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Asian migrant women's identity negotiation as language learners:

Significant events towards imagined identities

A thesis

submitted in full fulfilment

of the requirements for the degree

of

Doctor of Philosophy in Faculty of Education

at

The University of Waikato

by

JINAH LEE



THE UNIVERSITY OF
WAIKATO
Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato

2016

Abstract

Social identity issues come to the fore when people migrate from one place to another. Study of identity issues has been a central theme in understanding migrants. However, ambiguous and complex identity negotiation processes have been underexplored. Recently, demographic changes in Aotearoa NZ, due to the increase in the population of Asian migrants, concern many, because there is little known about the population in relation to the migrants' experiences in identity changes. This thesis will therefore attempt to unfold the complexity of identity negotiation processes in the study of Asian migrants in Aotearoa NZ, in particular, mothers. This research can provide a further understanding of the population and can contribute to the academic field of identity theories.

Asian migrant women as language learners struggle to settle in Aotearoa NZ. They hope to belong to the society through identity negotiation. The process of negotiation is individually different and dynamic. However, socially informed identity theories guided by Wenger's (1999) Communities of Practice framework provide a starting point to explore the dynamics of these processes. This research not only seeks to examine the complexity of these negotiations but also to develop a structure which can explain such complexity.

The research design was underpinned by theoretical concepts of social constructionism and narrative inquiry. To capture the dynamic identity negotiation processes, I collected narratives of significant events. Six Asian migrant women living in Hamilton, Aotearoa NZ, participated in the research. They engaged in prompted recounts and eight in-depth individual interviews, which consisted of one initial, six post-recount and one reflective interview, during a twelve month period. The iterative interview process also included the researcher's responses to the participants' shared stories, and reflective journal writings after each interview session.

The findings show that identities of the participants are not static and are related to the complex relation of imagined identities and past experiences, in the context of local and global environments. The dynamism of the participants' identities is also linked to the changing nature of their recounts in relation to the perceived level of significance. These ongoing shifts are shown in interview contexts. During the interviews, the participants often add statements to increase their self-value while they narrate stories indicating a weak sense of belonging. The statements are performed as *strategies* (Marginson, 2014), and the strategies are diversity and hybridity. Also, the dyadic relationships that developed between the participants and the researcher during the interviews, which were outcomes of the methodological frame, proved to have played a role in increasing the participants' self-value and the possibilities of positive identities.

The discussion of the findings presents close connections between a sense of belonging and sense of self-value in relation to identities. The participants' identity negotiation processes took place in relational contexts. The contexts reflect important aspects of dyadic relationships in the negotiation processes. The results provide implications for social identity theories, narrative research, and pedagogies of EAL teaching and learning.

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisors Dr Judy Hunter and Associate Professor Margaret Franken for their academic support with deep knowledge, motivational encouragement when needed, and patience with my progress.

Besides my supervisors, I would like to thank Dr David Cooke and Heather Read for their support on my Ph.D. writing journey with their knowledge of English language and with their insightful comments.

My Ph.D.. journey also was not possible without my participants. I would like to thank sincerely Emily, Holly, Jessica, Lucy, Mia, and Simi, who willingly committed to the research for twelve months and openly shared their personal stories.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my children who often made me forget the struggles and challenges of the Ph.D. journey with their laughs and loves. I also deeply thank my parents who believed in me and supported my life in general so that I could continue the journey to see the completion of this thesis.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

The research aims to investigate the identity negotiation of Asian migrant women as language learners. This chapter presents the background of the study which consists of identity issues, migrant women, and language learners. Section 1.1 describes the rationale for my interest in identities. Section 1.2 describes the rationale for my interest in the journey of identity negotiation of Asian migrant women. Each section includes my personal background as an Asian migrant woman in Aotearoa NZ, in a reflective manner in relation to the research topic. Section 1.3 presents overall objectives of this present research. Lastly, Section 1.4 overviews the organisation of the thesis.

1.1 Motivation for the study

This section presents my motivation to study Asian migrant women's identity negotiation as language learners. Section 1.1.1 describes my interest in identity issues. Section 1.1.2 describes how my personal journey as an Asian migrant woman in Aotearoa NZ has motivated me to study the topic.

1.1.1 Identity issues

My scholarly inquiry into identity goes back to the outcomes from my research on students' perceptions of multicultural education in the context of South Korea. As part of a master's degree in education, I investigated secondary school students' perceptions about multicultural education. Even though the research was not directly related to identity issues, students' answers included great concerns for losing their identity when multicultural education was promoted in the curriculum. The answers puzzled me with questions like, "What is identity?" and "Why did they say they would *lose* their identities?" They continued, "If they have perceptions that identities are national identities, then what does a Korean identity look like?" "Why does the fact that identities change worry them?" I could not answer these questions, and ever since then, the questions have remained in my mind.

About a year later, I moved to Aotearoa NZ, and I was able to understand the students' concerns in different ways. I was socially categorised by others. My identifications were defined by others, not necessarily by me, at the beginning of my settlement and they became my identities. The way I viewed myself like a competent and able female was neither noticed nor valid. My identities were socially constructed. The fact that I was distinctively viewed as an Asian and a migrant overwhelmed me. I remember I tried to resist those identities as the only identities I would have because I could sense that they were associated with negative discourses. For example, I was viewed as an Asian nanny for my children (whose father is a European New Zealander) by passers-by. My experience seems to be in line with the literature on Asian migrants which shows that Asian migrants experience their identities as unstable and often imposed by others (Butorac, 2011; DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Ho & Bedford, 2008; Pio, 2005). The identity issues among Asian migrants will be further examined in Chapter 2.

Reflecting on my first few years in Aotearoa NZ, I deliberately remained a sojourner by rejecting the imposed identities such as migrant. Even though I applied for a permanent residence visa, I often provided ambiguous statements when people asked the purpose of my stay in Aotearoa NZ. The identities I imagined for myself were not well matched with the imposed identities. This distance is described in the following section.

1.1.2 Identity constructions and challenges

Asian migrant women, in general, have hopes for the future in a new home, as is indicated in stories of migrants like those in Thomas and McKenzie (2005). For instance, Ju-hee from South Korea narrated her settlement story and claimed that she migrated to Aotearoa NZ for better education for her children. Their hopes were not those of socially assigned identities like Asian and migrant. Reflecting on my journey, I felt like one of the participants in Thomas and McKenzie (2005), and the sentiment resonates with participants' claims in Kawakami (2009) in which Japanese migrant women in the USA reported that they were just Asian migrants

rather than women professionals. I sensed that the *just another Asian woman identity* (Kawakami, 2009) seemed to imply a devalued sense toward the person.

I resisted the ascribed identities like Asian migrants and language learners and started to construct a Ph.D. student identity. Underlying the onset of the new identity construction may have been the desire to be valued as a member of the host society. In Norton's (2000) study, for example, Eva (a participant) hoped to study a degree programme in business to rid herself of an immigrant identity. To do that, she needed to learn English. Along with learning the language in class, she worked at a restaurant not only to support herself financially but also to learn English. Her journey to becoming a valued worker at the restaurant was described as a "long and arduous process" (Norton, 2000, p. 62). She became a valued employee. However, her identity was in her view a weak one, and the negotiation was ongoing. Eva commented on an incident when a customer asked whether she was using her accent to hope for more tips: "I wish I did not have this accent because then I would not have to listen to such comments," she said (Norton, 2000, p. 74). Eva's desire to be accepted and recognised as just one member of the mainstream society resonates with my journey. I did not feel comfortable when people appeared to regard me as someone who did not fit in with the rest of the group or community.

My journey to fit in and be valued as a member of Aotearoa NZ society has been a long and constant struggle and even after seven years, it continues. Initially, I imagined myself as a Ph.D. student even before I left for a new home here. However, my enrolment was delayed by the slow process of acquiring a permanent residence (PR) visa, unsuccessful attempts to enrol in the programme, and also family issues I had to deal with. Overall, my journey as a Ph.D. candidate has been an ongoing challenge.

Among the many challenges, one significant part of the struggle for me was language, as in Eva's story above. Nevertheless I was considerably well equipped to communicate in English, I was a language learner. People often asked me where I studied English. My study on the challenges of Korean international students in

New Zealand, which I did as part of my personal interests (Lee, 2011), suggests that Asian sojourners perceive English language to be the main challenge in settling in a new home. Learning English seems burdensome to individuals who use English as an additional language (EAL). At the same time, it is perceived as a key to overcoming other challenges like a lack of social support.

Learning the language is perceived to be critical for migrants (Barkhuizen & de Klerk, 2006; Hamberger, 2009; Han, 2012). The importance of language to identities is also often seen in the literature (Giampapa, 2001; Hochman & Davidov, 2014; Kroskrity, 2001; Pavlenko, 2001). Among them, Pavlenko (2001) demonstrates the link between language use and identity negotiation in the study on autobiographic narratives of American writers who use English as an additional language. The analysis of the writers' narratives demonstrates that their social identities were re-negotiated when they used the second language.

Ethnic Asians as language learners may go through unique identity formation processes to gain a feeling of belonging in their new society. The fact that their language learner identity may heavily influence Asian migrant women's identity negotiation processes concerns the New Zealand government in policy making and implementation (New Zealand Office of Ethnic Affairs, 2002). These issues are further discussed below.

1.2 Asian migrants in Aotearoa NZ

In this section I discuss how the present research involves a social issue present in Aotearoa NZ. I have described being viewed as Asian in Aotearoa NZ in Section 1.1.1. I was assumed to be Asian by others because of my face. I thus refer to Asian migrants as a group of people who *look Asian*. I place Asian women as a single group, and the reason is that people often distinguish others by physical features like skin colour and facial features (Crocker, 1999; Locke & Johnston, 2001).

Migrants from Asian countries, except for the Chinese gold miners in the 1800s, are relatively recent migrants to Aotearoa NZ. They are collectively distinguished

as an Asian migrant group even though there are distinctive differences in language and culture. The collective term also seems associated with certain discourses about the population as seen in the literature (Alexander, 2004; Malhi, Boon, & Rogers, 2009; Park, 2011; Ward & Masgoret, 2008). The term even applies to New Zealand-born Asian-looking people. Banks (2015; SpeakFilm, 2009) expresses his frustration as a “Kiwi” Asian in that he was often challenged because of his Asian face.

Aotearoa NZ is rapidly moving to become a multicultural society. The population of Asians in Aotearoa NZ has significantly increased in the last 30 years or so (Statistics New Zealand, 2015a, 2015b). The result from the 2013 Census shows a notable increase in the number of people who identify with at least one Asian ethnicity—a 33 percent increase since 2006 (Statistics New Zealand, 2015b). The increase is likely to be the outcome of increased immigration. As Bedford and Ho (2006) observe, Aotearoa NZ is the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) country with the highest per capita rate of immigration. The Asian population is likely to continue to increase (New Zealand Office of Ethnic Affairs, 2002; Statistics New Zealand, 2010, 2015a). The 2013 Census shows that twelve percent of the Aotearoa NZ population identify themselves as Asian, which represents the third largest ethnic group followed by European and Māori at 74 percent and 15 percent respectively. This figure signals the importance of understanding the population.

There are some concerns associated with the Asian population, one of which lies in the fact that Asian migrants do not feature strongly in migrant policy (Spoonley, 2014), and that there is a lack of settlement assistance (Tan, 2013). The other concern raised relates to social issues. A New Zealand government document on racial discrimination in Aotearoa NZ (Statistics New Zealand, 2012) reports that people who identified themselves as Asian experienced the highest levels of racial discrimination in any social setting.

The population trend and related concerns provided me with another critical reason for the research. Investigating the ways Asian migrant women experience

their lives in Aotearoa NZ may help us to have a closer understanding of the population to find ways of supporting them and to assist with policy making. I began the present research not only to document my personal inquiry but also to respond to the need for critical and timely social inquiry in Aotearoa NZ.

1.3 Objectives

As seen in the discussion of my motivation for the present research (Section 1.1), I am interested in how Asian migrant women experience their changing identity in their new home. The work of negotiation may be dynamic and complicated as seen in Section 1.1.2. Also, the trend of increased Asian migration in Aotearoa NZ as seen in Section 1.2 indicates further complication in the individual identity negotiation journey. The present research thus intends to investigate the individually different identity negotiation processes, not only to understand individually dynamic identity journeys but also to have a clear view of the complexity of Asian migrant women's identity negotiation. The objectives are achieved by the narrative inquiry approach which is described in Chapter 3.

1.4 Thesis outline

Following this chapter, the thesis is structured in the following way.

Chapter 2 examines the theoretical lens of identities and discusses the gaps in present identity theories. I begin the discussion of identity theory with Wenger's (1999) Communities of Practice (CoPs) model, to present the key concept that identity negotiation is related to a sense of belonging to CoPs. This model also encompasses notions of negotiated experiences and learning trajectories as discussed in the first section (Section 2.1). Next, I move to the literature on identities of Asian migrant women as language learners (Section 2.2). While presenting the theory and relevant literature, I discuss any gaps. From there, I present the research questions (Section 2.3).

Chapter 3 presents the methodological foundations I used to choose and shape the research methods. The foundations are social constructionism, narrative inquiry, and prototype development (Section 3.1). Next, I describe the data generation methods, which include interviews, prompted recounts and researcher's responses and reflective journal writings (Section 3.2). I describe the data analysis methods, which consist of analyses of participants' narratives and discourses in interview contexts (Section 3.3). I introduce the participants and describe my role as the researcher and describe the research relationship which was created during the research (Sections 3.4 and 3.5). I describe ethical considerations in the research (Section 3.6). Lastly, I present how I maximised trustworthiness of the present research (Section 3.7).

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 present the findings of the present research. Chapter 4 focuses on the participants' identity negotiation processes as an individual and unique journey. I present each participant's narrative (Sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6), and also my narrative as a researcher (Section 4.7) while participating in the data generation. Chapter 5 presents an analysis from the investigation of commonalities across individual and unique identity negotiation processes. The outcomes include identities available to the participants (Section 5.1), factors which afforded the participants' imagined identities (Section 5.2), constraints which prevented the participants from entering communities (Section 5.3), and ways the participants responded to the affordances and constraints (Section 5.4). Chapter 6 presents outcomes of the relationships in this narrative research between the participants and the researcher. I discuss how relationships were developed in interview contexts (Section 6.1) and how the relationships positively influenced both the participants and the researcher (Section 6.2).

In Chapter 7, Discussion, I revisit the theoretical and methodological lens used in the study in relation to the findings in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. This chapter begins with a summary of the results responding to each research question (Section 7.1). Next, I discuss the link between identity and sense of self-value as well as the strategies the participants used (Section 7.2). Lastly, I discuss the important roles of dyadic relationships in identity negotiation processes (Section 7.3).

Chapter 8 concludes the thesis. I present an identity negotiation model and apply the model to the participants' stories as a way to sum up the findings (Section 8.1). Next, I present the research's contributions to the fields of identity theory, narrative inquiry, and EAL teaching and learning (Section 8.2), followed by a discussion of the limitations of the study (Section 8.3). Lastly, I reflect on my own personal research journey to conclude the thesis (Section 8.4).

Chapter 2 Literature review

The central issue of the thesis is identities. In this chapter, first, I draw on identity theories to map out the important features of identities in relation to my research topic—the identity negotiation processes of Asian migrant women in Aotearoa NZ. To do that, I use Wenger's (1999) concepts of identity as a starting point. In particular, this literature review discusses identity through the lens of Wenger's (1999) socially informed framework. Discussion of the framework allows me to discern gaps to find what deserves further exploration in this study of identity. Next, I look closely at the literature focussing on language learning identities of Asian migrant women. This allows me to discuss the importance of language learner identities in the Asian migrant women's identity negotiation processes.

Section 2.1 looks in detail at features of Wenger's identity theory. The first feature is identity as membership. In this section, I identify the complexity of membership and identity by discussing its link to a sense of belonging as well as to the link between a sense of belonging and hybrid identities in the literature. The second is identity as a negotiated experience. In this section, I identify what influences negotiation and what the outcomes of negotiation are. The third is identity as a learning trajectory which links the past, present and future. I locate imagination as a central feature in the concept of trajectory. Section 2.2 focuses on the literature on Asian migrant women as language learners. I first engage in the literature on language learners' identities. Next, I look at the identity negotiation processes of language learners and women in the literature. Section 2.3 lists the research questions that have arisen from the literature review.

2.1 Identity negotiation

A range of researchers (Barkhuizen & de Klerk, 2006; Kazmierska, 2003; Y. Kim, 2011; Norton, 2000) have used the concept of identity to fully understand the migrant experience in research. Migrants encounter unfamiliar and conflicting discourses as they attempt to resettle, and in this process the question of identity

arises (Delanty, 2003)—the ways people view themselves, and the ways they are viewed by others are challenged.

In a study of second language identities, Block (2002) discusses the issue of emergent and dynamic identity in migrants as follows:

Conflict . . . arises when individuals move across geographical and sociocultural borders. In such situations individuals often find that any feelings they might have of a stable self are upset and that they enter a period of struggle to reach a balance. At this stage, it is easy to conceive of identity as contested in nature as the new and varied input provided to the individual serves to disturb taken-for-granted points of reference. (p. 4)

Like the statement above, migrants experience their sense of self is disturbed when migrating. Then, identities become an issue for migrants to manage because their stable selves are disturbed when they cannot use the “taken-for-granted point of reference” in the ways they are used to during interactions. For example, a migrant woman notices that she is no longer viewed as a teacher—a significant identity for the woman in her home country. The absence of the identity may disturb the familiar ways the woman interacts with others. She faces the need to align with others through identity negotiation, as seen in the quote above (Block, 2002), but what occurs is that people struggle to reach a balance. The ways she gains a balance, by examining the experiences, can illustrate her identity negotiation processes.

Negotiation occurs in social contexts. Norton’s (2000; Norton Peirce, 1995) studies on immigrant women in Canada illustrate how their identities were negotiated, shaped and reshaped through experiences and interactions within social contexts. Poststructuralists, feminists, constructivists, and sociolinguists see identity as socially constructed (Butler, 1999; Kroskrity, 2001; Norton, 2000; Pavlenko, 2002b; Wei, 2011). This view suggests that identities are not static as social settings change.

The dynamism of social settings implies that individuals' experiences and their identity negotiation vary in different contexts. Wenger's (1999) concept of identity in Communities of Practice (CoPs) indicates the changing nature of identities because an individual is involved in many CoPs. Even though Wenger's identity framework in CoPs seems concise and useful, the concept of CoPs may not be directly applied to the communities that migrant women belong to. Many migrants may not belong to CoPs in which members are expected to become experts. For instance their experiences are not like those of the insurance claims processors in Wenger's research contexts (Wenger, 1999). Thus, I am careful about the use of CoPs and when appropriate, I will use *communities* instead of *CoPs*. A more detailed critique of the concept of CoPs is addressed by Amin and Roberts (2008), and this point is revisited in Section 2.1.3 on the shortcomings of CoPs.

Identity in CoP, though, provides a valid point as Benwell and Stokoe (2006) state that Wenger's framework challenges the traditional classifications of fixed social identities by arguing for the recognition of the dynamic, shared experiences of individuals in groups or communities. As CoPs we belong to change, so do identities. For example, a migrant woman from Japan may study in a language class, work at a grocery store, and volunteer at church. The experiences at church may not be the same as those in a language classroom. Also, the experience in the language classroom may influence the experience at a grocery store, as CoPs can overlap. Various experiences in each CoP will shape the migrant woman's identities in different ways. In this way, Wenger's (1999) identity theory may offer a rich and productive conceptual lens to understand Asian migrant women's identity construction as English language learners in different contexts.

I start the review with Wenger's definition of identity as mapped in CoPs. While elaborating on his concept in the next three sections, I draw on related identity theories and references to migrant individuals and discuss the shortcomings of Wenger's framework. In Section 2.1.1, I discuss the concept of community of practice, community membership, and the nexus of multimembership. Next, I extend the discussion to other concepts in the literature related to membership—

sense of belonging and hybridity. In Section 2.1.2, I discuss how Wenger's framework of identity as negotiated experience is related to other important literature such as that on boundary crossing of migrant individuals. The interplay of the local and global in negotiated experiences and its impacts on identity is also investigated. In Section 2.1.3, I discuss Wenger's concept of identity development and change as learning trajectories. In this section, I discuss identity trajectories as related to *imagination* in the literature of migrants.

In the subsequent section, Section 2.2, I cover the literature on Asian migrant women and explore how identity is context dependant. In particular, I consider how identity is shaped by language learning. To conclude the literature review, I address the issue of how this research may capture the complex and dynamic nature of individuals in CoPs, individual agency and power relations (Handley, Sturdy, Fincham, & Clark, 2006), which have been little considered in Wenger's framework.

2.1.1 Community of practice and membership

Wenger (1999) theorises identities in CoPs, considering community as "a way of talking about a social configuration in which [the] enterprises are defined as worth pursuing and [the] participation is recognisable as competence" (1999, p. 5). Other theorists, such as Gee (2005), add an emphasis on the importance of shared systems of meaning making. In other words, a community is purposeful, and involvement in the community provides certain benefits to the members. Through ongoing interaction, members of the community create and engage in practices to pursue a shared enterprise. This leads to the formation of a CoP. According to Wenger (2006), there are three crucial characteristics of CoPs: shared interests, ongoing interaction, and shared practices. Over time, these characteristics lead to shared repertoires of negotiable resources, which are potentially reflected in the identity of each member. Wenger's concept of identity as membership in CoPs seems useful in studying Asian migrant women's identity construction because it recognises that migrants need to build these repertoires through interaction, and engage in identity negotiation to obtain legitimate membership in communities.

However, I also consider its shortcomings. Although Wenger's identity framework in CoPs offers theoretical underpinnings of this research, I note that membership may not be sufficient to examine Asian migrant women's identity negotiation processes. The reason is that Asian migrant women may be absent in legitimate memberships and the sort of belonging that Wenger presents. Therefore, I critically examine the possible gaps in the concept of membership in Sections 2.1.1.1 and 2.1.1.2. In Section 2.1.1.3, I critique the relations between a sense of belonging and membership, suggesting that membership does not necessarily entail a sense of belonging. In relation to belonging, in Section 2.1.4, I discuss what may make the identity negotiation of Asian migrant women different from that of non-Asian migrants.

2.1.1.1 Membership

Membership means an identity according to Wenger (1999). Being a member of a community means that the person is interacting with others, is acting in a certain way to be viewed as a member of that community, and is sharing the history of the community's practices. So, membership entails a form of competence when one participates in community practices and knows and acts according to the community's ways of being and doing (Wenger, 1999). According to Wenger, the experience and the display of competence evolve through the mutuality of engagement, the accountability to an enterprise, and the negotiability of a repertoire. For example, the Ph.D. supervision community I have belonged to has a goal of each member producing a thesis. All members have engaged in regular communication to achieve this objective. Supervisors have provided ongoing responses to my work, and the work I have produced has been the outcome of the interaction and the mutual goals. The ongoing writing and rewriting process has been the result of negotiation between the supervisors and myself. Through this process, the members who are involved in the Ph.D. supervision community have displayed competence and have come to recognise each other as legitimate members.

