in which they live. Exploring how students from different areas in Japan approach study abroad and language studies in general, would have been intriguing, but was unfortunately beyond the scope of this portfolio.

6.7 Conclusion

A central function of a professional doctorate is to improve practice. In April 2014, the findings of the study reported in this thesis were included in a review of the study abroad program. In response to this review, and to ease some of the readjustment issues, the university has decided to increase the pre-study abroad guidance period, and to provide students with a study abroad guide book. From 2015, this guidance period prior to the study abroad will be extended from one week to four weeks, giving

the teaching staff in Japan the opportunity to explain the expected changes in the learning environment, helping the students to prepare for both study abroad and a smooth re-entry into the Japanese L2 environment. Additionally, students will be informed about possible strategies to make the most of the study abroad experience, and ways in which to duplicate or continue some aspects of the study abroad once they return to Japan. Providing students with strategies to adjust to the changes in the two distinct L2 learning environments may thus strengthen the motivating aspects of the two learning experiences, while weakening the demotivating impact of the return to the Japanese environment. At the same time, a further increase in communication between all English teaching staff at UKC and the university is required to assist in the greater integration of the English curriculum in Japan and with the study abroad program at UKC.

In February 2013, relevant aspects of the studies in the portfolio were presented to staff in Japan to make them aware of student opinions, and to encourage reflection on their own teaching styles and the ways students might perceive their classes. Insights gained throughout this series of studies are also shared with students, parents and colleagues during informal discussions and interviews. As mentioned in Chapter 1, select findings from the individual studies and overall implications of this portfolio have been presented at domestic and international conferences. In this way, some of the insights related to the L2 motivation of Japanese university students presented in this portfolio have been encouragingly received as relevant and of interest to a wide range of language practitioners both in Japan and overseas.

In spite of the limitations, multi-faceted and rich insights gained through the variety and extent of the data collection underpinning this portfolio of studies have resulted in an original contribution to L2 motivation research. Many students and parents have an image of study abroad as a 'magic language pill' with success guaranteed. What is not always understood is that study abroad requires learner contribution and entails a return to the home country. While the 'magic pill' may assist during study abroad, ways of enhancing both its immediate and long-term effect also need to be considered. This portfolio represents a contribution to practice by focusing on both the study abroad period and the return to the home country. The series of studies has explored

the L2 experiences of university students in the UK and Japan using both a longitudinal mixed methods approach and case study approach within a DST framework. While the use of longitudinal qualitative and mixed methods research in Japan has increased substantially since this research project was initially conceived six years ago, studies of over one year in length encompassing an extensive study abroad program remain rare. This study has thus contributed to the study abroad research methodologically.

This portfolio represents a multifaceted exploration of L2 motivation as experienced by Japanese university students with initial low to intermediate English skills. It has captured a rich and often unpredictable diversity of factors acting on L2 motivation, many of which are worthy of further research. The portfolio has also contributed to practice, by illustrating how different areas of the learning journey can be made more 'passable' for the students, in turn leading to the critical examination and transformation of both the study abroad environment and the home country study environment. Even though learner prototypes can be identified, the nature of L2 motivation dictates that each individual has different motivational triggers. Each language student must be supported to contribute to their L2 journey by finding and activating these triggers. Educational institutions that include study abroad in their programs of study should aim to narrow the distance between expectations and reality, and to challenge and correct assumptions and preconceptions about different learning environments in order to prepare students for the balancing act which is required to successfully navigate L2 acquisition during study abroad and on return to the home country.