Wenger's notion of identity as membership is similarly expressed in the work of a number of scholars. Gee (2007), for instance, uses the term *Discourses* to refer to the way in which membership is entailed through "the ways of behaving, interacting, valuing, thinking, believing, speaking, and often reading and writing, that are accepted as instantiations of particular identities by specific groups" (p. 3). He states that a Discourse is a way of doing and being to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group. Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) do not tie their definition of identity to the construct of Discourses or CoPs but state that identity is a composite of "social, discursive, and narrative options offered by a particular society in a specific time and place" in order for individuals to "appeal in an attempt to self-name, to self-characterize, and to claim social spaces and social prerogatives" (p. 19). The identities are socially available memberships. Identity as in Pavlenko and Blackledge (2004) relates to the work of an individual or a group to claim available memberships. Even though the presentation of identities takes different directions, the literature implies a link between membership and identity.

Identities refer not only to membership but also to the individuals' dynamic experiences in CoPs such as "I am an easy going person" when one identifies oneself from the point of view of others. Stets and Burke (2000) caution against the separation of identity as identity in groups, on one hand, and identity of the self, on the other. They suggest that "the complete theory of the self would consider both the role and the group bases of identity as well as identities based in the person that provide stability across groups, roles, and situations" (p. 234). Gee's Discourse theory (Gee, 2004, 2015) hints at the link between self and identity in his discussion of the link between primary and secondary Discourses. Primary Discourses refer to a set of Discourses which is acquired early in life as "a culturally distinctive way of being an "everyday person" as a member of our family and community" (Gee, 2015, p. 3). Other Discourses people acquire later in life become secondary Discourses (Gee, 2007, 2015). He discusses the connection by saying that "our primary Discourse gives us our initial and often enduring sense of self" (Gee, 2015, p. 4). Primary Discourse becomes a filter of sorts when people

learn the secondary Discourses, learning new ways of being a member of a community (Gee, 2015; Lundell & Collins, 1999).

Gee's categorisation of Discourses and the literature on identity (Andrew, 2011; Andrew & Arnold, 2011; Gee, 2007; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Wenger, 1999) show a glimpse of the complexity in the theory of identities which includes the work of self. However, social identity as membership does not seem to fully take account the interrelation between social identities and personal identities, as argued by Stets and Burke (2000). Since I plan to holistically understand *identity work*, I hope to be able to unpack this interrelationship. This indicates a shortcoming in Wenger's identity framework in CoPs in attempting to understand individuals' identity holistically. To deal with this shortcoming and to obtain meaningful outcomes from the research, I carefully designed the study to include iterative in-depth individual interviews and story sharing between participants and the researcher. The detail of the methods is described in Chapter 3.

2.1.1.2 Nexus of multimembership

We have multiple identities. We all participate in more than one community. Communities not only constitute groups of people who interact in shared endeavours with shared purposes and systems of meaning making (Gee, 2005; Wenger, 1999). The term *communities* also refers to *imagined communities* (Anderson, 1983). According to Anderson (1983), modern nation-states are imagined communities which are self-conceived and created through the work of imagination. Imagination is also noted by Wenger (1999) as a mode of belonging to CoPs (the work of imagination is further discussed in Section 2.1.3.1 in relation to identity as a learning trajectory). Recently, the term—*imagined communities*—has been adopted in applied linguistics (Kanno & Norton, 2003; Norton & Kamal, 2003; Pavlenko & Norton, 2007) to discuss how language learners invest in learning the language for their future desires. Pavlenko and Norton (2007) highlight the complex process of imagining and reimagining multiple memberships that language learners create in their identity trajectories. The imagined

communities are part of their identity trajectories. In this study, I address imagined communities as part of multimembership for Asian migrant women.

Because we belong to many communities including imagined, our identity cannot be singular. The forms of participation of each community explicitly or implicitly affect one another (Rogoff, 2003; Wenger, 1999). Experiencing different forms of participation challenges and changes participants' sense of identity.

Norton's research (Norton, 2000; Norton Peirce, 1995) on immigrant women in Canada showed how the nexus of multimembership changed the identity of one language learner in a classroom. Martina (a participant in Norton's study) was an English language learner and also an immigrant, a kitchen helper, and a primary caregiver. Martina hoped to improve her spoken English while working as a kitchen helper because she saw increased proficiency in English as a way of realising her role as the primary wage earner in the family. Her language learner identity was related to her identity as kitchen help at work and a breadwinner at home. The connection between the private and public world impacted on how Martina created opportunities to practice English in the workplace.

Multimembership can also cause conflict. Martina (Norton, 2000) reported that she was excluded from the interaction with teenage co-workers not only because she was a language learner but also because she was a mature person. The exclusion kept her from improving her English, and she felt that she was marginalised. Similar to Martina but different regarding the disconnectedness of multimembership, the story of Vivian (Pailliotet, 1997) shows the extreme conflict between two different contexts. Vivian, a Chinese immigrant to the USA, reported that she acted as an independent adult in an American college setting but remained a *good* Chinese daughter at home. Her identity at home challenged her college student identity. She recalled it as stressful but necessary in order to participate in each community.

2.1.1.3 Sense of belonging and membership

A sense of belonging is “the experience of fitting in or being congruent with other people, groups, or environments through shared or complementary characteristics” (Hagerty, Williams, Coyne, & Early, 1996, p. 236). This is similar to *alignment*—one of Wenger’s (1999) modes of belonging. However, Hagerty et al. (1996) construe the experiences of fitting in with other members as a sense of belonging. This indicates that the investigation of individuals’ experiences can show an individuals’ sense of belonging. The literature on language learners’ experiences (Choi, 2009; Kinginger, 2003; Norton, 2000; Ro, 2010) shows that experiences are ever-changing, and thus the sense of belonging, too, is not fixed but highly temporal. Thus, investigating experiences may reveal one’s sense of belonging.

Many scholars (Bauman, 1999; Delanty, 2003; K. Mercer, 1990) link identity with a sense of belonging. They agree with the view that identity becomes an issue for individuals when they experience the feeling of not belonging. In his second language identity study, Block (2007) links the rise of identity questions with the observation that there is a lack of sense of belonging for many language learners. In this sense, Wenger’s (1999) framework for membership as identity requires further investigation in relation to migrants’ access to membership as language learners.

Membership, in the form of participation, may be an issue for language learners like Asian migrant women. To obtain a legitimate membership in the mainstream society, Asian migrant women are expected to have legitimate language skills (further discussed in Section 2.2). Two studies illustrate the point. Han’s (2012) study revealed that fluency in the dominant language is critical for migrants to enter a new society, and that language is “primarily an issue of access and legitimacy” (p. 147) for Chinese migrants in Canada. Colic-Peisker’s (2002) study of Croatians in Western Australia established a close link between the participants’ sense of belonging and their English language use. The findings show that early settlers with a lack of language proficiency struggled to belong to mainstream

society due to language barriers, and later settlers with high language proficiency still expressed a lack of sense of belonging to the Australian community because of their accents.

Differences in discourses, along with language issues, are perceived as a hurdle to gaining access to CoPs (Cho, 2009; Pio, 2005). For example, the job application process in a new home may be very different from the one which the migrants are used to. From the study of twelve Indian migrant women working in Aotearoa NZ, Pio (2005) found that her participants perceived that being Asian and being different were seen as challenges to entering the workforce in Aotearoa NZ.

Moving from peripheral to core participation may be another issue for people who have perceived language issues and differences in discourses. A relevant indication is seen in Wenger's (1999) concept of relations of participation and non-participation, as in the statement: "Whether non-participation becomes peripherality or marginality depends on relations of participation that render non-participation either enabling or problematic" (p. 167). He also points out the importance of connection to other members to become a legitimate member from a peripheral position. Connecting to other members seems to signal the importance of language skills and similarity in discourses. For migrants, it may be a challenge to participate fully in CoPs because of differences in discourses and difficulties in communication (the challenges of being language learners are further investigated in Section 2.2). The challenge is closely related to a lack of a sense of belonging.

The challenges of gaining a sense of belonging in CoPs because of language issues and unfamiliar discourses are sometimes seen as associated with marginalisation. Gomez (1998) points out that the lack of a sense of belonging is common among marginalised groups such as immigrants. Butcher, Spoonley, and Trlin (2006) similarly identify that migrants experience social exclusion and a sense of not being accepted in Aotearoa NZ. This may indicate that Asian migrants may assign their lack of sense of belonging to being marginalised. Conversely, it can be said that gaining a sense of belonging will reduce a sense of being marginalised.

According to Baumeister and Leary (1995), the need to belong is a fundamental human motivation. Because it is a basic need, people will seek to belong to CoPs, in which they will try to gain a sense of belonging. That may lead us to assume that membership will result in belonging and consequently lead to a sense of belonging. However, it is not a matter of course. Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008) argue that belonging is a process, which is in line with Wenger's (1999) statement that the work of belonging involves "a combination of engagement, imagination, and alignment" (p. 183). Wenger (1999) highlights that the modes of belonging require different conditions and different kinds of individual work. This contributes to the complexity of the work of belonging.

Understanding the complexity of the work of belonging may begin with the exploration of individuals' sense of belonging. Mahar, Cobigo, and Stuart (2013) examined 40 articles relevant to the term "sense of belonging", and define a sense of belonging as "a subjective feeling of value and respect derived from a reciprocal relationship to an external referent that is built on a foundation of shared experiences, beliefs or personal characteristics" (p. 1031). In a study of twenty professionals who migrated to Canada as adults, Cervatiuc (2009) shows the complexity of how the participants' identity works together with their sense of belonging. The participants fully participated in the social networks of people, who were born or grew up in Canada, but claimed that they belonged to an imagined community of successful multilingual individuals. This imagined identity indicates the hybrid identity work of migrants, a concept discussed in the section below.

2.1.1.4 Hybridity and belonging

In literature on migrants (English, 2003; Kraidy, 2002; Swyngedouw & Swyngedouw, 2009), there is often a recognition of hybridity which refers to being in and between two worlds. The sense of being in-between cultures may be unsettling for migrants. Narratives of migrants (Evans & Bowlby, 2000; Maehara, 2010; Pio, 2005) describe the struggle and uneasiness in making decisions between two different ways of practice in their original home country and their new home country. The struggle may suggest a lack of a sense of belonging.

To gain a sense of belonging, individuals may go through a process of negotiation. For example, in the study of Japanese migrant women, Maehara (2010) showed that the participants followed Irish ways in certain contexts while maintaining Japanese ways in other contexts. The different ways are the result of their hopes to belong to the community at the time of the negotiation. This point was discussed in the Section 2.1.1.2, Nexus of multimembership. The way a person acts and does things is different across contexts: a student in a language learning classroom, a worker in a fast food restaurant, and a patient in the hospital. As stated earlier, Pailliotet (1997) describes how a Chinese college woman acted as an independent adult at school while she acted as a good Chinese daughter at home. Negotiation tends to be context dependant.

Negotiation may not always be towards an existing group. For instance, a migrant woman may claim membership of neither a new home nor a home country. In the cross-cultural autobiographic research, Pavlenko (2001) investigates the autobiographic narratives of American writers who use English as an additional language; she states:

The meanings reinvented and appropriated are those of “legitimate language ownership” and “legitimate belonging” [emphasised in the source] to provide the readers with new meanings, perspectives, and images of being American—and bilingual in the postmodern world. (p. 340)

In relation to additional language learning for migrants, Duff (2007) argues that learning the target language and the normative practices associated with that “does not necessarily lead to the reproduction of existing L2 cultural and discursive practices but may lead to other outcomes, such as hybrid practices, identities, and values” (p. 311).

Hybridity generally refers to cultural and racial in-betweenness which needs to be understood as a process (e.g., Easthope, 1998; Hutnyk, 2005; Jay, 1999). Hybridity may afford individuals a new way of belonging. This is recognised as a third space by some authors, a space in which diverse and hybrid resources can be fostered. Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, and Tejeda (1999) talk of the third space which

students belong to. Recognising the diverse and hybrid resources of learners is also identified in Section 2.1.1.3 in imagined identities of migrant professionals, as illustrated in Cervatiuc (2009)—migrant professionals perceived that they belonged to bilingual and multicultural communities. This implies that hybridity offers a third space to migrants. English (2003) states that the third space is where migrants can be both at once, and they are comfortable enough in being between the two worlds to resist isolation as foreigners. The third space is also closely linked to migrants' identity construction, which may make the journey unique. Thus, hybridity and the role of third space may add an important aspect to understanding membership for Asian migrant women.

2.1.2 Negotiated experience

According to Wenger (1999), members act in historically and socially established ways in CoPs. However, individuals do not just follow given practices; they negotiate them. Negotiation arises in the context of social interaction to establish shared meanings. For example, new students engage in an established practice such as completing enrolment forms. They receive the form, and while filling it out, they may find some sections unclear. They may ask for clarification, and then they may go back to the enrolment desk staff to confirm whether the form is correctly filled or not. Ongoing interaction with newcomers and *old timers* (as Wenger refers to long-term community members) related to that particular practice may eventually affect the wording or design of the enrolment form. Over time, it may result in recreating the form. In this way, negotiated experience (Wenger, 1999, p. 149) in CoPs can contribute to and shape practices.

Negotiated experience in practices illustrates the complex and sometimes contradictory relationship between individual personal experiences and collective ones in the community. Brah (1996) states that “the specificity of a person’s life experience etched in the daily minutiae of lived social relations produces trajectories that do not simply mirror group experience” (p.124). The negotiated experience of an individual can be highly personal because of the complexity of multimembership. For example, Alice, a participant in Kinginger’s (2003) study,

was an American learner of French whose dream was to be a fluent French user. Having gone to France to study, she had difficulties in the university classroom. She realised that she could not expect to have as much interaction between teachers and students or among students as she had in the USA. She reported that the differences challenged her greatly because she wanted to speak French fluently. Later she decided to shape her own trajectory, and instead of being academic in a traditional classroom, she sought opportunities to improve her French in informal contexts by joining an American group tour and keeping a journal in French. Alice's story suggests that collective community practice is not necessarily the trajectory which all members would follow. Rather, the collective practice can be an unfamiliar practice which keeps a member from feeling a sense of belonging. As stated in Kinginger (2003), Alice was excluded in class. This is not only because Alice was a language learner but also because she had rather different previous experiences of being a college student. Such a situation points to the importance of previous knowledge and experiences in identity negotiation. Previous experiences were the cause of Alice's feeling of being disconnected from the mainstream, resulting in seeking a different learning trajectory.

An individual's previous experience and knowledge may also contribute to individually different and dynamic aspects of identity negotiating processes. Eraut (2004) refers to personal experiences and knowledge as *personal knowledge*, which includes "everyday knowledge of people and situations, know-how in the form of skills and practices, memories of episodes and events, self-knowledge, attitudes and emotions" (p. 2). These aspects of personal knowledge as defined by Eraut can play an important role in Asian migrant women's identity negotiation in CoPs (Norton Peirce, 1995). For example, Eva, originally in Norton's 1995 study (Norton, 2000), used her sense of humour when facing the challenging situation of having to negotiate a more equitable workload with her co-worker. The impact of such personal skills and practices has been under-explored in the study of identity, and they may influence the individually different negotiating experience of learners.

2.1.2.1 Reification

Along with participation, Wenger's contribution includes the concept of reification. Reification refers to "the process of giving form to our experience by producing objects that congeal this experience into 'thingness', and in reification we project ourselves onto the world" (Wenger, 1999, p. 58). In addition, he stresses that reification includes a wide range of processes related to these objects, which involves "making, designing, representing, naming, encoding, and describing, as well as perceiving, interpreting, using, reusing, decoding, and recasting" (1999, p. 59). Objects associated with a new settler identity may include such things as new forms of dress, visa applications, language learning coursebooks, citizenship certificates, and school report cards.

Such reification may greatly influence newcomers such as migrants when settling in a new home. As a migrant, I recall that I was no longer a visitor in Aotearoa NZ when I received a permanent residence (PR) visa sticker in my passport. The visa allowed me to stay in Aotearoa NZ permanently and gave me access to the resources which I could not access before. I could now claim myself as a Korean *allowed* to live in Aotearoa NZ. The process of getting this PR visa took me more than nine months and included substantial paperwork, such as a marriage certificate, a medical certificate and a police check. Each step verified me as someone on a trajectory of becoming an immigrant.

2.1.2.2 Significant events in boundary crossing

Boundary crossing does not mean a geographical crossing only. Migrants' movement and resettlement involve ongoing boundary crossing of social, cultural, economic, educational, and political communities in which potentially conflicting discourses need to be negotiated. For example, Evans and Bowlby's (2000) study of Pakistani migrant women's labour market experiences in Britain revealed that the Pakistani women needed to negotiate boundaries between the home, community and paid work. Some of the participants had to debate with their family members whether or not to be allowed to go into the labour market to

create new ways of living. The result of negotiating may lead individuals to cross boundaries, or may slow them down or stop them from crossing.

Identity negotiation is related to significant events in boundary crossing which is an area not explicitly theorised in the Wenger's (1999) identity framework in CoPs. Even though experiences come to the fore in the study of identity, as seen in the literature on migrants (Norton, 2000; Norton & Toohey, 2011; Rajadurai, 2010; Roessingh, 2011), not all experiences are linked to identity changes. However, some specific experiences account for changes which may be viewed as significant. Those significant events in boundary crossing are closely connected to identity.

Boundary crossing involves changes of identities (Kroger & Green, 1996). As discussed in Section 2.1, individuals belong to many CoPs and consequently have multiple identities. One may be a language learner at a community language centre and a kitchen help at a restaurant. The crossing from one CoP to another, from a language learner to kitchen help, seems to require an identity shift. Practices at a restaurant as a kitchen help are different from the ones in a classroom. However, as discussed previously, the process of identity shift is often not clear when people narrate their experiences. Being a language learner influenced the kitchen help identity of Martina, a participant in Norton's study (1997), as seen in the Section, Nexus of multimembership (Section 2.1.1.2). The intertwined nature of CoPs and the concept of boundary crossing in identity work may make both identity changes and the work of negotiation complex.

Identity changes may be explicitly managed or instigated through experiences, like the life transition stories of Japanese women in Ireland (Maehara, 2010). Some researchers (McAdams, 2001; McLean, 2008a; McLean & Pratt, 2006) have focused on *turning point* narratives to understand the changes. Experiences involved in the process include incidents, events or moments (Kazmierska, 2003; Strauss, 1977) that may be significant or distinctive in terms of the individual's identity. The experience is not just about what happened when it is narrated. It includes strong emotion about the experience. While arguing that the study of identities can start with the study of experiences, László (2008b) stresses that the

“plane of experience emerges with much more probability in the narration of events that relate to strongly positive or strongly negative emotions” (p. 127). One of the implications of László’s observation is that the study of those emotions and feelings involved in the experience can reveal the deeper layers of one’s identity work.

Block (2002) uses the term *critical experiences* to refer to such periods in one’s life. He explains:

By critical experiences, I mean periods of time during which prolonged contact with an L2 and a new and different cultural setting causes irreversible destabilization of the individual’s sense of self. There is, in a sense, an element of before and after in critical experiences as the individual’s sociohistorical, cultural and linguistic environment, once well defined and delimited, becomes relatively ill defined and open-ended. (Block, 2002, p. 4)

While Block (2002) uses critical experiences in terms of *a period* for second language learners and focuses on “irreversible destabilisation” of sense of self and identity issues, others (Choi, 2010; Flanagan, 1954; László, 2008b; Webster & Mertova, 2007) use any experience which has a significant outcome, when reflected on, as a critical and significant event. The significance is related to the identity changes.

The literature suggests that the narrated stories of individuals implicitly and explicitly include events which lead to some significant outcomes in terms of their identities (e.g., Li, 2011; Maehara, 2010; Norton, 2000). My own experience suggests that the types of experiences vary from receiving an unsatisfactory grade for the first time, being offered a promotion at work when unexpected, to presenting a paper successfully in class. These experiences have had a substantial influence on my boundary crossing and identities. In other words, significant events, whether they are positively perceived or not, occur in boundary crossings. Eva’s story (Norton, 2000) reports the joy of moving from an invisible immigrant woman to becoming a recognised worker. After a monthly outing at work, Eva was

able to show a different side of herself as someone who was confident and outgoing. Eva described the event of an outing as significant, leading her to construct the identity she wished for. Alice, in Kinginger's (2003) study, recalled that she was marginalised by a peer who spoke fluent French. Despite this rejection, emotional anger, and frustration, "she constructed herself as a competitor" and continued her journey to become a successful language learner (Kinging, 2003, p. 230). While the experiences are described in detail, they are not theorised in terms of significant events in the study of identities. Looking into individuals' significant events and theorising them allows me to look closely into a view of identity trajectories that is both dynamic and consequential.

2.1.2.3 Structure, agency, and negotiation

This section deals with the notion of negotiation in the literature. To do that, I first look at the relation between local and global forces which constitute structure. Next, I show its inseparable link to personal agency when individuals negotiate their identities. Lastly, I add the notion of context in which the identity negotiation takes place.

Identities need to be understood with respect to a person's relationship to the broader social, political and economic world (Early & Norton, 2012; Norton, 2000). Because our practices are always located in a specific time and space, it could be assumed it is only situated in the local. However, it is tightly connected to global forces as well. For instance, learning to speak the target language is a way to relate to the social world and gaining proficiency in the English language can be perceived as a key to gain social power (Gu, 2008; H. Y. Kim, 2014; Norton, 1997, 2000). The link between language and its power in a global context resonates with my experiences. As a migrant in Aotearoa NZ, I expected my children to be fluent in English and out of the maintenance of their Korean language skills. In other words, I often communicated in English at home even though my older son was more fluent in Korean than English at the beginning of settlement in Aotearoa NZ. When reflecting on the period, English use at home provided me with social power in complex relations with others at home which is similarly shown in the story of

Mai, a participant in Norton (2000)—I was both a translator and interpreter for my mother and my cousins who could not communicate in English in the beginning.

English language skills for migrants may be perceived to have a close link to success in the future as seen in the literature on language learning (Butorac, 2011; Kinginger, 2003; Norton, 2000). The expectation of this success may influence practices at local levels like migrant parents using only English with their children at home or encouraging them to spend more time studying English. The link is indicated in the story of Yellina, a participant in a study of generation 1.5 Korean-Canadian university students by J. Kim and Duff (2012). Yellina's parents limited her Korean video watching and urged her to invest in improving her English language proficiency so that she could enter a prestigious university in Canada rather than one in Korea. Graduating from a reputable university in an English language speaking country was viewed as a key for the future, and was expected to provide more opportunities.

Wenger (1999) explains the close relation between the local and global by saying that "in the context of constellations of practices, local and global are not different historical moments in an expanding world. They are related levels of participation that always coexist and shape each other" (p. 131). Global institutional discourses like English as a mainstream language at work and school often influence local discourses. For instance, Eva, a participant in Norton's study (2000) was fluent in Italian and worked at an Italian store when she migrated to Canada. Later, she looked for a job where she could practice English in spite of the fact that she felt secure and comfortable with the previous job. By doing so, she hoped to increase her opportunities to practice English for university entrance. Eva's fluency in Italian provided little power at the new job. She was given a menial job which neither required good communication skills nor provided opportunities to improve her English. The global power of English was evident to Eva when she left her work at the Italian store to shape how she was seen and how she perceived herself in an English medium work place.

The interwoven relationship between the local and global may make it difficult to distinguish one from the other. Mai, a participant in Norton's (2000) study of migrant women in Canada, learned English to gain employment and to be a language broker at home between her parents and her nephews. Her English language skills gave her respect and authority at home. However, at work, these skills were not important. She was a valued and competent worker until co-workers began to get laid off due to a global recession. After this, the social interactions at work changed, and sometimes she perceived that she was marginalised because of a lack of command of the minority language, Italian, practiced at work. Locally, English language skills were not valued. Mai's experiences show that the relationship between the local and global can be contradictory and is complex. Norton (2000) argues that experiences cannot be explained or understood without accounting for complex local and global relations.

Despite the ambiguity of the local and global relationship, the way people engage in practices in local social situations reflects existing global social forces (De Fina, Schiffrin, & Bamberg, 2006). Brandt and Clinton (2002) and Heller (2001) express this concept by stating that looking into the local context allows us to see the influence of global forces and the linkage between the local and global. Thus, empirical study of a specific context will display its own dynamic interplay of local and global forces (MacAulay, 2004), which can be only "observable in the here and now" (Heller, 2001, p. 212). Examining personal perceptions may shed light on understanding the complex relations between the local and global.

The local and global forces constitute social structures. However, negotiation not only concerns the influence of social structures. Personal agency is the other part of negotiation. Duff (2012) refers to agency as follows:

People's ability to make choices, take control, self-regulate, and thereby pursue their goals as individuals leading, potentially, to personal or social transformation Agency can also enable people to actively resist certain behaviors, practices, or positionings, sometimes leading to oppositional

stances and behaviors leading to other identities, such as rebellious, diffident student. (p. 417)

For example, not all English language learners in Aotearoa NZ enrol in a course to learn the language even though they can access the programme for free. Some never intend to study the language while some study in a home environment. The work of such personal agency with the influence of social structures constitutes negotiation. Scholars (Ahearn, 2001; Sewell, 1992; Wilmott, 1999) note that agency and structure are tightly interwoven and should be treated as mutually constitutive. Some scholars (Anderson, 1997; Duff, 2012; Miller, 2014) highlight the significant role of agency in identity negotiation. In particular, Duff (2012) argues that agency is the key feature in the negotiation process.

Acts of agency are often noted in studies of migrants (Hunter, 2012; J. Kim & Duff, 2012; Norton, 2000). When pointing out the complexity of the local and global power in migrants' narratives above, I used Eva's (Norton, 2000) story of changing jobs to improve her English proficiency. Katrina, another participant in Norton's study (2000), resisted a language learner identity and enrolled in a computer course. Both examples indicate the participants' agency to enter their imagined communities (Anderson, 1983).

The work of agency is not isolated from context. From the study of migrant employees in Aotearoa NZ, Hunter (2012) explains that the participants to some extent negotiated their identities successfully not only because of their agency but because of affordances of the contexts they were situated in. The study implies the complexity of personal agency in context and signals that context needs to be investigated when studying individuals' identity negotiation.

Negotiation happens in context. Identity negotiation is both the outcome and the process of the complex relation between structure and agency in social interactions, and in specific contexts. The interconnected nature of local and global structures and human agency can be examined by the study of the ways individuals perceive social phenomena. According to Ahearn (2001), we can tell the complexity of structure and agency by examining how people attribute

responsibility, credit, or blame for an event. How I address this matter of structure and agency will be further discussed in the methodology chapter, in Section 3.1.2.

2.1.3 Learning trajectories

The metaphor of trajectory implies fluidity and movement of identity. Even though Wenger (1999) acknowledges that a trajectory is not a fixed course or a fixed destination, he does imply that it is unidirectional. Stories of migrants, however, show that the reality of identity formation is bi-directional or multidirectional (Maehara, 2010; Norton, 2000; Pio, 2005). For example, Maehara's (2010) study of Japanese women migrants to Ireland describes their identity trajectories as constantly moving towards both Irish and Japanese even in a single CoP. Moreover, some trajectories may not be available for everyone. For example, a study of Korean adoptee-returnees (Higgins & Stoker, 2011) shows that the adoptee-returnees could not belong to the mainstream society due to the fact that they did not speak Korean like *authentic* Koreans. Their identity as Korean in Korea was not available to them.

Identity is a learning trajectory as negotiated experience is a learning process, according to Wenger (1999). He states that a trajectory provides a frame to decide what contributes to our identities and what does not. However, stories of *becoming someone* may not be as straightforward as Wenger presents. Fox and Allan (2014) observed a Ph.D. student's identity trajectory and revealed that the trajectory involved an ongoing journey of unbecoming and becoming. A study of a rural Chinese migrant woman's settlement in a city (Cho, 2009), on the other hand, indicates one enforced trajectory: Aunt Sun's identity trajectory was constrained by context. She had moved to a city and lived there for many years, but that did not make her an urbanite. On the contrary, she perceived herself to be a peasant living in a city. She may not have had any other available options to construct new identities than to maintain her past identities which were as peasant and rural migrant *to be controlled* by the factory and the local government.

Along with such structural environments as the local government above, the other critical aspect of learning to become may be a matter of agency, which Eraut addresses (2006):

While the concept of learning affordances addresses the extent to which people perceive the possibility of engaging in a particular piece of learning, the take up of such learning opportunities usually depends on their personal priorities and sense of agency. (p. 6)

One may decide not to learn to be someone. Katrina, a participant in Norton's study (2000), dropped out of an English skills upgrading course despite the fact that she wanted to re-gain power and prestige in Canada by investing in learning English. Instead, she enrolled in a computer course which her ESL teacher considered to be too advanced for her. However, she successfully completed the course. The studies above (Cho, 2009; Norton, 2000) indicate how individuals form complicated and diverse identity trajectories in different contexts even in one CoP. For instance, Eva, a participant in Norton (2000) negotiated her identities as a language learner and a worker at a restaurant.

People negotiate their identities in various ways, as discussed above in Katrina's story. She resisted the socially imposed language learner identity even though she viewed herself as a language learner. The classroom context, the interaction between the ESL teacher and Katrina, may have influenced her identity negotiation, from a language learner to a *legitimate* student who enrolled in a computer course. Contexts thus should be accounted for in examining identity trajectories in CoPs.

Amin and Roberts (2008) object to the widespread and almost indiscriminate use of CoPs and urge us to think carefully about the nature of situated learning. Doing this allows "the process of naming the many shapes and sizes of knowing in action to begin" (Amin & Roberts, 2008, p. 365). Eva in Norton's (2000) study, for instance, hoped to improve her language skills even at work. She sought to learn the language outside of language classrooms. Eva's experiences at work illustrate the fact that she was a language learner. Language learning continued at work, and

the language learner identity influenced her identity trajectories as a restaurant worker. Hence, understanding the ways that individuals negotiate their experience may be studied in context (Gee, 2005; Nasir & Cooks, 2009). While the concept of CoPs is useful, I wish to acknowledge that the idea of identity is situated but not confined to discrete social contexts framed as neatly as Wenger's notion of CoPs. Rather, it is a dynamic and multi-faceted concept of the individual as well which may include a concept of self.

2.1.3.1 Imagination and identity trajectories

Identity trajectories are related to hopes and dreams, which link daily activities with future identity. The work of imagination is often discussed in the literature on migrants (Chang, 2010; Dagenais, 2003; Giroir, 2014; Norton & Toohey, 2001). Kanno and Norton (2003) and Pavlenko and Norton (2007) note the importance of imagination for language learners, and their imagined communities are closely related to their identity trajectories. For migrants also, imagination often plays a critical role in their investment in language learning such as Alice in Kinginger's (2003) study. Alice (Kinging, 2003) learned French because she perceived and imagined that the language would be the key to enter a culturally refined life. For her, imagination was the driving and starting point of her identity trajectory.

Imagination may also mean an end point of an identity trajectory. Similar to Alice's journey in Kinginger (2003) as described above, Giroir (2014) also discussed the view that imagination was a drive for the participants to learn English for their imagined future selves, in a study of three migrant women's narratives. The participants engaged in "a contentious practice of belonging" (p. 311) within the host community, not only to be recognised as a legitimate member but also to renegotiate some limited narratives as a migrant, woman, and language learner. This indicates the importance of imagination in identity work.

The results of identity work are complex. Identity trajectories are not necessarily positive even though imagination implies a positive identity trajectory. Literature on migrants (Kawakami, 2009; Maydell, 2010) illustrates that positive/upward identities and negative/downward identities may be created. In a study of

Japanese women who married Americans, Kawakami (2009) investigated the participants' own perception, both before and after their migration to a western country. The findings showed that their identity changed from positive to negative, from a cosmopolitan or internationalist woman to "just another Asian immigrant" (Kawakami, 2009, p. 22). On the other hand, in the research on Russian-speaking immigrants in Aotearoa NZ, Maydell (2010) found that some of the participants strived for a new type of identity, a cosmopolitan identity after they felt a lack of belonging in Aotearoa NZ. The newly created identities did not result in or result from the work of aligning with other members of CoPs. Rather, they were hybrid identities as I discussed in Section 2.1.1.4.

As Maydell (2010) found, imagination may not be associated with belonging to a current CoP. The work of imagination may result in the creation of new identities—bilingual and multicultural beings, which was also discussed in the section dealing with the link between hybridity and belonging (Section 2.1.1.4). The complexity of identity negotiation, connecting with a sense of belonging and imagination, results in individually dynamic identity trajectories in CoPs. The research hopes to capture individually dynamic identity negotiation processes.

2.2 Asian migrant women and language learning identities

This section directs attention specifically to Asian migrant women and focuses on the literature of their identity negotiations.

For many Asian migrant women, language learning is a condition for living in Aotearoa NZ. According to Hamberger (2009), migrants' integration into a new society has four dimensions: cultural, social, economic, and political. Hamberger stresses that language acquisition is a part of the cultural domain of citizenship and that the language of the destination country is a prerequisite for successful integration. Barkhuizen and de Klerk (2006), in the study of pre-immigrant narratives, similarly found that most of the participants acknowledged that their

identity would change in a new home, and language would play an important part in the changes.

For Asian migrant women, the fact that they are language learners in social interactions affects their identity, identity negotiation and identity trajectories (Collins & Slembrouck, 2005; Coupland, Sarangi, & Candlin, 2014). Hamberger's view on language learning as a prerequisite for migrants to belong to new communities will provide insights into the current study in the effort to understand Asian migrant women's identity negotiation and the impact of being language learners upon it.

2.2.1 Identities of language learners

Many Asian migrant women are likely to have become language learners ever since they made the decision to move to an English-speaking country, and maybe even before. Their identities are assumed not to be those of competent English users. I have discussed in Section 2.1.1.3 that language learner identities play a significant part in migrants' sense of belonging. In this section, I focus on the contention that language learner identities are also socially imposed on Asian migrants. Collins and Slembrouck (2005) assert that the dominant language ideologies that characterise society involve judgements of individuals based on language. For example, a migrant whose English skills are not very competent and who has a marked accent may be viewed as someone who needs translation, an interpreting service, or who needs to learn the way of communicating in mainstream society (Colic-Peisker, 2002; Maydell, 2010). Despite the fact that relatively new migrants have professional and financial resources, they may face imposed identities primarily as language learners.

Language learning may have a negative impact on migrants' overall journey. When Asian migrant women immigrate into Aotearoa NZ, they presumably do so for a better future. Hopes and dreams in a new land are illustrated in many stories documenting migrants' settlement. One such study is a collection of women migrants' stories in Aotearoa NZ (Thomas & McKenzie, 2005). Among many, three Asian women's stories highlight their expectations in a new home: Sunila from

India, Yuki from Japan and Ju-hee from Korea. Ju-hee and Sunila settled into Aotearoa NZ for better education for their children, and Yuki for a better lifestyle for her family. The three women had resources established in their home countries, yet their narratives showed struggles as language learners because the resources could be not transferred to a new home.

The unsettling language learner identity of an Asian migrant adult is related to a sense of access to mainstream society, as also partly discussed in the section on identities as membership (Section 2.1.1). As noted earlier, Han (2012) highlights this issue in research examining one migrant's language learning settlement experiences in Canada. She concludes that the "immigrants' language problem is primarily an issue of access and legitimacy, both of which are not under immigrants' control" (p. 147) and further points out the embedded power issues which lead to a great deal of difficulties in identity negotiation. Power issues, presented in the interactions between Yang, a participant in Han (2012) study, and the lease company representatives, have also been identified in studies of language learners such as Troyna and Siraj-Blatchford (1993) and Varghese and Kanno (2010).

The limitations of language learner identities are noted in the literature. A study of migrant ESL students accessing four-year college education (Varghese & Kanno, 2010) revealed that most participants were well aware of their non-native speaker status, and that language learner identity is a structurally imposed challenge for the participants. The institutional constraints that apply only to ESL students gave the students the sense of unfairness compared to non-ESL students and the stigma of "remedial student" status (Varghese & Kanno, 2010, p. 319). Troyna and Siraj-Blatchford (1993) similarly argue that there is a prevailing assumption that people tend to link lack of English language skills with learning difficulties. In applied linguistics, Early and Norton (2012) and Canagarajah (2004) have noted the prevailing view and have suggested that possible identities other than language learner identities can be introduced and constructed in varying contexts. For instance, in a study of three English language learners, Early and Norton (2012)

found that the students gained an increased sense of agency to invest in language learning and identity options through sharing each other's stories in class.

2.2.2 Identity negotiation of language learners and women

Studies on language learners' identities show the complexity of the identity negotiation process. For example, Block (2007) looked into second language learners' identities in different contexts such as identity in adult migrant contexts and in study abroad contexts. In a chapter on adult migrant contexts, Block (2007) discusses the emergent issue of language learner identity among adult migrants arguing that the language learner identity negatively affects their sense of self in all learning settings. Research on Japanese women in the USA (Kawakami, 2009) indicated that many Japanese stay-at-home women in the USA had imagined identities as professionals, yet they were reluctant to even apply for a job because they felt that their English was not sufficient for the application process. The participants viewed themselves as "just another Asian immigrant" (Kawakami, 2009, p. 22) because of the fact that they were language learners. Similar cases in the research show that the identities of migrant women are strongly affected by the fact that they are language learners (Colic-Peisker, 2002; Li, 2011; Pailliotet, 1997; Pio, 2005).

The identity reconstruction process for migrant women thus often begins with language learning. This was also seen in Section 2.1.3 which discussed identities as learning trajectories. Language learning occurs at home, at formal language institutes, and at work as seen in the literature on migrant women (Butorac, 2011; Keating, 2005; Norton, 2000). Through language learning, migrants hope to access their imagined communities, as seen in Section 2.1.3.1.

Learning is not only limited to the English language. Migrants negotiate their values and norms with their host society, and they rewrite their identities (Huang, Teo, & Yeoh, 2000; Norton, 2000; Pio, 2005). For instance, from the study of migrant women from India in Aotearoa NZ, Pio (2005) showed that the participants were uneasy with their cultural norms and behaviours which were the husband holding a job and children doing well in school which was considered as

stable family life, and which was supposed to define them. However, the participants held jobs and expressed the view that the jobs helped them to access to and understand the host culture.

The negotiation process is complex, which is partly due to the fact that the migrants are language learners as discussed above and also due to the fact that they are Asian and women. In terms of the racial factor, *Asian*, the discussion point in Butorac (2011) resonates with my own experience which I presented in Chapter 1. Butorac investigated the impact of English language learning and sense of self on nine migrant women to Australia. The results show a marked difference in perceiving settlement experiences between participants from Asian countries and participants from European countries. She argues that Asian migrant women even after achieving competency in English may consider that belonging to mainstream society is limited and full participation may never occur. She considers the reason for the difference is that “race impacts discourses of acceptance and belonging in Australia society in ways that construct Asian people as the racial and linguistic ‘other’ and European migrants as on track to being part of the mainstream” (Butorac, 2011, pp. 262-263).

Also, in relation to being a woman, reflecting on my personal experience, my journey resonates with recent studies (Norton, 2000; Pailliotet, 1997; Pio, 2005). Asian migrant women must negotiate multiple discourses (Huang et al., 2000), and the negotiation may involve changes in their conception of what being a woman entails (Evans & Bowlby, 2000), such as being a breadwinner. As mentioned above in the study of Pio (2005), the literature on Asian migrant women as mothers and wives (Maehara, 2010; Norton, 2000; Pio, 2005) shows a dynamic identity negotiation in a new home. For instance, Martina, a participant in Norton (2000), once lost her sense of authority over her children because she relied on her children for English communications even when looking for a job. After her husband had lost his work, she became a primary caregiver. Martina continued practising English and actively sought ways to investigate the ways of life in a new home country. This research on Asian migrant women may uncover similarly dynamic identity processes: as language learners, as Asian, and as women.

2.3 Research questions

In this chapter, I have reviewed the literature on identity theories and identity issues in relation to Asian migrant women. As discussed in Section 2.1.1, there are shortcomings in understanding identities as membership. The literature suggests that often membership ensures neither one's identity nor a sense of belonging. The identity negotiation process is individually dynamic and complex. Section 2.1.2 suggests that the negotiation process is complex, and the study of significant events may help to uncover the complexity. Section 2.1.3 suggests that identity as becoming is related to imagination and that trajectories may not necessarily be uni-directional. Section 2.2 suggests that being language learners may greatly influence the identity negotiation of Asian migrant women.

I have identified that the current identity theories cannot fully explain the complex identity negotiation processes of Asian migrant women. I thus have formulated the following research questions to shed more light on the complexity and to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in identity theories. They are as follows:

1. What are the communities, both experienced and imagined, that Asian migrant women learning English participate in?
2. Are there significant events in the identity trajectories of Asian migrant women learning English? If so, what are they?
 - 2.1 What contributes to the significant events in Asian migrant women's learning English?
3. Over time, what are the identity trajectories of the participants?
4. What role does language proficiency play in their identity trajectories?

I hope that answering such research questions will shed light on the in-depth understanding of Asian migrant women's identity negotiation processes. I also hope to find a structure which can link the findings.

Chapter 3 Research design and methods

This chapter outlines the methodological perspectives and the research methods that I chose to answer the research questions. Section 3.1 examines the methodology which helped me to design the research process. Section 3.2 describes the data generation process. Section 3.3 explains the data analysis process. Section 3.4 introduces the participants who were involved in data generation and places me, the researcher, in the research process. Consequently, Section 3.5 explains how I positioned myself in the research. Section 3.6 illustrates the ethical issues I considered and managed. Section 3.7 demonstrates the rigour in the research design and sensitivity in the research practice, and Section 3.8 sums up the chapter.

3.1 Methodology

My research aimed to understand how Asian migrant women negotiate their identities in a new home. My goal is not only to understand individuals' dynamic identity trajectories but also to make sense of different features related to the changes in their identity trajectories. I found some crucial features of social constructionism helpful to explain the identity issues discussed in Chapter 2. Section 3.1.1 thus describes social constructionism. It is congruous with features in narrative, which I found to be the best approach to the research design. Section 3.1.2 illustrates the features of the narrative approach used to generate and analyse data. Section 3.1.3 analyses the shortcomings of a narrative approach to analyse the data and discusses an analytic approach, seeking both variation and commonality from narrative data.

3.1.1 Social constructionism

I took social constructionism as the methodological ground for my research. The reason lies in my research intention, that is, I hoped to capture the experiences of Asian migrant women living in Aotearoa NZ, and I hoped their experiences would help me to understand them holistically and to examine the complexity of their

lives (Ahearn, 2001; Gubrium & Holstein, 2002; Riessman, 2008). The process of such research is best done as a collaborative inquiry (Gergen, 2001) through ongoing conversation (Anderson, 1997) between researchers and participants (Clandinin & Connelly, 1989). During the fieldwork, I hoped there would be a partnership nurtured by sharing information/stories (Karnieli-Miller, Strier, & Pessach, 2008; Kvale, 1996; Witz, 2006). The specific rationales are as follows.

First, the underpinning theory of social constructionism involves understanding people in social interaction. Burr (2003, p. 126) states that social constructionism considers “dialogue and social interaction” important, and it includes “social relationships as well as the process of social interaction.” Similarly, Lock and Strong (2010) state that social constructionism concerns the meaning and understanding of human activities in social interaction. The central feature is the understanding of people and their interactions with each other.

Studying social interactions is very closely linked to the second aspect of social constructionism—*co-constructed knowledge*. Knowledge is not fixed; it is fluid. Burr (2003) argues that “our knowledge is not a direct perception of reality . . . we construct our own versions of reality between us” (p. 6). Burr's claim explains that knowledge is not *out there*. It is rather constructed in social interactions, which Gergen (2009) explains as “meaning in relationships” (p. 95) and “meaning as co-action” (p. 97).

Third, within a constructionism perspective, social interaction changes depending on the context. For instance, interactions with colleagues at work are likely to differ from the ones with church members. This supports the views of the changing nature of meaning-making processes and the importance of the dynamic features of contexts. Lock and Strong (2010) ascertain that the way people make meaning in social interactions is specific to particular times and places. They go on to say that the meanings of a particular event, and our ways of understanding it, vary across different situations. Gergen (2001, 2006, 2009) describes this aspect well throughout his work when accounting for the nature of knowledge/truth in reality.

Fourth, social constructionism does not rule out power issues; it focuses on the inevitability of power relations. Burr (2003) argues that critically looking into taken-for-granted knowledge would account for power relations in the way we view and do things. For example, Asian people who settle in Aotearoa NZ *instantly* become Asian migrants and are expected to be language learners. Studies of their experiences may reveal the power issues impacting on and constitutive of those identities. Gergen (2009) precisely argues if one does not question a norm, then they agree with the norm, which will result in accepting limited identities, potential power imbalance, and consequently the oppression of people with the limited identities. In this way, power issues can be a core element in social constructionism.

The medium of social interaction is language. Thus, the fifth element of social constructionism which I recognise as important in the research is the role of language. According to Burr (2003), the world is constructed as people *talk to* each other. Gergen (2009) refers to language as a central vehicle in which we negotiate in social interactions, and presents a critical feature of power relations. The present research also recognises the importance of language in constructing reality in people's lives and investigates the influence of being language learners on participants' identity negotiation.

I have examined five features of social constructionism which have helped me to design the research. The five features of social constructionism serve as methodological underpinnings for my research design.

3.1.2 Narrative inquiry

Grounded in social constructionism, a narrative approach best fits with my research, just as Norton and Early (2011) recognise narrative inquiry is useful in the study of identity and language learning. Prior to discussing the narrative approach, in the discussion below, I separate narratives from stories, and stories from events, for the purpose of my research. Doing so is essential to help me elicit the narratives and to identify any significant events from participants' stories.

A number of scholars (Bell, 2002; Clandinin & Connelly, 1989) interchangeably use narratives and stories. However, I take the definition of Halverson, Goodall, and Corman (2011) that a narrative is different from a story. Halverson et al. (2011) define a narrative in the following way:

A narrative is a coherent system of interrelated and sequentially organized stories that share a common rhetorical desire to solve a conflict by establishing audience expectations according to the known trajectories of its literary and rhetorical form. (p. 14)

People impose a structure when they tell their experiences, called a *narrative structure* (Sarbin, 1986). Burr (2003) also defines a narrative as the outcome of a selective process of relative stories in relation to a theme which the teller is crafting. When a teacher presents a competent teacher narrative, she is not likely to include a story about receiving negative feedback from parents.

In contrast, a story is a particular sequence of related events, and the events are set in the past, present or future and recounted for rhetorical/ideological purposes, within a narrative which a teller is presenting. The events are composed of multiple elements, including actors, times, and other entities, which relate to one another through actions (Halverson et al., 2011). Thus, I use a narrative as a journey in relation to identities and a story as any convergent or divergent sequence of events as a part of the journey. Thus a narrative can include many stories.

I now outline critical features of a narrative approach which have informed the research design. First, a narrative approach looks into the ways people experience the world (Moen, 2006). The starting point for the research is to understand how Asian migrant women, as English language learners in Aotearoa NZ, negotiate their identities. Barkhuizen, Benson, and Chik (2014) present the strength of narrative inquiry in language learning and teaching research as residing in “how people use stories to make sense of their experiences in areas of inquiry where it is important to understand phenomena from the perspectives of those who experience them” (p. 2). This thesis aims to understand Asian migrant women’s identity negotiation

experiences from their perspectives, and the narrative approach will help me to do this (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000).

Second, narrative involves telling of past experiences. Labov (2006, p. 37) says a narrative is “a particular way of reporting past events.” The past events are meaningful enough to recount at the time of reporting, and the telling is expected to benefit the teller and/or the audience in the future. People narrate their past experiences which are related to the present and future (Bell, 2002; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Labov, 1997, 2006; Sandelowski, 1991). This feature will make it possible for me to elicit the trajectories associated with each participant’s perceived identities in relation to their experienced and imagined communities in Aotearoa NZ.

Third, along with this temporal aspect, a narrative has a spatial aspect—it is socially constructed in interaction. There is a story teller and audience, and the teller chooses what story to tell the audience. Labov (1997, 2006) calls this *reportability*. If someone is telling a story to another, it is likely to be meaningful or significant for the teller. The feature of reportability will allow me to identify significant events impacting on the participants’ identity trajectories.

Fourth, a narrative study can help me to understand how individuals act in the social world under the influence of local and global forces. Riessman (2008) argues that narrative study can reveal the relationship between an individual and society. Looking into how participants’ narratives are constructed and reconstructed will help to elicit any recognisable local and global influences, and also the impact of English proficiency on the participants’ stories.

Fifth, narrative study is also a means of exploring the connection between structure and agency, which are tightly interwoven (Ahearn, 2001; Giddens, 1984). According to McAdams (as cited in Phinney, 2000, p. 28), a narrative approach can help to study “the ways in which individuals make sense of their lives within a changing sociohistorical context”. Ahearn (2001) argues that it may be helpful to examine “how people attribute responsibility, credit, or blame for an event” to investigate the relationships between agency and structure and further how the

result of the relationships constructs and reconstructs “social transformation” (p. 131). This feature will help me to see how structure and agency are linked and how the complexity is displayed in participants’ identity negotiation. In this way, a narrative approach will enable me to capture complex and dynamic human behaviours in CoPs (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

In relation to the third point described earlier (narratives are socially constructed in interaction), people recount something meaningful to them, and their narratives are constructed and/or reconstructed in context (Bell, 2002; Moen, 2006; Pavlenko, 2002a). This informs the sixth feature I identified: the importance of the meaning-making process. A narrative study is about meaning-making, a process that is done with others. Sandelowski (1991) argues that studying individuals’ narratives is not just about gathering stories but engaging in a meaning-making process between participants and researchers. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) also state that “narrative inquiry is a process of collaboration involving mutual storytelling and restorying” (p. 4), and researchers become a part of a potentially *caring community*. They describe a narrative inquiry as “a collaboration between researcher and participants, over time, in a place or series of places, and in social interaction with milieus” (p. 20). This collaborative feature informed me to design the research in a way that the researcher is involved in the research not only as a researcher but also as a contributor. My view was that this would help me to see how socially informed identity theory and co-constructed knowledge are displayed in reality.

Lastly, the co-constructive feature of narrative leads to the possibility of reconstructing narrative. The outcome of the co-constructive nature of narrative is characterised by Barkhuizen (2011) as *narrative knowledging*. Barkhuizen (2011, p. 395) defines narrative knowledging as “the meaning making, learning, and knowledge construction that takes place at all stages of a narrative research project”. One of the outcomes of story sharing is identified as reciprocal learning (Lee, Hunter, & Franken, 2015). The reconstructive nature of the narrative approach may enable each participant’s narrated experiences to become a recognisable story of their identity trajectories. This feature informs the research

design, particularly the reflective interview sessions at the end of the data generation period.

3.1.3 Analysis of narratives

Narrative research largely examines the narratives in two ways: narratives as the objects of the study and narratives as the tools to explore aspects of human experiences (Bamberg, 2012a). The former resembles a case study which addresses the complexity in individually dynamic experiences. The latter looks for themes across the rich narratives of the individuals to explore aspects of human experiences. Both aim to show clearly the complexity of human experiences. However, scholars are more concerned with the outcomes of narrative studies. Josselson (2006), for instance, stresses that narrative studies produce the richness of social phenomena from diverse cohorts, and she argues for a knowledge base out of the narratives. By arguing this, she suggests a need for the meta-analysis of narrative studies. Her discussion on the building of a knowledge base validated for me the importance of constructing a model to shed light on understanding the dynamics of identity negotiation processes in more general terms.

To do that, firstly, I treated each participant's narratives as a case study. As illustrated in the previous section, Section 3.1.2, a narrative inquiry approach ensures access to rich data from individuals with thick descriptions of individuals' identity trajectories. I treated each individual's story as a whole to understand individually different identity trajectories. This is similar to the first stage of the analysis process of phenomenography (Åkerlind, 2012), and to the analysing stage of Eisenhardt (1989), who provides a process of building theory from case study research. The stage of seeking variation focuses on understanding each participant to concentrate on individually different experiences. Understanding a person holistically means more than describing their stories. It also includes an individual's feelings and hopes related to the stories which connect the past, present and future. Witz (2007) suggests a *portraiture* method by arguing that people should be viewed as a whole which includes emotions. The outcomes of

this stage inform Chapter 4 (one of three findings chapters), which illustrates each participant's narrative.

Second, I looked for commonality—common themes across the narratives which show aspects of the identity negotiation processes. Hermanns (2004) like Josselson (2006), argues that narrative inquiry should go beyond that of case studies. The research questions I drew up focus on the understanding of identity negotiation processes, not on the case studies of individual differences. I hoped to investigate a potentially valuable model to shed more light on the process of identity negotiation. As my research questions suggest, I wanted to explore how identities may be commonly negotiated. This stage involves a continuous coding and meta-coding process (Bernard & Ryan, 2009; Glaser & Strauss, 2009; G. W. Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Looking for the commonality across the narrative is similar to the second phase of Åkerlind's (2012) proposed analysis process and Eisenhardt's (1989) cross-case pattern search stage. Holliday (2007) in addition argues that this second stage involves examining the overall character of data, searching for the division, determining the character of each division, and deriving themes.

The last stage focuses on finding relationships between identified themes. This is to respond to the criticism of narrative inquiry that "the most frequent criticisms of narrative, namely, that narrative unduly stresses the individual over the social context" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2). To connect the identified themes, I needed a model which allowed me to get a sound understanding to answer the research questions. This aligns with a call for an analytic system in qualitative research in order to contribute to understanding a more predictable and meaningful social world (Dörnyei, 2012). I recognised the critical need for *prototyping* narrative data (Dörnyei, 2012; Josselson, 2006) by constructing an identity negotiation model.

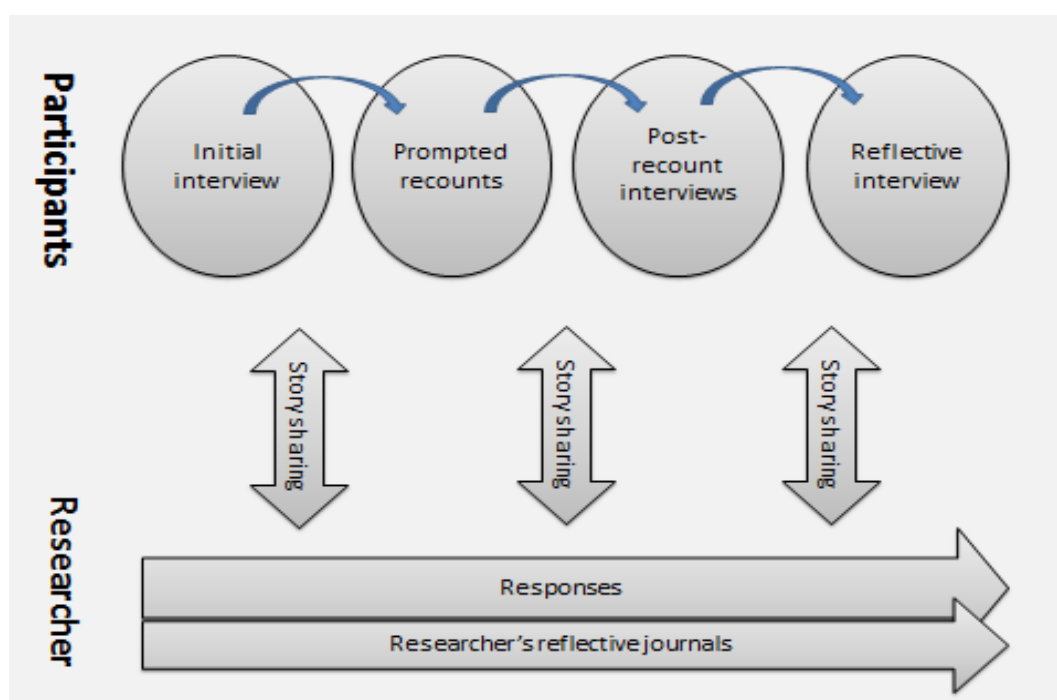
This stage involves a retrospective approach. When a preliminary model to answer the research questions was developed, I returned to each participant's identity journey to locate their significant recounts into the model (described in Section

8.1). This process tested the model and also acknowledged again the dynamic of identity negotiation processes. Riessman (2008) argues that “a good narrative analysis prompts the reader to think beyond the surface of a text” and the generalisation is to “theoretical propositions” (p. 13). In this way, the research may propose an initial model of the identity negotiation process of Asian migrant women as language learners.

3.2 Data generation methods

To explore Asian migrant women’s experiences guided by a narrative approach, the design of my methods is the outcome of an effort to collect the richest data possible. Figure 3.1 shows an overview of the data generation process.

Figure 3.1: *Process of data generation*



As seen in the Figure, I used interviews, prompted recounts, and researcher’s reflective journals and responses as methods to share stories between participants and myself, the researcher. The process was structured in the way that an ongoing conversation could be possible for the planned data generation period. I planned to collect data for twelve months. I aimed to interview each

participant once a month for the first seven months and to have a four-month break. In the twelfth month, I aimed to do a final reflective interview with each participant. I collected data from February 2013 to March 2014 (see Appendix C for the detailed fieldwork process).

The following sections present the rationale for each method and a detailed description of how each technique was used.

3.2.1 Interviews

In-depth interviews were the main data gathering method in the research. Asking participants to talk about their experiences is said to generate productive data (Holstein & Gubrium, 1995). Even though there was a list of specific questions prepared to meet the objectives of the research, I hoped to conduct open-ended interview sessions so that participants had as much freedom as possible. This was evident in the length of interview time and the scope of experiences and significant events. The interview time varied from 30 minutes to over three hours. Transcription ranged from 1,437 words to 9,070 words. Also, participants recounted more than one event—often one story led to another.

The narrative often went beyond the description of the event including feelings behind it. From a narrative study of older Southeast Asian refugee women, Bennett and Detzner (1997) reveal that the recounts of significant events included emotions like loneliness even though participants were not asked about the emotion. László (2008a) also argues that the narration of events relates to “strongly positive or strongly negative emotions” adding, “through the identification of the emotions and feelings involved in them we can get to much deeper layers of self-organization” (László, 2008a, p. 127).

There were three phases of interviewing: initial, post-recount and reflective. Each interview was recorded and transcribed and shared with the participant for confirmation.

3.2.1.1 Initial Interviews

Initial interviews were arranged via emails or phone calls. Potential participants signed the consent form during the initial meeting, and all agreed to conduct initial interviews on the same day. The initial interviews were conducted in February and March 2013. Each interview lasted for at least 30 minutes and up to three hours. There were guided questions such as “Could you share something about your life back in your home country?” and “What made you decide to come to New Zealand?” (see Appendix B-1 for the details). In this interview session, participants shared their migrant journeys to Hamilton, Aotearoa NZ and also their hopes for the future.

3.2.1.2 Post-recount interviews

Post-recount interviews had the purpose of expanding the participants’ recounted stories from the prompted recounts (described in Section 3.6.2). There were questions like “Could you tell me if the event has affected you in how you view yourself?” and “Why do you think you had such an outcome from the event?” (see Appendix B-3). I conducted six post-recount interviews with each participant, and I transcribed them as early as the following day and no later than two weeks from the interview. Interviews were scheduled every month for six months. However, the interview was not managed the way I planned. For instance, the interval between interviews was sometimes two months rather than one month. Also, many post-recount interviews were conducted without prompted recounts, which is discussed in the section on prompted recount.

3.2.1.2 Reflective interviews

The last interviews were held twelve months after the initial interview. The reflective interviews focused on making meaning for each participant’s overall journey while engaging in the study. A week before the last interview sessions, each participant received a summary of the previous seven interviews and my response. The summary included three sections, two figures, and one table. One figure viewed communities identified that each participant belonged to (see

Appendices D-1, E-1, F-1, G-1, H-1, and I-1). The other figure viewed each participant's identity trajectories of past, present, and future (see Appendices D-2, E-2, F-2, G-2, H-2, and I-2). A table presented any significant event identified (see Appendices D-3, E-3, F-3, G-3, H-3, and I-3). The tables are elaborated in greater detail in Chapter 4.

This reflective interview played a significant role in confirming my overall interpretation of each participant's journey. At the same time, participants could reflect on their own journey and identify the most significant event for them. Emerson and Pollner (as cited in Johnson, 2002) advocate the practice of reflective interviewing, and Rochford (as cited in Johnson, 2002) used it in his own work, stating that taking reports back to participants will not only confirm and verify the researcher's interpretation but also will open a dialogue on the interpretation of them.

3.2.2 Prompted recounts

Through prompted recounts, I expected that participants would recount any recent significant personal event by voice recording or in writing once a month for six months, a week before the post-recount interviews. This recount itself generated significant data. According to Franken and Hunter (2011), in a study of primary healthcare practitioners' views of health literacy, prompts like who and what were used and the result of the prompts was "a narrative of sorts". The prompt recount was also a reference point for the subsequent interview, which had been the main purpose of the method in the design of the research. I explained this at the initial meeting—they were asked to recall any recent experience which had affected their sense of belonging in Aotearoa NZ (Appendix B-2).

I encouraged the participants to recount in their own language if they felt more comfortable doing so. The participants agreed to record or write in their preferred language. I would have needed a translator if the recount were neither English nor Korean. Yet, their recounts were all in English. As mentioned above, the method

provided me valuable data. However, I faced some challenges obtaining data the way I planned. The challenges and the un-anticipated advantages are as follows.

3.2.2.1 Challenges and opportunities of prompted recounts

Obtaining recounts prior to interviews was a challenge during data collection. I was only able to receive a few written recounts early enough for me to read and think about them. Sometimes, participants handed me written recounts on the same day of the interview. As the data collection progressed, however, there were times that recounts often emerged through telephone calls to set up the next interview. For instance, I asked them how they had been and they told me briefly about their life, and their stories on the phone became the source of the talk in the following interview. Also, recounts that interested me emerged from email exchanges or during the previous interview session. I asked them if it would be okay if they talked about that next time.

Collecting a prompted recount prior to the interview was an issue, not only because the participants did not provide it but because an event which needed further exploration often emerged unpredictably. One interesting feature I identified also was that the prompted recount prior to the interview often lost its significance during the interview. During the time between the prompted recount and the post-recount interview, often there were new experiences which significantly influenced their identity negotiation. This aspect of the changing aspect of significant events is discussed in Chapter 7.

Despite the challenges above, I found that prompted recounts benefited the data generation process. They were beneficial at the beginning of data generation in particular. They guided the participants and the researcher on what to talk about next. Once any form of the recount was produced in advance, it gave the participant opportunities to expand the story. Even though the exact form of the prompted recounts was not collected as planned, other artefacts like a traffic ticket and a booklet were presented to mediate or initiate a recount during the data generation process. They became the focus of prompted recounts that the participants talked about during the interviews.

3.2.3 Researcher's responses and reflective journals

My research design enabled me to be actively involved in data generation through reflective writing both as a *fellow traveller* and a researcher. There were two techniques that I used. One was through writing *responses* as a fellow traveller. The other was through reflective journals as a researcher. As Connelly and Clandinin (1990) note, researchers recognise their own lives and experiences while listening to participants' stories, and also recognise the effects on the research efforts and products to improve their practice in narrative inquiry. In this way, researchers and participants produced collaborative stories. The description of my involvement is as follows.

3.2.3.1 Responses as a fellow traveller

As seen previously, the main data generation method was in-depth interviews which entailed an ongoing relationship between the participants and myself. The process included a certain degree of researcher self-disclosure (Johnson, 2002). In the research, as I described the participants and researcher in Section 3.4 earlier, I recognised that I could be considered to be a fellow traveller because I also had experiences as an Asian migrant woman and language learner, and so self-disclosure would be possible in the research.

This self-disclosure is more than a simple interview strategy according to Ellis and Berger (2002). They argue that the way an interviewer opens up is natural and the *reflexive dyadic interviewing* is a means of collaborative interviewing:

The interviewer typically shares personal experience with the topic at hand or reflects on the communicative process of the interview. In this case, the researcher's disclosures are more than tactics to encourage the respondent to open up; rather, the researcher often feels a reciprocal desire to disclose, given the intimacy of the details being shared by the interviewee. (p. 854)

Similar to the statement above, my self-disclosure was done in two ways: during the interview and after the interview. During the interview, there were times I opened up the interview session with my own stories, which was to encourage the

participant to share her own without a feeling of insecurity. This self-disclosure helped me to be viewed as someone like them, an Asian migrant woman living in Aotearoa NZ. Also, my self-disclosure occurred naturally. The participants were more relaxed when the recording stopped, and they would ask me questions. A change of role occurred. Genuinely, I shared my personal stories with them. As interview sessions progressed, both the participants and I became oblivious to the conversation being recorded, and the self-disclosure was done with ease.

The researcher's self-disclosure also explicitly featured as a data collection method. I shared my stories through written responses, which I sent after each interview. The responses were sent via email, usually two weeks post interview. It meant that each participant received seven responses in total. I expressed gratitude for sharing their stories with me, and also I shared my experiences as a migrant Asian woman language learner. In addition to self-disclosure, I sometimes wrote questions which had emerged while reading the transcribed data. This response was the linkage between the previous interview and the subsequent one. In this way, my interest in their stories led to further story sharing and the question played a role as a prompt.

My self-disclosure was not easy at the beginning. However, the participants' stories often resonated with my own, and I shared my experience with them in writing. As Abell, Locke, Condor, Gibson, and Stevenson (2006) point out, the success of self-disclosure crucially relies on the act of "doing similarity" (p. 229). Lee, Hunter, and Franken (2015) discuss *doing similarity* after the participants fully tell their stories. This narrows the power distance between the participants and the researcher. In this sense, my identities were beneficial due to similar experiences.

3.2.3.2 Researcher's reflective journals

The other technique I used was writing reflective journals after each interview, which were personal and not shared with participants. I was nervous about interviewing people whom I did not know, and I was unsure about how my research design would unfold. This anxiety seems very common to researchers.

For instance, Magilvy and Thomas (2009) and Backman and Kyngäs (1999) presented the challenges they faced while carrying out their chosen approaches to their study while Karen Clancy (2007) and Martin (2000) discussed the challenges as insiders while collecting data.

I saw reflective journal writing as one way to manage those challenges (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Lee, 2014). Research also identifies that it helps people to become critical and analytical about their own learning and practice (Greene, 2011; Kennison, 2012; Sen, 2010). For these reasons, I wrote a brief memo after each interview. I planned to write a reflective journal right after each interview. Most of the time, however, I managed it only after a few hours and sometimes after a couple of days. I produced a total of 48 entries. These memos were not shared with the participants because they included my private thoughts and emotions about the interview interaction with the participants and about the overall process of data collection. For example, there were illustrations of awkward moments and other times descriptions of feeling good about the possible richness of data. This technique provided a space for the continuous reflection on the data and the research process (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In general, this journal showed my journey of moving from a novice to confident researcher.

3.3 Data analysis methods

To analyse collected data to answer my research questions, I found Åkerlind's (2012) and Eisenhardt's (1989) analysis process enabled me to look at both variation and commonality from the narratives of the six participants. When analysing data to find theoretical models to address the identity negotiation process of the participants, I found it helpful to draw on Braun and Clarke's (2006) thematic analysis process and Ryan and Bernard's (2003) techniques to identify themes.

First, I focused on examining the different trajectories of each participant's identity negotiation in Aotearoa NZ. This was achieved by summarising the

individuals' shared recounts. Second, I looked for common themes through a series of selection processes from raw data to coding and to themes. My attention moved from the individuals' stories to selected quotes (Åkerlind, 2012; Eisenhardt, 1989). I shifted my attention from the "pool of meanings" (Åkerlind, 2012, p. 118) to a meaningful link to make sense of how all those themes connected to one another and what they were telling me in terms of the research objectives.

At the end of the process, I noticed an important aspect of the research objective—identities were shaped and re-shaped in relationships developed during interviews. Even though this was neither planned nor expected, it needed to be analysed. Thus, I added a chapter (Chapter 6) to address the findings about the relational aspect between the participants and myself during the interviews. The findings are in line with recent literature (Mann, 2011; Richards, 2011; Talmy 2010, 2011) which highlights the relational aspects of qualitative interviews.

3.3.1 Narratives of individuals

Even though my research was not a case study, it was important and also necessary to understand each individual's unique story. This served as a basis to understand individuals holistically, as claimed by Witz (2006). Individual narratives also became my response to each participant when conducting reflective interviews. Before the final reflective interview, I summarised each participant's journey. This summary focused on what participants said and how I felt about their shared stories. The summaries were shared with each participant during the last interview session, the reflective interview (see Appendices from D-1 to I-3 for two figures and one table presented to each participant).

The two figures in the Appendices (one showing the participant's sense of belonging, and the other describing her past, present and future communities), and the table in the Appendices (showing significant events recounted by the participant), played a significant role in the research. Participants could visually see my interpretation of their migrant journey and communities they belonged to. At the same time, they could see the connection among the significant events in relation to their identity trajectories. Participants could elaborate further on their

identity trajectories they were not aware of previously. They also could identify what was the most significant event to them in terms of their identity trajectories. Overall, they could make sense of their identity formation, and they could decide which story of their journey should be told to the audience. As a result, the participants confirmed and/or decided the title of their narrative which is illustrated in Chapter 4.

In reporting each individual's narratives during the session, I used direct quotations along with the table and the figures. As explained, the quotations helped to verify the interpretation of reported stories. The last reflective interview became the foundation of Chapter 4.

3.3.2 Thematic analysis

As noted above, for the purpose of the research, I designed the analysis process to find a model which could shed more light on the complex identity negotiation processes from individually dynamic and unique identity journeys. I used thematic analysis guided by Braun and Clarke (2006) and Bernard and Ryan (2009). I searched for themes which were similar and/or different among those experiences and looked for a structure linking those various themes (Åkerlind, 2012; Eisenhardt, 1989; G. W. Ryan & Bernard, 2003). I used Nvivo software.

The overall analysis was rather chaotic and complex. There was a continuous cutting and sorting of identified quotes or expressions which seemed important into piles of similar groups. Often, it was not clear which group was the most relevant for the text to be sorted into. In this case, I put the text into all the possible groups so that I did not miss any important data. The close description of the process follows.

I read through each participant's stories and identified a possible theme for segments of text that emerged as salient because of their relevance to my research questions. For example, as seen below, I noted 24 themes from Jessica's first interview with 49 segments of text.

Table 3.1: *Example of the number of themes identified*

Interview (Jessica)	Themes	Quotes
Initial interview-1	24	49
Interview-2	20	40
Interview-3	26	49
Interview-4	14	17
Interview-5	33	74
Interview-6	25	54
Interview-7	15	31

As seen in Table 3.1 above, there were themes and quotes. I assessed the themes first. I examined each theme to decide whether it could be a theme or a sub-theme. A sub-theme was decided when the theme could be an example of another theme. If a theme was too ambiguous to decide, then I added it in a separate pile so that I could re-assess it later. There was a process of combining and sorting to develop “hierarchies of themes” (Ryan and Bernard, 2003, p. 85)—code books. One sample result of the process is seen below: I identified seven themes from Jessica’s stories with many sub-themes, and I also noted anything interesting so that I could re-examine it.

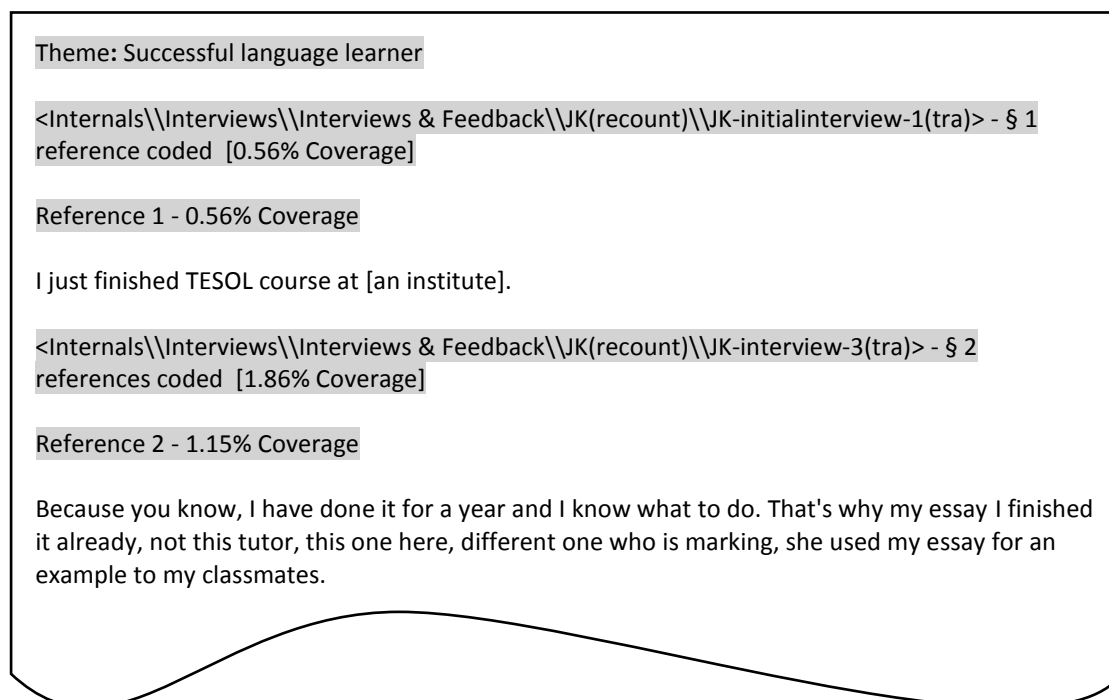
Table 3.2: *Example of themes and sub-themes identified*

Themes	Quotes
Interaction	
unclear communication_interaction	11
sharing with others	5
personal opinion of others	11
others evaluating me	4
devalued self identity	10
not being heard or visible	4
differences and preference not heard	3

invisible to others	2
Ambiguity	
accepting ambiguity	3
confused by others	4
cultural unclarity	6
Being language learner	
successful langauge learner	6
language struggle	8
my reasons	2
unfair judgement of English proficiency	
no language zone	1
influence of language	2
Identity and membership	
initial settlement	11
imagined identity or community	8
I don't belong here	2
current identities and communities	6
emotional effect	7
Policies and system effect on life	
global influnce	8
local influence	7
Negotiation	
no other option available	6
my way to deal with things	15
don't want to do this	4
Past experience affects future decision	
positive	2
negative	8
Interesting to Jinah	7

Then, I examined the quotes. Each sub-theme and its references were exported to the Word document as illustrated below.

Figure 3.2: *Example of the export of one theme*



As in Figure 3.2, the theme was *successful language learner* and one of the quotes I identified was Jessica's claim that she had a TESOL qualification during the first interview. During the third interview, she mentioned that her essay was chosen as an example for her peers. Both stories were added when Jessica was telling me significant events about her unsuccessful language learner identity. The stories identified were contradictory to the main stories and I did not code this as a main theme. However, I thought they were important to note (later in this section, I describe how the theme was significant in the study). Like this example, I re-read the identified themes and references to confirm if all the quotes were related to the theme. I repeated this with all the themes I coded.

These sorted themes again became a data pool. I combined all the themes and references. From the data pool, I tried to find a structure to elucidate the relations among them in terms of the process of identity negotiation. The process linked themes into theoretical models (Bernard & Ryan, 2009; G. W. Ryan & Bernard, 2003). At this stage, I found the software program—Nvivo—which had given me

flexibility and convenience, was no longer beneficial. It was better to use a more traditional way of analysing: highlighting, taking notes, connecting/disconnecting themes and drawing maps to find the structure. After numerous drafts, the final structure seen below became the source of Chapter 5. The themes were examined several times while I was drafting the findings chapters.

Table 3.3: *Final categorises of themes*

Themes	Sub-themes	Quotes
Affordance	Given_ExistingIDs	78
	Offered_OuterStructure	33
	Offered_Others	81
Constraints	Being_Mother-Wife	61
	Structure_Global-Local	136
	Previsous_CoPs-Knowledge	66
	Being_Language_Learner	67
	Health	14
	Being_Aisan_migrant	28
Response	Took_Opportunities	39
	Learn_Differences_TwoWays	21
	Seek_Support	36
	Personal_opinion (one-way)	69
	Find_Ways2Settle	62
	Choose_Priority	30
	Don't know what	4
Developing_New ID		17

The analysis of the data did not stop with the findings chapters. When I identified a significant link between self and identity, I went back to the data and selected quotes which seemed related to the representation of self. For example, the quotes in Figure 3.2 above were under the theme of successful language learner and I could see that they were Jessica's representation of herself to resist her unsuccessful language learner identity. Then I re-examined the quotes in light of

the participant's positioning which is discussed in Chapter 7. I also returned to the data after I constructed a model that synthesised the findings, which is presented in Chapter 8. In this way, the data analysis was iterative and ongoing.

3.4 Participants and researcher

As explained in Section 3.1, the nature of the study, the relationship between participants and the researcher is critical in the research. Also, trustworthiness of this research is grounded in this relationship. Thus, it is important to understand the relationship. In this section, first, I look into the process of recruiting participants and the brief background of each participant. Second, I briefly present the researcher—myself. In particular, I describe my roles in data collection, and then further explain how the participants and I created a close relationship during the data generation process.

3.4.1 Participants

I used the snowball sampling method. I recruited participants who resided in the area of Waikato in Aotearoa NZ and gained six participants. Initial contacts were people who were likely to know prospective participants, but they did not become participants in the research. If the prospective participant was not able to participate in the research, she was asked if she knew anyone who might be a suitable participant. Each participant was involved in data generating activities for twelve months (see Appendix C for the details). Each prospective participant was approached for initial interviews via emails, texts, and telephone calls. Most of the participants (five out of six) agreed to conduct interviews at their houses, but one participant preferred more public places like cafés. All who agreed to have an initial interview became ongoing participants.

I considered several criteria when recruiting participants. Firstly, the participants needed to be Asian migrant women in Aotearoa NZ who have children. In the context of bicultural society of Māori (indigenous people) and Pākehā (fair-skinned people) (Ranford, n.d.), people often identify Asian by skin-colour. For this reason, the term Asian in this research includes Southeast Asian, Chinese, Indian and other

Asian (Statistics New Zealand, n.d.). There is also an underlying assumption that women with children engage in *mother discourses* which may heavily impact on their identity negotiation. Secondly, they needed to be learning English as an additional language. The reason is that migrant women who use English as an additional language may engage in rather different identity negotiation processes than those of people who are first language speakers of English. Although the potential participants could vary in Asian ethnic backgrounds and their preferred languages, the people I planned to recruit needed to be comfortable with telling their stories in English or Korean, which is my first language. However, I also let them know that they could use either preferred language when writing to me. This was to minimise any misinterpretation by third parties such as an interpreter during the interviews. The period of time the recruited participants had been living in NZ varied from one year to 17 years. The aim was to focus on their identity negotiation process rather than their settlement process.

Six participants engaged in my study: one from India, two from Korea, two from China, and one from Japan. All names are pseudonyms. Some chose their pseudonyms while others did not mind the pseudonyms that I used. Some background details for each of the participants are described below.

3.4.1.1 Simi from India

Simi moved from India after discussion with her husband about their children's future. The choice of NZ as a destination was mainly due to the influence of her sister who was already living in Auckland. They came to visit NZ in 2003 to see whether it was a good place to live and to raise children. She first settled in Auckland with her children and about a year later her husband joined her and the children in December 2005. Simi had been working as a primary teacher at English schools both in India and overseas prior to the immigration. Realising that there were more job opportunities in the early childhood education (ECE) field at the beginning of her settlement, she went back to school to qualify as an ECE teacher. She moved to Hamilton because her husband got a job in a city near Hamilton. At the time of data collection, she was working full-time at a kindergarten. She hoped

to run her own kindergarten one day. At the same time, she indicated that she wanted to move back to India when her children had grown up and were settled.

3.4.1.2 Jessica from Korea

Jessica migrated from South Korea. She moved to NZ after meeting her Aotearoan New Zealander husband in Australia while she was there on a working holiday visa. She got married and had lived in Hamilton since 2009. She had one son who was in preschool when the initial interview was conducted. She had had a few part-time jobs such as a grocery store assistant both in Korea and in NZ. However, she was searching for a career with a qualification. With limited job opportunities in the jewellery making industry for which she was trained in Korea, she obtained a TESOL diploma from a local tertiary institute. Further, she wanted to enrol in an ECE programme at the same institute.

3.4.1.3 Mia from Korea

Mia was a middle-aged South Korean woman who immigrated into NZ in 1997 with her husband and two school-age sons. Her initial settlement was an ongoing struggle because she had not wanted to move to NZ. It was her husband's decision and she reluctantly followed him, which made her ill-prepared to settle in a country where a different language was used. She was a qualified ECE teacher with experience in Korea. After years of struggles, she was able to get a job as an ECE teacher but not as a qualified ECE teacher with a recognised NZ registration.

At the time of the interviews, she was a part-time ECE teacher and a full-time English language student. She was also involved in many committees some of which operated to liaise between NZ and Korean organisations and communities. She stated that there was something missing that prevented her from being fully involved in each community, which she claimed to be a lack of language competency. In the future, she said she hoped to run a centre, combining a Korean school and a kindergarten to create an innovative and sustainable school.

3.4.1.4 Holly from China

Holly migrated from China. She was working at an international pharmaceutical company, but she had not seen any future opportunities in China. She moved here for a better future in June 1996 and met her husband who had also migrated from China. At the beginning of her settlement, she enrolled in a business programme. However, she changed to an English programme to learn English and finished it. She completed a one-year tertiary foundation course at the same institute. At the time of data collection, she had two daughters, and she described her main identity as a mother. She was heavily involved in activities related to her religion. Through church, she helped her communities in many ways, such as interpreting for people who could not communicate in English. She did not stop finding ways to improve her English, even though she was considered to be a good English user in her communities. She hoped one day to find a full-time job when her children no longer needed her care.

3.4.1.5 Emily from China

Emily migrated to NZ from China in October 2002 with her husband and her son. Her husband initiated the move for a better life for the family. Since 2002, her family had lived in many cities such as Dunedin, Taupo and Wellington in Aotearoa NZ. They even moved countries, from China to NZ, to Canada, to China and back to NZ. The ongoing moves were mainly due to her husband's study and job. At the time of the interviews, her family had moved from Beijing, China, having settled in Hamilton for less than a year. This time, the decision was mainly for the education of their children. She indicated that her son was going to secondary school, and she was looking for the best place to educate her children. She had three children, one boy, and two daughters. She was a full-time mother, and her family was heavily involved in activities at her local church.

3.4.1.6 Lucy from Japan

Lucy moved to NZ with her ex-husband and a son. Her marriage fell apart after a few years, and during the study she lived with her partner and her son. In Japan,

she described herself as someone who loved travelling—her temporary jobs in Japan were only to make money to travel overseas. At the time of data collection, she was a self-employed home business woman working as a beautician. She obtained the qualification from a local college. She also worked part-time on a casual basis counselling for Japanese students at a local high school. However, she hoped to get a secure job in the future. She was also involved in many charity activities. At the beginning of 2013, when she began her engagement in this research, she became a chairperson of an ethnic language community school.

3.4.2 Myself, the researcher

Along with the participants, I played a part in data generation as a researcher and also as a fellow traveller. The detailed description of data generation tools adopted in the study, writing reflective journals and responses, is addressed in Section 3.6.3. Here, I describe what it means to be a fellow traveller as an *insider* and also to be a researcher as an *outsider* in the research context.

I had used Gina as an English nickname for a long time, and I use this name to refer to myself in the context of myself as an Asian migrant woman in Aotearoa NZ. Using Gina as a nickname allowed me space to be distant and allowed me to establish a professional detachment. At the same time, it made me feel secure and comfortable in describing myself in the third person.

3.4.2.1 A fellow traveller: Gina from South Korea

Gina moved to Aotearoa NZ in December 2008 with two sons and her ex-husband who is an Aotearoan New Zealander. She was a lecturer at a local college and a self-employed English tutor in Korea. Even though her academic background is a degree in business management and an overseas qualification in social work, her employment in Korea was closely related to her competency in English—a civic worker, a committee member of a World Taekwondo championship, and an English teacher at private institutes. In Aotearoa NZ, though, the English proficiency which offered a great opportunity became a limitation—she was viewed as a language learner. She obtained employment as a community support

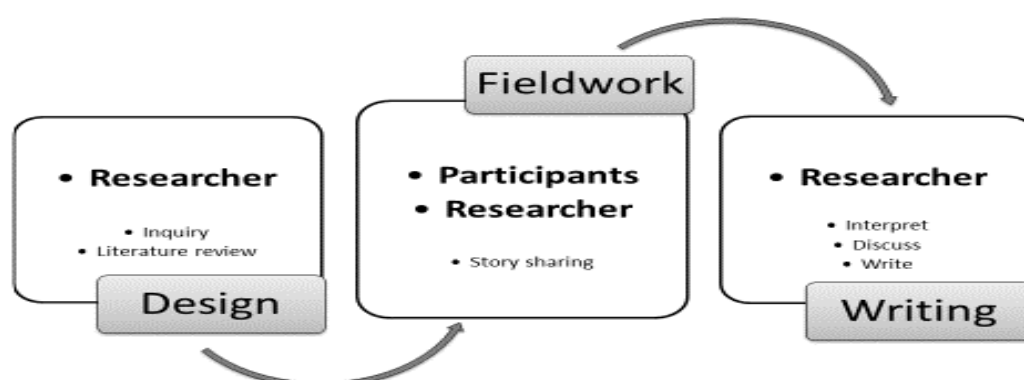
worker in 2010. At the time of the commencement of data collection, February 2013, she was studying full-time and working part-time on weekends.

I would like to acknowledge the fact that Gina's identities may be similar to those of my participants—signalling the researcher as an insider in a sense. Like the participants described in the previous section, Gina is an Asian migrant mother using English as an additional language. The brief description of Gina is not very different from any of the participants' description. They are all Asian women using English as an additional language and living in Aotearoa NZ. In that sense, she is an insider. As an insider with many similar identities, I shared my stories with the participants through writing responses after each interview.

3.4.2.2 Dual positions of the researcher

Even though I recognised that I was a fellow traveller—an insider as seen above, I also acknowledge the fact that I was a researcher. The figure below shows my role as a researcher in this research.

Figure 3.3: *Dual positions of the researcher*



As seen in Figure 3.3, the researcher has full responsibility for the overall process of the research, from designing the research to writing a thesis. In particular, while designing this research, I investigated the literature on the issues of identity negotiation of Asian migrant women. I selected the methodology and the methods

to generate and analyse data. While conducting the fieldwork, I not only participated in the story sharing but also made sure the fieldwork was implemented as planned and managed any problems that arose. I analysed the data and interpreted the outcomes. Then, there was the writing process. In this sense, I was not only a fellow traveller but importantly also a researcher, which distanced me from the participants. This is shown in the researcher's reflective journal writing, and the findings from this became part of Chapter 4.

3.5 Creating a research relationship

A close relationship was developed between the participants and researcher. As discussed above, as a researcher, I needed the participants' ongoing commitment during fieldwork for the success of the research. Even though I had this particular goal to achieve, I also acknowledged myself as a fellow traveller—an Asian migrant woman using English as an additional language. I could assume that sharing experiences and realising that there were many similar stories might narrow the perceived power gap between the participants and the researcher, which is similarly described in Barkhuizen (2011). It could be anticipated that there would be mutual compassion and caring. During the interviews, it was clear that both participants and the researcher expressed concerns for each other's wellbeing. This is further explored in the findings chapters.

In this section, I focus on how the relationship, which I deemed to be a caring one, helped the research process. Ongoing interaction and sharing experiences led to the creation of a caring relationship which is similar to Connelly and Clandinin's "caring community" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 4) even though the relationship in the present study was a dyadic one. It began with caring for the researcher's general wellbeing and expanded to a specific issue like the success of the research. In the beginning, the participants cared for my general well-being. There were general expressions of their interest and concern like "How are you?" and "How was your holiday?" Then, it became specific, "I should not talk too much. I read your transcription; you must have had really hard time transcribing all that.

Too much work for you.” This general concern for my wellbeing was evident throughout the conversation.

As the interviews progressed, the interest in the research project increased; participants were interested in the progress of my research. Such comments and expressions were also shown in my comments during the interviews and in my responses, emails after each interview, to each participant. The development of a caring research relationship is described further in the findings chapter, Chapter 6.

The participants’ interest and concern shifted from the success of collecting data to the successful end of the study. In the beginning, there were general inquiries about whether they were answering my questions the way I wanted them to, and whether their stories would contribute to my research or not, such as “I heard that the more I talk, the better data you might get.” As time went by, participants were curious about my research progress and their inquiries became specific about the outcome of my research. In the middle of interviewing, some participants said to me, “Please put this one in your research. I think they should know this” and “I will be glad if they get something out of my story.” In this way, the participants were closely involved in the interview processes, creating a sort of research community in which each member understood and shared the goal through ongoing interactions.

I was also aware of the fact that the success of data collection depended on the stability of this research community. My place in that community was supporting each participant to contribute to the data collection. This meant that I needed to be flexible and sensitive to their needs and wants such as the length, place, and time of interview sessions as well as the events they wanted to share. This may have helped to develop the relationships, which is discussed in Chapter 7.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Prior to my fieldwork, I obtained ethical approval from the ethics committee in the Faculty of Education at the University of Waikato. The detailed steps I took to consider ethical issues in my research are discussed below.

The main data generation method was in-depth interviewing. Johnson (2002) identifies possible ethical issues in using this method: protecting subjects/individuals and protecting communities. Considering ethical issues in in-depth interviewing, he suggests that researchers have an obligation to take any necessary steps to protect individuals' information shared and to avoid any harm to their reputation, social standing, or social prestige.

The process of interviewing was carried out with these ethical issues in mind. I was introduced to possible participants by friends and acquaintances. To begin the fieldwork, I obtained informed consents. To do that, I sent an invitation letter (see Appendix A-1) directly to the prospective participant via email or face to face. The letter included the detailed information of my research, the activities they would be involved in, and their rights as participants. Participants were informed that they had the right to decline to participate and the right to withdraw anytime. The participants received a consent form to sign (see Appendix A-2) at the beginning of the first interview session.

Cultural and social considerations were taken into account when conducting interviews. I accepted any light refreshments offered by the participants, and I sometimes took some snacks or fruit to the participants' houses to share when interviewing. Also, I was aware of the cultural discourse that female Asian participants might see the interviewer as someone in authority, which might impede their opening up or being able to say, "No." I explained the ethics regulations and other aspects about participating in the research (Appendices A-1, A-2, and A-3).

The interview was focused on gathering the participants' stories. A significant part of my research data was narrated personal experience. Therefore, protecting the

anonymity and confidentiality of participants was critical. Accordingly, I used pseudonyms at all times. The original data such as recordings was all stored with password security. I also kept all of the personal information confidential.

It could be assumed that sharing private and sometimes unpleasant stories may cause some distress. I discussed this matter with my supervisors and a counselling expert at the Human Development and Counselling Department, the University of Waikato. Then, I included a list of counselling services available in the community in the invitation letter (see Appendix A-3). In this way, the participants were informed of resources if needed.

Participants were informed that they had options to choose. For example, prompted recounts (a data generation tool which was described in Section 3.6.2) could be done either by voice recording or in writing, and in the language they preferred. Places and time of the interviews varied as well. The interview sessions with participants were held in places which the participants and I mutually agreed to and felt comfortable in. As mentioned earlier, it was either the participants' homes or a public café. Most of the interviews were done in the participants' houses, as suggested by the participants. The time of each interview session varied, and each participant and I negotiated the best time for each interview session. The exact time that the participants spent while participating in the research varied as well. The time of interview and recount depended on the scope of stories that each participant was willing to share, resulting in varying interview time periods from about 30 minutes to three hours.

Participants received transcribed and (if necessary) translated data they provided, and a summary of the data they generated (see Appendices from D-1 to I-3), along with my response. One Korean participant preferred doing interviews in her first language but hoped to receive the translated transcripts so as to improve her English language skills. I translated the data. Transcripts of each interview were sent to the participants by email. Participants also received a summary of their interviews before the final interview session via email.

I informed participants that, after my thesis was submitted and approved, the link to my published thesis on the Research Commons of Waikato University's website would be sent to them so that they would have access to it.

3.7 Trustworthiness

The trustworthiness of qualitative research establishes reliability and validity, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985). To gain trustworthiness, I reviewed the work of Seale (2001). According to Seale (2001), *credibility* can replace truth value in qualitative research by using prolonged and ongoing engagement in the field. *Transferability* can replace applicability by providing detailed description of research and data. Credibility and transferability ensure the trustworthiness of data collected, which Webster and Mertova (2007) claim to be reliability in a narrative inquiry. *Dependability* and *confirmability* can replace consistency and reliability, achieved through feedback and auditing from others, which may ensure the meaningful analysis of data (Webster & Mertova, 2007).

These four forms replace reliability and validity. Furthermore, Holliday (2007) assesses the role of researchers in reliability and validity in qualitative research as follows:

A significant aspect of qualitative research is the need for researchers to show their workings, to reveal how they have managed the subjectivity inherent within this research paradigm. This is the major way in which rigour can be maintained, and it makes the writing of the research a central element in achieving accountability. (p. 42)

The researcher's role seems to be central to showing the rigour of qualitative research according to Holliday (2007). Transparency in analysing of data, including researcher reflexivity, has increased the validity of the present research.

I describe rigour in the research design and sensitivity in research practice below.

3.7.1 Rigour in research design

I carefully designed the data generating process to maximise the trustworthiness of data. At the same time, the process of analysis I developed was to gain the most meaningful findings from the data. The details of the process are described in Sections 3.2 and 3.3 to demonstrate the research rigour to establish reliability and validity in the present study, following Long and Johnson (2000). I address rigour in research design as follows.

3.7.1.1 Data generation process

There are three main means that I used in the data generation process. One was the length of the data collection period and the number of times each participant engaged in the research. Another was ongoing two-way responses between participants and the researcher. The third was various forms and sources of data generated.

In detail, firstly, I triangulated the data through prompted recounts, in-depth interviews, and a reflective interview. In this way, participants were able to add, elaborate, and reflect on the event. The details of these techniques were described previously in Section 3.2.

Secondly, each participant engaged in the interview process for more than twelve months. Eight interviews during the period allowed time to ensure the data they provided was accurately presented and genuinely understood. For example, the prompted recount sent to the researcher was the main topic in the subsequent interview session. Participants had adequate time to think about the recount and to explore it further with relevant connected stories. Related to this feature, thirdly, a two-way response made it possible for the participants and the researcher to engage in ongoing interaction so that the participants were able to change information if something was interpreted differently from the participant's intention. The data, once collected, interpreted, and confirmed, went back to the participants and they had time to judge the *accuracy* and *credibility* of the

interpretation (Moen, 2006). In sum, these elements of data generation were the result of an endeavour to ensure that the data generated was reliable and credible.

3.7.1.2 Data analysis and writing

Along with research design, the data analysis process was carefully constructed to maximise trustworthiness. I largely separated this process into two. One was during the data generation period. The other was after the data generation period—mainly when writing the findings and discussion.

As early as the first initial interview, I began to analyse data. I actively listened to the participants' stories and read the transcribed data. My interpretation was confirmed and changed by participants through an ongoing confirmation process in the research design, which is described in detail later in this section. Then the pool of data was categorised multiple times until I could coherently link the themes.

Collected and analysed data is presented through writing. I often used extracts from data. The use of verbatim quotations in writing was used "as evidence; as explanation; as illustration; to deepen understanding" (Corden & Sainsbury, 2006, p. 11). Writing with verbatim quotations made it clear for the readers to see the points I was making. Holliday (2007) states that this writing itself takes on an agency of its own as an argument through telling the reader what is important from the data.

Writing consists of multiple layers of representation according to Barkhuizen (2011). There is a representation of the writer's voice as well as of the participants' voices and possibly more, such as that of wider communities. Holliday (2007) argues that there is a complex of voices: from the voices of researcher and participants to the overarching argument that connects all the voices. This final voice is to represent the newly developed and constructed knowledge from the study overall. Holliday (2007) recommends that when writing, researchers should write how they dealt with the complexities and what the relationships were. In this sense, I made an effort to acknowledge the complexity of voices. I included

my personal narrative as well as the participants' narratives. Next, I also recognised the voices of others which influenced the narratives of participants from the participants' stories.

3.7.2 Sensitivity in research practice

My research displayed an ongoing relationship with participants and relied on the participants' commitment and openness to share their stories for twelve months. Strong rapport was built, and also that was an important outcome of a research relationship. This was further explained in Section 3.5. In this section, I addressed four elements in research practice, reflected in the process of data collection, which could be considered to relate to the rigour to obtain trustworthiness in the study. They are: being flexible in research practice, being grateful for shared stories, seeking ongoing confirmation, and seeking guidance from supervisory panels.

Even though there was a set plan for data collection, I was flexible in the time frame and ways of communication. For example, one participant could not have the interviews every month for seven consecutive times, so interviews were scheduled accordingly. This was also to minimise any pressure that the participants may have felt because of the amount of effort they had to put in my research. Also, I had to find various ways to communicate. The data generation process was an ongoing conversation between participants and me, a novice researcher. I searched for the best way to communicate with each person, as some responded better to telephone calls than emails. Once the participants and I became familiar with one method of communication, for example, texting, the conversation became more natural and frequent.

Throughout the research process, I often felt grateful to the participants who committed their time and energy to the research. Most of all, I was grateful that they openly shared their personal stories. I often let them know that their time was appreciated and their stories valued. They were also displayed in my responses to participants which included comments about the stories they shared.

The stories also re-emerged during the reflective interview sessions when they were shared, which also highlighted their value.

The interview process resulted in the ongoing confirmation of shared stories between the participants and me. As a researcher and interviewer, when I noted information gaps during an interview, I asked the participant to fill them in. If the gap was more about the reasoning or emotion about the story they shared, I took a note and asked about it at the next interview or through my response. In this way, I confirmed their recounts.

The research practice was not altogether smooth or trouble-free. Ongoing conversations between a supervisory panel and me throughout the data collection period helped to deal with any difficulties I faced during the time. For example, I sought advice on my interview skills when I faced difficulties in obtaining elaborated recounts. Most importantly, any ethical issues were discussed with the supervisory panel. Ethical considerations in the research practice are presented in a separate section above.

3.8 Summary

This section summarises the chapter: on what grounds I designed and conducted the research and what methods I used to carry out the research and to analyse the data generated.

The research is grounded in three philosophical and methodological foundations which are social constructionism, narrative inquiry and prototype development from diverse narratives. The social constructionism focuses on language, social interaction in context, and knowledge co-construction. The paradigm also recognises the importance of power issues. Narrative inquiry as a methodological foundation offered me the opportunity to study how people experience the world. This approach enabled me to examine how narratives are socially constructed, how the relation between agency and structure unfolds, and what meaning-making processes look like in narratives.

While the identified features guided me to design the data collection processes, I hoped the research would offer a structure to answer my research objective: How do Asian migrant women negotiate their identities as language learners? In this regard, I analysed the relationship between the participants and myself which had emerged as salient. (These findings are presented in Chapter 6). This analysis helped me to closely examine the relational contexts to shape the discussion chapter (Chapter 7).

The summary of the data generation methods is presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: *Data generation methods*

Method	Main purpose
Initial interviews	Provide demographic and general life story of living in Aotearoa NZ
Prompted recounts	Reflect on participants' recent experiences
Post-recount interviews	Elaborate participants' recounts
Reflective interviews	Reflect on the journey of the last 12 months to make meaning of the stories shared
Researcher's reflective journals	Generate emerging questions about participants' stories and reflect on the researcher's personal experiences Express private thoughts about research
Researcher's written responses	Share thoughts and feelings on the participant's previously shared stories Share own stories when reflecting on the participant's stories

As seen in Table 3.4, I used interviews and prompted recounts to collect significant events from the participants. I also used the researcher's reflective journals and written responses to contribute to the data generation. The data was generated between six participants and the researcher for over twelve months. It resulted in 48 in-depth interviews along with various forms of prompted recounts which include written notes, artefacts, and documents, and 42 written responses and 43 reflective journal entries.

The research data was analysed in three chapters: narratives of each participant, aspects of identity negotiation processes, and aspects of interview relationships between participants and the researcher. The results follow in Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

Chapter 4 Asian migrant women's narratives

This chapter focuses on the findings from each participant's eight iterative interviews to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the communities both experienced and imagined that Asian migrant women learning English participate in?
2. Are there significant events in the identity trajectories of Asian migrant women learning English? If so what are they?
3. Over time, what are the identity trajectories of the participants?

Each participant's journey was unique. Thus, the description of each participant's narrative varied. The answers to the research questions presented themselves in each narrative. I described each participant's narrative in a separate section in the order of the final interviews conducted—Jessica in Section 4.1, Holly in 4.2, Emily in 4.3, Mia in 4.4, Lucy in 4.5, and Simi in 4.6. Next, the narrative as a researcher during the data collection period is described in Section 4.7. I have used verbatim quotes that seemed to describe each participant's narrative best as headings in the following presentation of findings.

4.1 Jessica: "I study for my future job"

Jessica participated in the research from February to December 2013. Her shared stories during the period focused on being a successful language learner to enrol in a degree programme, and a mother (see Appendices from D-1 to D-3). Jessica settled in Aotearoa NZ when she married a New Zealander. It was the beginning of building her family and having her first son that made her realise it was time for her to pursue a career to help financially. She had had few jobs previously both in Korea and Aotearoa NZ, so her goal first began with language learning and a recognisable qualification.

Her general life story was highlighted by the significant events she recounted. This section focuses on the description of all the significant events in relation to her

recognised identity trajectories. Often the significant events included emotions which marked major decision-making points. As noted in the methods in Chapter 3, the events were confirmed by Jessica in the eighth interview.

Table 4.1 below shows the significant events confirmed by Jessica.

Table 4.1: *Significant events recounted by Jessica*

When	Significant Event	Background	Interview session
February 2013	Being rejected and referred to a foundation course at a lower level than her qualification	ECE programme application	First
March 2013	Being given no reasonable answers about her placement	Conversation with administration staff of ECE programme	Second
April 2013	Being treated badly and not being listened to by a tutor	Writing class	Third
May 2013	Replying to her husband's comments on her persistence in speaking in English while interviewing	Conversation with her husband a few months earlier	Seventh
May 2013	Being ignored by a woman she knew	Encountering an acquaintance in public	Fifth
June 2013	Being accepted to a degree programme at University		Sixth

To briefly elaborate on the information in the table above, in February 2013, Jessica's application to an Early Childhood Education (ECE) programme was rejected, and she was referred to a lower level foundation course, her recent TESOL qualification at the same institute unrecognised. The second event was the frustration she felt while she was seeking information about her placement. She narrated that the administrative staff did not provide reasonable answers to her questions. In April 2013, in a writing class, Jessica's voice was silenced and disregarded by her tutor when she requested access to the internet to check the essay format. In May, which was reported in the seventh interview, Jessica's husband commented positively on her effort and English fluency regarding her

decision to complete research interviews in English when he found out the interviewer was a Korean. In the same month, Jessica encountered a woman she knew in a shopping mall but who ignored her. In the sixth interview, in June 2013, she reported that she was accepted into a degree programme at a university. She was excited to begin her new journey as a university student.

In the beginning, Jessica indicated that she had finished a graduate diploma in teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) which was an NZ Level 7 qualification. She had then hoped to enrol in an early childhood education (ECE) programme at the same institute for a future career. However, she was referred to a Level 4 foundation course without any guarantee of future acceptance into the ECE programme. She had to finish the six month course because she was relying on social support to support her and her family.

Central to Jessica's narrative for eleven months was her aspiration to enter into a *legitimate* programme for her future career. She reported this as below:

Some people . . . they can work at supermarket. . . . If you don't have that kind of thing [a qualification/a degree], you will have to be stuck in certain jobs. And then if you get minimum wage, you can't survive with one job. . . . If you don't have a qualification, you can't get a better job, you know, to cover all these expenses. . . . If you see further, it is not really working.
(Interview 8)

Obtaining a legitimate qualification started with learning the language—English. However, learning English in a formal institution was not easy for her. She wanted to study in a language learning course provided by a tertiary institution when she migrated to Aotearoa NZ. However, she had to wait for her permanent residence visa due to the fee difference between international students and permanent residents.

The visa acceptance did not instantly lead to attending a formal language course because she had become a mother. Being a mother added to the complexity of learning English. With limited options as someone with an infant to take care of,

she began attending free language classes at a community centre. She also started to speak English to her son at home at the cost of his opportunity to learn Korean, which was one of his heritage languages. Her statement from the seventh interview showed the complexity of learning English as a mother.

J: But sometimes, because you know I am not quite confident in speaking. Sometimes I kind of stuck in *no language*.

R: What do you mean by that?

J: I know [what] I want to say, but there is no word. I want to say something. But I can't explain in English. I can't remember Korean words. I am kind of [at] that stage. I don't teach Korean to my son because if I speak Korean to my son, when I get back to school, I can't speak English. Because it is kind of confusing. And I don't think I am really good at language. I work hard to get it, but I am not talented to learn [a] new language. I can speak this much because I work hard. When I speak Korean to my son, I may not speak English properly at school. That is why I try to speak in English. But people [in the Korean community] worry about, "Aren't you teaching him Korean? . . . You have to teach him. Otherwise he can't speak Korean." I explained to him, [a Korean supermarket owner] "Because I am studying, if I speak Korean to him, I can't speak English at school properly." That is true. If I am talented, I wouldn't worry about it. (Interview 7)

She settled in a not good at learning language identity to justify her action as a mother. As seen from the excerpt above, Jessica was trying to be a good language user. Jessica reported that, eventually, she enrolled in a language programme at a local tertiary institute. She successfully obtained a graduate diploma in TESOL with merit. Her success in the course did not last long: She failed the entrance requirements for an early childhood education (ECE) programme. Then, as she was referred to a Level 4 foundation course, she became an unsuccessful language learner. Even though she thought ECE might be a good option for her future, she resisted pursuing it due to the lack of perceived possibilities as well as the despair

and distress she felt during the process. The first and the second interviews with Jessica highlighted the frustration she felt, as seen below.

Yes, um, English is not my first language. They always ask for IELTS 7 whatever. It makes it stressful . . . just finished a TESOL course at [a tertiary institute]. I have to go back to [the tertiary institute] to study introductory courses. . . . They said that my English is not good enough. So I have to do it. (Interview 1)

They referred me to the level 4 course. I wanted to know what was going to happen after the course. And I went to the office, but there was no one there to ask. Yes, why did they even call me for an interview if they needed IELTS 7? They just said, "You need [an] IELTS result." Then I wouldn't have gone to the interview. I wouldn't even apply because if I knew. I am preparing [for] IELTS now, instead of doing level 4. . . . Just say, "You are not accepted," because of the literacy test, because of the writing. Then I understand. If they don't like my writing, just tell me. You need IELTS, or just simply saying you are not accepted. Don't send me somewhere which I don't need. . . . They don't seem to believe that I can do an ECE course. They said, in their words, "Writing essay[s] in ECE is different from writing in TESOL course." Then I said, "How is it different?" "I don't know, but different." . . . You know how annoying it is that studying at level 4. I am doing exactly the same thing but easier. (Interview 2)

With the emotional distress, she reported that she felt like an unsuccessful language learner as seen in her statements: "They said that my English is not good enough" and "They don't seem to believe I can do an ECE course." Her experiences at school after the event were shaped by her resistance to her wrongful placement.

At the end of the Level 4 foundation course, Jessica's application to a university degree programme was accepted. The acceptance, reported in the sixth interview, became a turning point for her feeling successful again. During the interview, she mentioned a conversation between her husband and herself a few months earlier, which seemed to confirm her feeling of being a successful language learner, "I am

smart now.” The conversation was about Jessica’s language choice during research interviews. Her husband expected her to speak Korean, her mother tongue, when he realised that the interviewer was Korean. The comment claiming to be smart, she added, was playful. Yet, by saying that, she was confirming to herself and her husband that she did not have a fear of English conversation anymore.

In summary, Jessica’s interview journey drew a trajectory of becoming a competent English language learner. This language learner trajectory also connected to her obtaining a *legitimate* qualification in Aotearoa NZ (see Appendix D-2).

4.2 Holly: “The Bible is leading my life”

Holly participated in the research from March 2013 to March 2014. Holly migrated to Aotearoa NZ in 1996 on her own. Then she married a Chinese migrant. At the time of the interviews, she was a stay-at-home mother with two children. Table 4.2 below shows the identified significant events narrated by Holly.

Table 4.2: *Significant events recounted by Holly*

When	Significant Event	Background	Interview session
Early days of migration	Changed enrolment from Business to English language voluntarily	Early stage of immigration	First
A few years prior to the interview	Joined a tennis club, which was a turning point in her viewing life in NZ	Conversation with mothers at her daughter's school	Eighth
Early days of interpreting job	Being told that she was not needed	At hospital to do interpreting job	Fourth
February 2013	Actively involved in a petition against the marriage amendment bill	Information from a brochure at church	Second
May 2013	Helped a Chinese lady who couldn't communicate effectively in English	People asked her to help others who were in need	Third
August 2013	Sister and niece were baptised	At church on Wednesday only for her sister and niece	Sixth
October 2013	Bought a juicer with her own money from casual work	Waited a few years to buy a juicer for her family	Seventh

To briefly describe the table, at the first interview, Holly recounted the excitement and also the difficulties of the settlement period when she migrated. She enrolled in a Business programme, but she decided to change her enrolment to an English language course. A few years previously she had joined a tennis club, and she reported at the last interview that it was a turning point for her in Aotearoa NZ (the elaboration of this event follows). Then, in the early days of her interpreting job, she recounted that she was told that she was not needed when she arrived at the hospital to do her job. In February 2013, she was actively involved in a petition against the Marriage (Definition of Marriage) Amendment Bill, which she had become aware of from a brochure at the church she regularly attended. In May, she told a story of a Chinese lady whom she was helping because she could not communicate in English. In August, Holly's sister and a niece from China were baptised at a church she attended before they flew back to China. In October 2013,

she reported that she had just bought a juicer with her own money that she earned from the interpreting job. I explain the significance of these events in the description below.

Many of the stories she recounted indicated that she was actively involved in many communities which became evident in the second, the third, and eighth interviews. Her stories were focused on her involvement in church activities such as running a Bible study group. She also voluntarily helped people in the Chinese community. Her availability, mobility and, most of all, her English skills were the reasons why people often asked her for help, she reported. She was considered to be a good English language user.

Her journey to becoming a competent English language user began at the beginning of her settlement. In 1996, she enrolled in a Business diploma course. After a few classes, she realised that her immediate need was learning English. She changed to a language course and she narrated the event below.

When I came, I realised that my English was so bad. In the class [Business course] I could not understand well. Even I did not understand what they asked me to do. Totally I got lost. I said I had to change to the English class. Yes. At that time, you had to be on a waiting list to get into [the] English class. Lots of people came to English class. I [was] already enrolled in Business. So I did get accepted without waiting. Accepted. (Interview 1)

A couple of years previously, Holly had obtained a certificate in interpreting. She became a registered interpreter at an interpreting centre. She worked for Chinese people who needed English language support in the hospital. She indicated the benefit of working as an interpreter in the hospital as something which pushed her to learn more. She had to be familiar with the terminology in English and felt like it was related to her previous qualification in her home country, a degree in pharmacy. She thought she was not wasting any of her own resources. At the same time, she was paid for this casual job. She recounted a story of being able to buy things she wanted without feeling guilty, which was not possible previously.

My friend bought [a juicer] for 80 something dollars like that. At that time, it was half price. 160 something like that. I was waiting, waiting. [A] few years later, now things are [different], the situation is [a] little bit changed, 5 years ago we still struggled. Sometimes I do interpreting, getting some money, so I used it. . . . Yes, yes, so like sometimes, I was late to pick up my children. So they had to be in the library. . . . I buy them something for compensation. (Interview 7)

A salient story in relation to the interpreting job was an event recounted in the fourth interview. There were a few occasions when she had to face awkward situations at work. For example, one day she arrived at the hospital but staff told her that she was not needed, because the patient only had a few simple tests remaining, and there was no need for an interpreter. She was annoyed by the fact that she had gone there for nothing. However, she reported that she pretended nothing bad happened as a strategy to manage the situation, which is shown below.

I didn't talk to them. I reflect on that. I just try to think or understand why they say this thing. They needed someone before, now they don't need someone to interpret, mainly I just ignore[d]. The best thing which works for me is that I don't let this thing get to me. Sometimes, why do you say or [have] attitude towards me. I don't think [about] this kind of thing much. It is okay. (Interview 4)

At the same time, she added that her job was more than delivering messages between English and Chinese language users. She found her role was important for the wellbeing of the patient.

You have someone to talk about things. Even though our job is standing in the middle, I say they will feel that they need you rather than doctors. Doctors don't see you that way, but patients see you that way. Someone they saw you there, they are happy, they are relieved. That kind of thing. (Interview 4)

As seen in the excerpt above, Holly recognised the importance of her support for the patients.

For Holly, her turning points in an immigrant life were marked in three stages between 1996 and 2013. The first one was the event about changing her enrolment to the English language course. She reported it was due to the realisation of her lack of English competency to do anything in NZ. She also felt very comfortable in the language course not only because she learnt the language but she could also freely express herself in Chinese where many classmates were from China.

I felt better. There were lots of Chinese, so I could ask [in Chinese when she did not follow any instruction]. I was happier in [the] general English class. Then I did [a] one year tertiary course to prepare to continue in uni. It was also an English class but focusing on academic writing, reading. After one and a half year[s], I felt better with English. (Interview 1)

As seen above, she continued improving her English skills. Later she trained to become an interpreter. As mentioned previously, she did not stop improving her English language skills even after she became an interpreter, advancing her vocabulary skills.

The second turning point was the event of her and her husband being baptised when her family was struggling. Her faith in the Bible helped her overcome the hard times and has led her life since then. The third one was joining a tennis club. She reported that it was the most significant event in terms of a sense of belonging in Aotearoa NZ. She reported that belonging to a tennis club helped her feel closer to Aotearoa NZ society. The following excerpt shows her interpretation of belonging to the club as a place where people learn to understand each other. Being a member of this club made her feel that she really belonged in Aotearoa NZ communities.

I joined a tennis club . . . not during the time but it shaped me. . . . I talk to them, your English improve. You learn something, positive things, and

positive attitude. Also like, they will also see, "Oh, she is a quite positive person." They also get, sometimes they get encouraged from you, and get comfort from you. I met this lady, not met because we all play tennis there. She went to [the] hospital to have an operation then she went home. So I brought something to her, visited her. I think people get comfort when they see me there and greet them, saying beautiful things. You can help them, and it also helps you. You don't know what exactly but you communicate with people, doing things. (Interview 8)

At the last interview, Holly replied that, apart from her involvement in church, it was joining the tennis club which could be said to be a turning point in terms of a sense of belonging in this society. She said that looking at the aged who were very active members in the club also changed her perspective in her own aging. This gave her hope for the future, not only as a mother but as a member of society. For her, it was the most significant event.

In these three events, Holly consistently reported how the Bible guided her life, changing her perspectives as shown in the following three interview excerpts:

To be honest, my spiritual life didn't come to this level [she is a devoted Christian who tries to live by the Bible], I would like to spare all my time to help people, but I mean in some cases, that happens to you, and you have to do it. I know I should do it because that is the good thing. (Interview 3)

Now, I changed my view. . . . The purpose of [the] universe, you can do something, and you have something to offer. Actually, the aim is other people, not for you, to be blessed but through other people being blessed. . . . (Interview 6)

You understand life more, real life, and then you have more strength to overcome. . . . I gradually change my mind. You know before I came here, I really wanted to do something as a bridge, trading business between China and NZ. That was really for me. And then after went to church, past a couple of years, I asked God, "What you want me to do?" and like now, this job,

interpreting, I am doing the same thing, a kind of, bridging Chinese and New Zealanders. Life is different from my original thought. (Interview 7)

As seen above, Holly expressed her commitment to religion which guided and influenced her future plans which included voluntary community work and further Bible study (see Appendix E-2 for her future hopes).

In sum, Holly's competent English language user identity was developed over a period of time. This identity was confirmed by her casual work as an interpreter and being identified as a resourceful community member in Chinese communities. Holly's interest in helping people in need was the influence of her commitment to religion.

4.3 Emily: “Actually it [life in NZ] is okay”

Emily participated in the research from March 2013 to March 2014. Emily resettled in Aotearoa NZ about six months prior to the first interview. Since 2002, Emily's family, which consisted of three children and her husband in 2012, had settled in Aotearoa NZ, Canada, and China. In 2012, the family moved back to Aotearoa NZ to resettle. Unlike the previous relocations which were related to her husband's employment, the final move to Aotearoa NZ was for the children's education. As a mother of three, her first child was about to become a high school student.

Table 4.3 below shows the significant events identified during her interviews.

Table 4.3: *Significant events recounted by Emily*

When	Significant Event	Background	Interview session
A year prior to the interview	Being hurried and wanting not to be seen near school	School run	Fifth
A few months prior to the first interview	Being offered an opportunity to be a Sunday school teacher	Conversation with Sisters (Church members) at church	Second
May 2013	Making a paper flower with students	Sunday school lesson	Third
August 2013	Setting up a Bible study group at home which became successful	A Bible study group	Sixth
September 2013	Being offered an opportunity to attend training and learnt new teaching methods	Sunday school teacher training in English	Seventh
January 2014	Volunteering at a community school holiday programme	Chinese community member rang her for volunteer work	Eighth

At the beginning of her resettlement, Emily reported a few incidents which occurred during drop-offs and pick-ups of her children that made her feel uncomfortable “being Asian, not Kiwi” (Interview 5). In the second interview, she reported that she was offered a role as a Sunday school teacher at the ethnic church her family began to attend. During the following interview, her excitement in her new role as a Sunday school teacher was reported. Handicrafts were not something that she previously thought she was good at. However, she realised that she was creative. In August 2013, her family set up a Bible study group. The success of this group was reported through the increasing number of people who joined. In September, she reported that she had had one day of Sunday school teacher training. The usefulness of the training in terms of learning the differences in teaching methods between Aotearoa NZ and China was reported: “I think teachers are different, and the way is different. Like I said that teacher asked us to more practice in groups” (Interview 7). During the last interview, Emily reported that she volunteered at a community school holiday programme as a teacher for

a few weeks. With other teachers, she was involved in designing and running the programme.

At the beginning of the first interview, she informed me that she was a full-time mother raising three children. She used to be an accountant back in China, but she had not worked since having children. She mentioned that in the future when her children were grown up she would like to be employed. At the time of interviews, she recounted how much her family was involved in religious activities. All members of the family attended church on Sundays, went to prayer meetings on Wednesdays and had the Bible study group on Fridays. She was happy with her life and excited about the new role and responsibility as a Sunday school teacher which she was offered at the church.

Although Emily was excited with the new experiences offered, such as Sunday school teacher training, she sometimes recounted events which related to her struggles as an Asian migrant. Difficulties in communication in the English language and a sense of discomfort of being different were recounted. The excerpt below is an example of being rejected by her own children due to her accent and her appearance.

“Mum your English is not good.” One day I went to her [her daughter] kindergarten and I spoke to her in Chinese, and she said, “Mum, can you speak English, please.” . . . Then, one day I spoke English to her and she said, “Mum, don't. Your English is not good, you sound funny.” . . . He [her son] would say to me, “Mum, quick, quick, go home. . . . I don't want my classmates and my friends see you.” . . . I think . . . he did not want his classmates laughing at him or me, calling [me] Asian. You know, at the beginning, I said: “No problem, no problem, don't worry!” But he kept doing it. . . . Another reason I just guess, he is thinking about we are Asian not Kiwis. (Interview 5)

An event recounted during the seventh interview indicated that living in an English world was physically exhausting for her.

Yes, it was very tiring. [In the] afternoon, I was so sleepy, in the morning [it] was okay. . . . In the morning, I talked to myself, “Okay I can speak English and practice my English.” But in the afternoon, I couldn't do it anymore. (Interview 7)

She thought that attending the Sunday school teacher training was a great opportunity to learn and practice English. However, she could not help but feel exhausted within *the world of* English. It was painful for her to even participate in a class in English. She expressed in her statement that she could not concentrate on the class any longer and had to rely on a colleague who translated during the afternoon session. She also mentioned that she was very relieved and happy when her group work could be done in her mother tongue. She mentioned that she took English lessons when she initially arrived in 2002. However, they did not last long due to her pregnancy. Since then, she had not had any specific formal language learning.

Emily consistently mentioned her life being good. As briefly mentioned at the beginning of the section, reported events include her excitement at each recount. In particular, she was very excited when she commented on being a Sunday school teacher in the second interview. The most significant event for Emily was becoming a Sunday school teacher because a few significant events followed were connected to the identity. For instance, attending Sunday school teacher training and volunteering at an ethnic school holiday programme were closely linked to her experience and membership as a Sunday school teacher. As a family, Emily and her husband set up a Bible study group at her house which was described as successful. She reported, “There were 14 people, but last Friday there were 17 people that came.” (Interview 7). Like the statement, her recounts included positive aspects of events.

Overall, Emily was pleased and excited about living in Aotearoa NZ. She reported events which were the accomplishments of her children and her family such as her children having “Kiwi” friends and her family organising a Bible study group. Even though she was content with her life, she commented that she wanted to have a

career when her children grew up. To do that, she was well aware of the importance of English competency. Since her child bearing, Emily reported that she was neither learning English nor seeking employment. However, opportunities such as becoming a Sunday school teacher, participating in teacher training, and volunteering at a holiday programme, in my opinion, opened doors for her to be more involved in multiple communities, as well as learning new skills and improving her English language.

4.4 Mia: “English stops me going further”

Mia participated in the research from March 2013 to March 2014. She was a language student, an ECE teacher, and principal at a Korean school in Aotearoa NZ. She was also a Korean teacher for non-native speakers and a chairperson at a regional Korean school association. Besides these, she was involved in many organisations like the New Zealand South Korea Friendship Society and was in an elder group at a church.

Most of the interview sessions included more than one event, with some being more significant than others. Table 4.4 shows the most significant events identified and confirmed in each interview session.

Table 4.4: *Significant events recounted by Mia*

When	Significant Event	Background	Interview session
Early days of settlement	Being offered a job as a qualified teacher despite the language problem	Early years of immigration	First
April 2013	Voicing complaints which were not possible previously	Conversation with the host principal	Second
May 2013	Being issued a ticket by a police officer	An incident with the police	Third
June 2013	Considering failing a language course intentionally	Conversation with a classmate	Fourth
July 2013	Realising that she was taken advantage of at work	A new teacher asking for a ride	Fifth
August 2013	Realising that she was going back to the English world	Conversation in a plane	Sixth
September 2013	Being appreciated and recognised for her skills at a new team	Becoming a member of a preschool team	Seventh
March 2014	Feeling of being taken advantage of in her own community	At a meeting for a Korean school day trip	Eighth

At the first interview, she told me stories of her early days of settlement. Among the many stories, she was excited to report the fact that she could obtain a job as an early childhood education (ECE) teacher, for which she had volunteered despite the fact that she barely managed a basic conversation in English. She reported the event as such, “I was hired as a part-time teacher. But I didn't even know that I was hired. They asked me to sign, and I signed. . . . The next time when I got there, they paid me” (Interview 1). In April 2013, the Korean school was involved in the host school’s Gala show (the host school had offered some classrooms for the Korean school to use for Saturday classes). She thought it was the best way to promote Korean culture to New Zealanders. She reported that this event provided the Korean school power as shown in the excerpt below.

Like the one, cleaning the lounge would be a hard one to ask the principal but the reason I could even mention [it] was that we are helping them in their event. It will be the first for them as well, doing it with Korean school. So, this time, I could ask them things which I didn't even dream of doing before because we are helping them. (Interview 2)

In May 2013, Mia had an incident with a police officer. The police officer issued a traffic ticket, and the process was upsetting for her. She rear-ended a car which left no damage. She did not know that she would get a traffic ticket even if she was not speeding. She reported, "The process of getting to know the information was very annoying, and he was very rude to us" (Interview 3). In June, Mia recounted a story about considering failing a language course intentionally so as to repeat the course because "It is such a good foundation course for the main course." (Interview 4). Then, there was an episode at work which happened in July 2013 that Mia was asked for a lift by a colleague, but she later realised that she was taken advantage of. In August, she went to Korea for a teaching Korean training seminar and on the way back in a plane she met a girl who was going on a working holiday to Aotearoa NZ. She felt uneasy and stressed in realising her imminent return to the country where she needed to communicate in English by commenting, "I thought Oh, now I have to use English. It is the reality" (Interview 6). In September 2013, Mia joined a new team (a preschool team) at work, and she felt that she was recognised as a skilful teacher. In March 2014, she recounted an event which happened at the Korean school. Her leadership was challenged, and she felt that she was taken advantage of in her own community. She explained that she worked hard for the school to establish a sound ethnic school, overcoming many challenges. However, she felt that she was no longer needed because the school was running smoothly. The significant events were mostly related to her being an ECE teacher, a language learner, and principal at a Korean school.

She often admitted that English was a barrier which she could not get over. A lack of English skills stopped her being fully recognised as an able person. Her identities as an ECE teacher and principal were often challenged because of being an English language learner. As an ECE teacher, she was recognised as someone skilful.

However, she was not a registered teacher because of the English language requirement. At the same time, her responsibilities at work were limited: Her duties did not include any writing. At the last interview, she recounted a story of her being challenged as a Korean school principal. She recounted an emergent issue that had arisen at the school which was reported by a parent. She acted on it and resolved the incident without any complication. However, she was accused of being an incompetent leader by co-workers and parents. Again she felt she was mistreated by her own community. After reporting this event, she mentioned that she felt belittled by the accusing group who all had great English skills with *legitimate* careers like an English teacher at a tertiary institute. The feeling of being taken advantage of at work and at the Korean school was due to her perception that she lacked English competency.

Even with her identity as someone who needed to improve her English skills, she shared stories of being recognised and appreciated. At the seventh interview, she reported a new role at work. She had joined a preschool team after an incident with a colleague in the toddler team where the colleague accused Mia of cheating on the timesheet. Mia described this event, joining a preschool, with a sense of relief as seen in the excerpt below.

So from now on, if there is any teacher missing at preschool I cover the shift. I have never done any classes at preschool but this time, they got to see me teaching them and knew that I could do well. . . . She [a teacher at toddler's class] was nasty towards me but now she needs help from me. Now I don't care. Going to preschool, I am recognised and appreciated. So I feel better.
(Interview 7)

Even with the struggles with the English language and the feeling of being taken advantage of, she was generally satisfied with her life in Aotearoa NZ. She reported that her hard work and skills were appreciated, and there were people who cared for her.

Being appreciated and recognised was the reason she wanted to build a centre which combined a Korean school and multicultural ECE centre. The most

comforting place for her was the Korean school. Mia said that the Korean school was the place where she could find peace in Aotearoa NZ. She felt at home. Without the language barrier, she could reach out, and she was appreciated. It was her way of contributing to society and enriching New Zealand culture. The culture sharing was highlighted in the event recounted in the second interview when the Korean school participated in the host school's Gala show. Mia mentioned during her last interview that it was one of two significant events. After the show, she received good feedback not only from the host school but also from Korean communities including teachers, students, and parents. The events were positive in terms of belonging to New Zealand society.

There were also events which negatively influenced her identities, leading her to feel that she would never belong to Aotearoa NZ society. The conversation with a police officer reported during the third interview was one salient event in relation to Mia's negative identity trajectories. At the first and second interviews, Mia's stories as a successful settler were promising. Her narrative took a different course at the third interview though. She recounted a few episodes. One was the incident of someone smoking presumably illegal substances on her property. Her bedroom drapes were burnt, and there was a lingering smell of smoke inside even though no one in her house was a smoker. The second one was her being issued a traffic ticket of 150 dollars for reckless driving. The third one was her son being charged a lot of money for the damage done to a car bumper (her son had crashed into a car at the traffic lights a few weeks earlier). However, he had made sure there was no damage by confirming with the car driver and also by taking a photo at the scene. The incidents made her feel that she was no longer appreciative of Aotearoa NZ life as an Asian migrant. She interpreted the events as though she was being disregarded by the main population. She also perceived Aotearoa NZ not to be a safe place to live any more.

In addition, she reported a great deal of disappointment and sadness when she recounted the incident with the police officer. The following excerpt illustrates her disbelief at the police officer's attitude and the change in her attitude toward living in Aotearoa NZ as a migrant. This was highlighted when she commented that her

sons were ignored by the police officer even though her children spoke *perfect* NZ English, unlike her. According to her:

I thought that he would give us just [a] friendly reminder to be careful. . . . He had a really angry face. That is the point here. You know my dream. I wanted to die here in New Zealand. But the dream broke into pieces yesterday. . . . Even my sons said to him that we didn't know, he kept saying, "Why not?" Not knowing was our fault according to him. . . . My sons asked him questions. You know my sons speak good English, but he kept saying, "Pardon," to my children. Nonsense! It was the sign of ignoring us. (Interview 3)

Mia's deep-rooted identity as someone who did not have good English competency, but had been accepted by Aotearoa NZ society, was challenged by this event. She mentioned that she often blamed her English skills when she encountered any negative incident, for example that being ignored or disregarded was due to her lack of language skills, not because of being an immigrant. However, when her sons, who had competent language skills, were both educated and had professional jobs in Aotearoa NZ, were disregarded by the police officer, she began to have doubts about living in Aotearoa NZ. While she was reporting the stories, she also recounted a conversation with her uncle who lived in the USA when she was about to migrate to Aotearoa NZ. He said, "You are a forever alien. Even [if] you live there and your children are really good at English and get good jobs." (Interview 3).

This event made her tearful and depressed at the time of the interview. However, at the last interview, about ten months later, she said that she forgot about the incident when she realised that she did not know the detailed traffic rules. The feeling of being an unsuccessful English user was still seen as the main cause of any negative incident.

Mia kept challenging herself to be a good language user. Her overall journey from the past to the imagined community in the future indicates this well (see Appendix G-2 for Mia's past, present and future communities). Mia had been seeking

opportunities to learn English at work and school. She commented quite a few times that she was two percent short of fully belonging to this society. She reported that the two percent meant more than that for her. Any negative experience led her to think of her being not competent in English, as mentioned above. English was what was pulling her back and stopping her from going further.

4.5 Lucy: “I want to be stuck in one place”

The first interview with Lucy was held at her home in March 2013. She had a home business with a qualification obtained at a tertiary institute as a beauty therapist. Along with it, she was closely involved in Japanese communities for both paid and volunteer work. For example, at the beginning of 2013, she was nominated to be a chairperson at a Japanese school. Also, she worked at a Japanese restaurant and occasionally worked as a Japanese counsellor for groups of exchange students.

Table 4.5 displays all the significant events identified in terms of Lucy’s sense of identities.

Table 4.5: *Significant events recounted by Lucy*

When	Significant Event	Background	Interview session
A few years prior to the interview	Feeling a lack of support when her son was sick	Flight from Germany to Japan with her son	Fifth
Prior to the first interview	Looking for a job but was not successful	NZ qualification as a beauty therapist	First
January 2013	Failing employment as a census lady	Successful interview and test	Third
February 2013	Being nominated as a chairperson for a Japanese school committee	Set up a new committee	Second
October 2013	Being hospitalised	Ongoing health issue	Sixth
November 2013	Receiving a complaint from a travel guide	A day trip as a counsellor	Seventh

The significant events identified above are in chronological order. Lucy recounted a story of her son having been sick while travelling, on the plane and at the airport. She reported the event in detail in terms of other people's reaction to the situation in which she felt neither supported nor understood. A few months before the first interview, she reported that she had applied for a job as a beauty therapist. She tried in vain. She also recounted a story about her job seeking process to be a "census lady" at the third interview. She said that she could not understand why her application was not successful for that kind of "easy job" after the successful literacy and numeracy test and interview.

At the second interview, she recounted a story of her being nominated as a chairperson for a Japanese school. She said how much the new committee members and she were not prepared for it as there was no handover from the previous committee. In October 2013, she recounted a story of being hospitalized due to a change in her ongoing health issue, a heart problem. The day after being discharged from the hospital, she said that she had attended a Japanese school sports day because she was the only one who knew the programme well. In November 2013, as the counsellor for Japanese exchange students, she received a complaint from a travel guide about a day trip. It was the result of misunderstanding and miscommunication. Later, the manager of the travel agency came to Lucy to apologise to her on behalf of the travel guide.

The overall interview journey with Lucy indicates that Lucy kept herself busy in attending workshops as well as doing voluntary and paid work. She reported at the beginning of the interview that she liked being busy. Even though she enjoyed it all, she commented that she wanted to work full-time in a particular environment, "I want to be stuck in one place." She was seeking a stable life. However, her desire to seek stability was challenged.

Lucy was briefly hospitalized due to her health concern. This happened when she was busy preparing for several hundred Japanese students coming to Aotearoa NZ. At the same time, the Japanese school she belonged to was holding a sports day. Even though her health was at stake, she managed to go to the school activity. She

recounted that she could not miss the event because of her responsibility as she was the only one who knew the details of the activities. Luckily, many people showed up, and the event was very successful. Also, she was appreciated by parents and other committee members.

Since the event, though, Lucy had been avoiding any kind of stressors. She reduced her working hours and did minimal housework. Despite this, the worry of the unforeseen future was narrated as seen below.

I have been trying not to do anything. I am not working. I do minimal housework. My boyfriend is really helpful. He does everything. I just have been lazy. . . . But I've never been, "Oh what am I going to do? Oh, I am so busy". I have never been like that. That is why I was surprised. Maybe I don't feel being stressed out. Maybe my body was. . . . I don't know. Or maybe last few, back to few years before, the past, maybe toxic in my body. (interview7)

The incident of being hospitalised due to an ongoing heart problem was a major turning point for her, which she recounted in the last interview. She had the anxiety of not knowing what would happen in the future which was highlighted by the fact that she did not get any clear answers about her heart condition. She even thought of going back to Japan to get checked. Her positive view on living in Aotearoa NZ faced a threat as she was not sure of her health which would jeopardise her job-seeking efforts. She mentioned that she could not say that she was fit for a job when interviewed. She was confused and lost.

The feeling of being lost seemed to differ from her stories of an active and busy life. However, her involvement in many communities also showed the feeling of loss and confusion. But as an example to others, Lucy never stopped learning. She mentioned that she had a TESOL certificate from a local college and recently a diploma in Beauty, Body, and Spa Therapies. The previous year, she had opened a home business. Working at home gave her the flexibility she needed because she had a son to take care of. However, she said that she wanted to gain other employment. She was not sure of the reason for her unsuccessful employment

attempts. The following excerpts illustrate the confusion and her own reasoning for failure in the job application process.

I applied [to] four places. And two did not reply even. Other two replied saying sorry we have another candidate sorry for this time. Maybe my age, or Asian, no experience in that field. (Interview 1)

I applied census the other day, I failed. . . . I was really shocked. . . . Maybe not [a] problem but reasons [of the failure]. Why? So that you can build up for next application. Might be. Maybe not. I don't think they are going to give men [the work]. In fact, I had few problems or reasons; they wouldn't tell me the truth, I think. Oh, because you are Japanese, just because you know you are a woman, they can't say that. (Interview 3)

Her confusion led her to learn more. She took a free course organized by the Migrant Resource Centre and she shared a story about the course.

It is called a WorkTalk. And teach you how to find a job in NZ environment, CVs and cover letters. It is useful. CV and Resume is [are] different from Japan. It is good to know the information. (Interview 2)

This course offered tips for future employment. However, it also showed the reality of the difficulty in gaining employment in Aotearoa NZ. She shared a story of a man who applied to more than 300 places a year—a man with a legitimate NZ degree with good grades but not with a common English name. She concluded that Aotearoa NZ was a great place for education but not for work. This general opinion indicates a wide gap between her desire for a stable life and the reality.

4.6 Simi: “I have been very lucky”

Simi's narrated journey from February 2013 to March 2014 was focused on being an ECE teacher and a mother of two children. At the first interview, she shared her hope to be an owner of an ECE centre in the future. At the same time, she wished she could be travelling back and forth to her home country, India, when her children did not need any more close support. Yet, at the last interview in March

2014, she mentioned that there might be a different pathway in front of her. Both of her children were successfully enrolled in degree programmes at university, and she had been nominated to be a governing member of a community-based ECE centre (see Appendix I-2 for Simi's past, present and future communities).

Table 4.6 shows the significant events identified during interviews.

Table 4.6: *Significant events recounted by Simi*

When	Significant Event	Background	Interview session
Early days of settlement	Being told by an associate teacher that she was not using English correctly and received it in writing as a form of reflection	First day of practicum at an ECE centre at an early stage of settlement	Second
Early stage of settlement	Obtaining an ECE teacher qualification	Decision to study even though she was a registered teacher	First
April 2013	Looking into the details of the trip and informing the teachers and centre	Colleagues had no interest in her idea about a day trip	Third
May 2013	A confidential matter being shared by her manager in relation to running the centre	An issue at the centre	Fourth
August 2013	Manager initiated to change her shifts due to the practice of her religion	Ramadan period	Sixth
January 2014	Becoming a governing member of a community-based ECE centre	Community-based ECE centre opened in Hamilton	Eighth

To briefly describe events in the table above, the first and the second interviews included stories during her early days of settlement to Aotearoa NZ. Simi obtained an ECE teacher qualification which was recounted as significant during the first interview. During the second interview, she reported an incident which happened during a practicum. She was accused of misusing English words during a conversation with an associate teacher at the centre. It threatened her future. The associate teacher stopped communicating with Simi for a week, and she

mentioned the lack of English skills in a reflection letter on Simi's practicum. The incident challenged Simi's successful practicum and completion of the ECE programme. Consequently, she discussed it with her course supervisor so she could resolve the tension with the associate teacher.

In April 2013, she initiated a preschool day trip to an aquarium. Although none of her team members were keen on the idea, she gathered information about the trip and informed the teachers and the school. Her initiative led to a successful day trip. In May, she shared a story of the manager and employer treating her as a trusted employee at work on a confidential issue at the centre (on which she didn't tell me the details). She was one of the very few people who became aware of the issue. In August, she reported that it was the month of her religious activity, Ramadan. Her work shift was adjusted accordingly, which was initiated by her employer. In January 2014, she shared a story of her becoming a governing member of a newly developed community-based ECE centre.

As seen in the table, the identified stories were closely related to her being a competent ECE teacher. Most of Simi's previous recounts were consistent with being an appreciated and trustworthy employee, such as the story identified in the fourth interview. This confident ECE teacher identity was built on challenges and threats in an incident at the beginning of her settlement, which was shared in the second interview, as mentioned above. The incident occurred on the first day of her practicum. Her English was corrected by her associate teacher when she was helping prepare for morning tea. She was very upset but kept quiet even though she believed she had said the word, fruit, correctly. After the incident, the associate teacher ignored her for a week. It was very unsettling since she was the one who would mark Simi's performance. Also, the way the associate teacher wrote her reflection made her feel hurt and annoyed, as seen in the excerpt below.

So I arrived there, saw my associate teacher in the kitchen to do morning tea. So I thought I would help her. "Are you preparing the morning tea? Is there anything I can help you with? Do you want me to cut the fruit or anything like that?" . . . She said it is not *fruits*; it is *fruit*. She was pretty rude, the way

she said it. So I didn't understand. It was my first day, and I was nervous. I said I did say *fruit*. Anyway kept quiet because I didn't want to upset her, I didn't argue with her. I quietly did what I was told. . . . Then, she wrote in the reflection; I had used the word plural *fruit*. She had an Indian teacher who worked for her before, and she used to say *fruits* all the time, and she wrote on the board and then, and she said Indians used English in a very archaic manner and everything. So I was quite put off. . . . She had her concern about teachers coming from overseas with no English background, and they were trying to come here and work like that, pretty nasty stuff. . . . (Interview 2)

This event threatened her identity as a competent English user. When she was young, she studied at a convent school with Irish Sisters and had years of teaching experience in India and overseas.

Later, Simi discussed this matter with her course supervisor, who advised her to write a reflection letter. With that letter, she had a meeting with the associate teacher. At the meeting, she was able to express her thoughts and feelings. The result was surprising, because the associate teacher actually listened to her. The rest of the practicum went smoothly, and the associate teacher marked her performance with good grades.

This competent ECE teacher identity was again confirmed by an event reported in the eighth interview. Simi was appointed as a member of a governing board of a newly organized community-based ECE centre. She was one of seven members. Her role in the committee was to use her expertise in early childhood education. She recounted this event as something very empowering as she was being recognised as an expert in her field in wider communities. This event made her think of her future in a different way. There was still a vagueness about what it could be, but she felt that it was time for her to go further with her career, not only on the path of working as an ECE teacher. Another possibility had emerged for her.

At the last interview, she pointed out that a major turning point was changing her career path, from primary to ECE. She mentioned that her life in Aotearoa NZ could

have been a different one, if she had not decided to study further at the beginning of her settlement. She had noticed career possibilities while she was working as a reliever, both in the primary and ECE sectors. She said that she made *good* decisions, which was the reason she considered herself as lucky compared to other migrants. Both she and her husband maintained the careers they had started back home. Recently they had also purchased a new house, and both of her children were enrolled in programmes at university. According to her, her feeling of being lucky was the result of making the right choice at the right time.

4.7 Researcher: “I am feeling good about my research today”

As briefly described in Chapter 3, I began Ph.D. study at the University of Waikato in March 2012. The feeling of success, of being accepted in the programme, was short lived. The six month full proposal confirmation period was extended to twelve months. So, obtaining the confirmed enrolment was a turning point for me to claim myself as a researcher. However, I again felt powerless when I entered the field to gather data. I was one of them—an Asian migrant woman using English as an additional language. I was not comfortable to claim myself as a researcher. I was a lot younger and had less experience compared to some participants. Culturally I was uneasy imposing my research on participants. Most of all, my English competency seemed to be problematic in terms of claiming my researcher identity. These perceived challenges, though, were managed by examining the reflective journals I wrote after each interview.

The 42 entries showed the narrative of a novice, the journey of a novice researcher. The journals at the beginning illustrated vivid, unclear and problematic issues about my interview performance. The first entry especially showed extreme anxiety of the un-known future.

I could not sleep well last night. A bit worried. Maybe it is not because it is the first time. It may be more to the fact that she is a Korean wanting to do interviews in English. She must be really good at English. . . . Now I have to

think about how I dress myself. . . . I chose jeans and sneakers. . . . I do not want to give her the impression that I am a wealthy young single doing this study for a more leisure purpose. And also, I do not want to intimidate the participant. (Entry 1)

As seen above, I was worried about my English skills which would have been evidence of the lack of competency as a Ph.D. student. Later, I paid attention to the visual encounter with the first participant. I decided to wear a casual outfit which seemed to confirm my identity as a student. At the same time, I expressed my desire to be a friendly interviewer because I was aware of the fact that participants could easily discontinue engaging in the research.

As the interviews progressed, I began to accept the ambiguity of my role. I became relaxed and comfortable interviewing. I became more like a friend, which was shown in the rest of my entries throughout the interview journey. The following excerpts are some examples.

There was a kind of bond between us, made us share things more than a just interview. (Entry 9)

When done, she wanted to know when to meet next. I was so happy that she wanted to continue. (Entry 11)

I feel like I was witnessing the strongest woman. I remember at the beginning I found her very different from me. But I find more similarities as a woman and wife, and as a Korean. (Entry 27).

The feeling of connectedness and closeness was evident to me. The secure feeling seemed to allow me to focus on the research in relation to research design and findings from interviews. I could see detailed questions emerging, and the questions in the journals were directly related to the outcome of the study. The following excerpt is a part of journal entry after an interview with a participant who had a strong view on a social issue which was opposite to my view.

The easy feeling turned around when I realised the recount was about something opposed to my opinion. I had to take my own time to think about

how to approach this and how could I do this without expressing my opinion. Maybe that's why I didn't address her opinion. I asked more about the details of the event, focusing on the facts. I think it went okay in terms of controlling my feelings about it; I found myself being rather easy going. I was even proud of myself of being very objective. (Entry 12)

As seen in the excerpt above, the unsettling emotion was critically analysed, and there was the recognition of how I managed the conflict situation between my own beliefs and values and those of a *good* researcher. In this way, a trajectory of a novice researcher's narrative manifested itself. At the end of the journal writing, there was evidence that the journal writing had helped my journey of a novice researcher. The following extract shows that I had learnt from the reflective journal writing.

Some of her [one participant's] story and sentences, even though they were not elaborated, were very good. Now I am doing interviews and at the same time analysing the detailed sentences rather than chunks of stories which I was doing at the beginning. Maybe it is the way to becoming an experienced researcher. I had a lot easier and relaxed wrap up with her compared to the first one. (Entry 38)

The extract above indicates that I was moving forward to the next step with the data I collected because I was talking about analyzing data. I also mentioned the ease of conducting interviews. I was familiar with the process and was comfortable with the decision-making. In this way, I recognised myself as someone becoming an experienced researcher. My identity as a researcher, who was different from that of the participants, was developed and constructed during the interview process.

In sum, the journey of my developing expertise was evident in the reflective journals. For example, there were strong statements of negative feelings and doubts about the interviews at the beginning of data collection. As the data collection process progressed, there were more statements about feeling positive

about interviews and more detailed inquiries rather than general anxiety about the research process. I was becoming a confident researcher from a novice.

4.8 Reflections: Constructed and reconstructed identities

This section consists of the summary of Chapter 4 and my reflection on the summary. In sum, each participant had unique identity trajectories. Some had identities that were taken for granted like being a mother and an Asian migrant, which allowed them access to communities such as ethnic churches and migrant resource centres. Those available communities were evident for all participants. On the other hand, they all informed me of their imagined communities. To belong to their imagined communities, they reported their investment in learning, such as English language learning. Five participants of the six went back to school to obtain qualifications to construct or reconstruct their imagined identities in Aotearoa NZ.

Jessica wanted to find a compatible career in both Aotearoa NZ and Korea. She began with learning the language and learning to teach the language. With the realization that it was not enough, she tried to become an ECE teacher. Yet, her application was not successful, and six months later she enrolled in the Linguistics programme at a university, which was related to her previous TESOL qualification. Compared to Jessica's journey, Holly had a different path. When she immigrated, she decided to get a qualification in Aotearoa NZ. She was enrolled in a business course, but she realised that she was a language learner as she could not follow simple instructions in the mainstream class. She changed her enrolment to a language course. This language learner identity began to be reconstructed to a competent language learner when she finished a course to become an interpreter. She was recognised as a resourceful person in her community.

On the other hand, Mia shifted her identity from a qualified ECE teacher to an unqualified ECE teacher due to the change of systems and moreover due to her low level of English competency. She wanted to regain her identity as a resourceful

ECE teacher. Her journey to becoming a qualified ECE teacher was still in progress due to her basic English proficiency. On the other hand, Simi was a competent English language user who taught in the English medium in primary schools before migrating to Aotearoa NZ. She was able to work as a reliever because she was a registered primary school teacher. However, Simi identified more job opportunities in the early childhood sector, and she went back to school to obtain an ECE qualification. She had been working since the qualification, and she was regarded as an expert. Lucy also went back to school to get an NZ qualification even though she had a similar qualification back home as a beautician. She successfully finished the course and began to look for a job.

Similar to the participants, as a researcher, I enrolled in a Ph.D. degree programme to reconstruct my identity as someone academic, competent and resourceful. I could not claim to be a competent researcher identity at the beginning of the journey. The journal writing shows that after a year in the field, I became more relaxed and confident with the research. It seemed like I was finally a researcher after the fieldwork. I am still on my journey to construct and reconstruct my imagined identity like many of my participants.

This chapter described each participant's narratives as described in Section 3.3.1. The chapter following presents the findings from the thematic analysis to find a structure which could shed light on the complexity of each participant's identity negotiation process as described in Section 3.3.2.

Chapter 5 Identity negotiation of Asian migrant women as English language learners

The previous chapter focused on the participants' individual journeys. Significant events and their effects on the participants' identity trajectories were presented. This chapter focuses on presenting the themes identified in relation to the participants' identity negotiations. From the data, participants had a limited set of identities such as English language learners in Aotearoa NZ. The participants all expressed hopes for the future. They had imagined identities, which were more than just being a mother, a language learner, and an Asian migrant. Their narratives showed the process of constructing their imagined identities over time in their recounted stories. It also showed how they constructed their identities through their recounts.

The chapter takes a cross case approach in that it explores the features of identity negotiation processes across the participants' recounts. However, it presents the unique ways in which these aspects play out for each participant. This contributes to addressing the research objective, How do Asian migrant women as English language learners negotiate identities? Concurrently, it addresses the following research questions:

2.1. What contributes to the significant events in Asian migrant women's learning English?

4. What role does language proficiency play in their identity trajectories?

In this chapter, first, I briefly describe available and imagined identities in the new home. Second, I look into the ways the participants accessed new communities which included previous qualifications and knowledge, social and institutional opportunities like free English language learning, and support from their communities to which they belonged. Third, I investigate constraints on entering imagined communities, which consist of multimembership, complex layered contexts, social and cultural practices in Aotearoa NZ and language learner identities. Fourth, I look into how the participants' responses functioned to

negotiate the affordances and constraints they faced. They include reconstructing constraints as opportunities, seeking support from social interaction and local and global structures, and drawing on personal reflections.

5.1 Identities in the new home

Participants reported how they were viewed by others and also how they viewed themselves. Regardless of the length of the participants' settlement in Aotearoa NZ, their common identities were Asian migrants, mothers, and English language learners. At the same time, there were imagined identities such as tertiary students and professional career women, which were either similar to the ones they had had in their home countries or new possible identities in their new home. In this section, I describe identities recounted by the participants and their imagined identities in Aotearoa NZ.

5.1.1 Asian migrants

As Asian migrants in Aotearoa NZ, the participants were all visibly different from mainstream New Zealanders; they were perceived as neither Pākehā, Pasifika, nor Māori. Their stories reflected the visible minority identity as Asian. Being visibly different was brought out in some recounts from Holly, Mia, and Emily. The first interview with Mia included several stories of being an Asian migrant. She recalled that her family were the only Koreans in the town where they initially settled. They were noticed as different from the town community. In the early days of her life in Aotearoa NZ, Holly reported that she was uncomfortable even just walking on the street because she was pointed at and talked about by passers-by.

Mia recounted a story of her different appearance as a reason why two sisters at the ECE centre cried every time she made eye contact with them.

I can't forget [the] two girls Whenever the girls saw me, they cried. We had classes from infants to preschool. Whenever I went to [the] infant classes, they would cry because I was yellow. Everyone was white, but I don't know why she didn't cry when she saw Māori. I didn't do anything, but only

eye contact made them cry. I used to avoid eye contact whenever I go to the infant class. (Interview 4)

Later Mia became very close to the girls and their parents. However, she could not stop thinking of any other reason than her being “yellow.”

Emily’s story of being different was shown in her children’s comments (first discussed in Section 4. 3).

E: When he [Emily’s son] was young, sometimes, I sent him to school. He would say to me, “Mum, quick, quick, go home. I don’t want my classmates and my friends see you.”

R: Did you ask why?

E: I think he was, I don’t know how to pronounce the word, he did not want his classmates laughing at him or me, calling Asian.

(Interview 5)

As seen in the excerpt above, Emily believed her son did not want to be seen differently by his classmates. His reaction, when she did the school run, made Emily assume that being Asian might be a reason to be laughed at.

These stories illustrate that being Asian was a marked identity to others and to the participants. The participants saw themselves differently as seen in the stories in which they attributed some negative responses to their visible differences. As described above in Emily’s story, some have been affected by their own children’s responses, who may themselves have experienced explicitly negative remarks about being visibly different.

5.1.2 Mothers, wives, and ex-wives

All participants were mothers, wives, and an ex-wife, and their family roles and discourses were embedded in their stories. Most of the participants, Mia, Emily, Lucy, and Simi, moved to Aotearoa NZ with children. They reported that their decision to immigrate was for the children to have a better education and better future.

Simi and Emily mentioned that they wanted their children to be educated in Aotearoa NZ rather than their home countries, as seen in the following excerpts.

We thought the Western country is [has] a great education system. And the environment is good, better than China. Yes, so we decided to come. (Emily: Interview 1)

We wanted the children to go abroad for the studies. But we couldn't afford that, sending them [on their] own. So we thought it was a good option: coming to New Zealand. It was basically for my children's education. (Simi: Interview 1)

In the cases of Lucy and Mia, the decision was made by their husbands. Their husbands justified the moves as beneficial for their children. Mia resisted because she was content with her career and life in general. However, she had to give in. In Lucy's case, the idea was suggested by her husband when they had a son, and as she recalled, it was her husband who wanted to move.

I resisted the idea of emigrating, because I was working as an early childhood teacher, graduated from university. I had been working for ten years, almost running the centre. Then he [Mia's husband] left Korea to see what it was like in NZ for six months in 1997. He came back in seven days, in August 1997 He said, "Let's go." My husband has a short temper, you know. As soon as he came back, he asked me to go to NZ the next day. Even then, I had no intention or desire to come here. But he kept persuading me. He didn't want to raise children in Korean education system, education by rote [rote learning]. (Mia: interview 1)

He [Lucy's ex-husband who is a New Zealander] wanted [to move]. Yes, we had a baby, so he wanted to raise the baby here rather than Japan. We shifted. (Lucy: Interview 1)

Whether the decision was made mutually or not, the reason for migrating to Aotearoa NZ was for the benefit of their children.

The emphasis on being mothers often emerged during data collection when the participants explained their decision-making processes. For example, Holly and Emily identified themselves as full-time mothers. Holly had two school age daughters, and Emily had three children who were at different stages of schooling. They presented themselves as mothers and were needed: “My daughters need me. I understand in the early stage they needed me, but I wanted to work, but now I changed my mind, getting used to it.” (Interview 1). The immediate needs of motherhood often made them postpone or give up their career opportunities. Holly and Emily wanted to find a job when their children no longer needed their support. Jessica quit her job when she was pregnant. Lucy decided to stay in Aotearoa NZ for the sake of her son even after the divorce from her husband.

Motherhood often became a reference point in decision-making in relation to identity negotiation. Their stories also show the expected roles of wives to accept their husbands as decision makers. Family roles in the home may often be the only identity choice for the participants in their early days in Aotearoa NZ.

5.1.3 English language learners

Many of the participants engaged in English language learning formally or informally. Several participants sought to gain higher English proficiency through enrolment in English language courses. Jessica, Lucy, Mia, and Holly enrolled in English language learning courses at tertiary institutions. Jessica and Lucy later obtained TESOL qualifications from a local tertiary institute. Even with the qualification, they reported that they still needed to improve their English skills. Holly changed her enrolment from a business to an English language course at the beginning of her settlement. Emily only had a few months of one-to-one English lessons at the beginning of her settlement.

They also took advantage of informal learning contexts. Emily informed me that the Sunday school teacher training she attended was presented in English, and she reminded herself that it was a great opportunity to improve her English skills. Holly reported that her casual work as an interpreter helped her to improve her English.

She learnt the medical terminology necessary to interpret at work and at the same time, she learnt to communicate effectively with others in English.

Among them, Mia's English language learning journey was unique in terms of her ongoing struggle to meet the English proficiency requirements of the New Zealand Teacher's Council. She recounted earlier experiences as a café proprietor in relation to her limited ability in English.

I could say only four words, "Hello, goodbye, thank you, and how are you?" . . . How could I say and what could I say? We used body language . . . We didn't know what cinnamon was [A customer wanted cinnamon topping]. We asked him to write it down. He wrote it, and we looked it up. We had to ask him to wait and ran to a store to get cinnamon. We did our business like that. (Interview 1)

To learn basic conversational English, Mia volunteered at a kindergarten. In 2003, a change in regulations required her to obtain higher English proficiency so that she could keep her registration. As described in Section 4.4, she could not meet the requirement and became an unqualified ECE teacher. Mia's English learning journey continued, as seen below.

Now, I work part-time at the Kindergarten to study English. I can teach well, but writing is the main obstacle. So I went to study at [a tertiary institute]. When I finish it, I will apply for a postgraduate dip at the Waikato Uni, which I am preparing for. (Interview 1)

The participants identified themselves as needing to learn English, and they were also viewed as needing to improve their English. They were labelled language learners by both themselves and others. They actively sought to gain opportunities to increase their language proficiency.

5.1.4 Imagined identities

According to the participants, the identities available in the new home country were not quite the same as those they had in their former home countries. They had often been professionals. For example, Simi was a primary teacher in India

and overseas. Mia was an ECE teacher and manager at an ECE centre in South Korea with more than ten years' experience. Holly and Emily worked at large companies in China, with tertiary qualifications. Jessica and Lucy worked and made enough money for their overseas trips. Many of the participants reported that they wanted to regain those successful employment identities.

They had imagined identities in their new home. Simi, Mia, and Jessica wanted to become qualified ECE teachers. Unlike Mia, who had previous experience as an ECE teacher, Simi and Jessica foresaw new job opportunities in the ECE sector more than any other field. This might be related to the immigration policy which promoted ECE occupations due to the shortage of ECE teachers in Aotearoa NZ. At the beginning of our interviews, Jessica had applied to an ECE programme. Without any specific career in mind, Holly reported that she would become someone who could bridge China and Aotearoa NZ. Lucy was a qualified beautician, and she wanted to find a job. Unlike others, who had rather clear hopes for the future, Emily, who was relatively new in Aotearoa NZ, had only a rough idea of what she wanted for the future. Each participant's hopes for the future are described below.

Simi successfully obtained an ECE qualification and had been working for many years. Her appointment as a governing committee member at an ECE centre was an important event which was described in Section 4.6. The responsibility in the committee motivated her to see something more for the future as shown in the excerpt below.

It was something additional. Yes, my work is still there [the ECE centre where she worked full-time]. The centre [a newly developed community-based ECE centre] offered me It has been one and a half month working there now. So yes, things have been so busy Yes, I was talking to my husband. . . . "I am getting tired now. I am getting old. I want to do something that is not physically demanding." So my husband saying, "You go back to studying and do something." But I said, "I don't want to study." I enjoy, but I don't know.

Maybe opportunities would come up . . . something involving paper work and advising things Something will show up as always (Interview 8)

The participants' imagined identities were the outcome of negotiation, and they were changing. Mia's loss of status as a registered ECE teacher in Aotearoa NZ was due to the upgraded English language requirements that challenged her imagined identity. Her imagined identity changed to running an ECE centre which she could use the facilities for Korean school on weekends. Mia's focus shifted from an ECE teacher to a manager of a multicultural ECE centre. As a relatively new migrant, Jessica hoped to enrol in an ECE degree programme. As described in Section 4.1, the process to enter the programme was challenging in many ways. She then enrolled in a different programme to obtain her imagined identity as someone with a *proper* career. Holly's hope to become a businesswoman to liaise between China and Aotearoa NZ changed to considering various options and one of them was studying the Bible at a tertiary institute. Emily had not articulated a specific imagined identity. Yet, she began to hope for a career in the future because she became involved in many new communities which gave her joy and fulfilment. Lucy's imagined identity was an employed beauty therapist in a "Kiwi" salon even though she was self-employed at the time of interviews.

The participants' imagined identities were not only about future careers. Many of the participants wanted to be viewed as successful Asian migrants. Successful migrant stories were identified in the stories of Simi, Mia, and Holly, who were relatively early immigrants to Aotearoa NZ from Asia. As described in Section 4.6, Simi considered herself lucky compared to other migrants. She commented that both she and her husband continued working as professionals in Aotearoa NZ. Mia also commented that she and her husband were the first Koreans working for Aotearoa New Zealanders, outside of the Korean community. The participants also wanted to contribute to Aotearoa NZ society as Asian migrants. For example, Holly wanted to play a role as someone who could bridge Aotearoa NZ and China, as an interpreter. Mia considered her involvement in a Korean school and an NZ-Korea friendship society was her way of introducing Korean culture and language to Aotearoa NZ, to enrich multiculturalism.

The participants hoped to be successful in raising children. Stories of being a *successful* mother were seen in the recounts of Simi, Mia, Emily and Lucy. Simi mentioned the sacrifices for her children that she had left the comfort of her home country behind as well as a good career, family, and friends. She reported that her time and sacrifice in Aotearoa NZ would have been in vain if her children were not successful. Mia similarly commented that she could not have raised both of her children to be pharmacists if they had stayed in Korea. She was regarded as a successful migrant due to the success of her children. The other participants, who had younger children than Simi and Mia, also commented on being successful mothers in that they were raising their children to be successful. As mentioned earlier in Chapter 4, Emily hoped her children to be educated in Aotearoa NZ, and Lucy decided to stay in Aotearoa NZ for the benefit of her son. Their imagined identities as successful Asian migrants and mothers as well as having legitimate careers were all geared towards becoming a valuable member of the Aotearoa NZ society.

5.2 Access to new communities

The participants' stories of imagined identities in their new home country included factors which afforded access to these imagined identities. These factors fell into three groups. One is participants' knowledge and skills accumulated over time, which included their general life experiences as well. Another is training opportunities and social and institutional services which helped the participants enter their imagined communities. The third is the relational support from members of both their ethnic communities and new communities. In this chapter, those factors are articulated through the participants' stories.

5.2.1 Previous knowledge

Knowledge that the participants held facilitated access to their imagined communities. The knowledge could be general life experiences and specific skills previously obtained. The participants all had had qualifications or careers in their home countries. They obtained new qualifications and skills in Aotearoa NZ, as

well. This acquired knowledge, such as Holly's pharmacy degree, helped participants to access new communities. I looked into the prior knowledge that each participant reported and how it was linked to their current and future identities.

Mia was a registered ECE teacher with years of experience in South Korea. She reported this at the first interview, explaining how her qualification and experience had helped her to access her imagined identity, a skilful and qualified ECE teacher, at the beginning of her settlement. She said she knew what was expected, and she was confident, as seen below.

We had to close the café [A family business opened soon after her arrival] . . . after a few months. We had nothing to do. So I worked at an ECE centre which I knew how. . . . I had ten years of experience and the skills are very similar, the principles. . . . I could not speak but I was creative and first of all, I loved children. And I was the only one who could play the piano. The kids loved me. (Interview 1)

As seen in the excerpt above, Mia was able to volunteer at an ECE centre and later secured a part-time position at the same centre even though she said that she could not communicate in English effectively. When she moved to a bigger city, she also began to volunteer at another ECE centre. She reported that it was to learn *real world* English, which she could not obtain in a formal academic setting.

School English was helping me little. So I went to volunteer at this kindergarten where I work right now, again to learn English. I did it for eight months. I did twice a week for 2 hours each day because other days I went to school. (Interview 1)

Her previous qualifications and experience as an ECE teacher enabled Mia to access the same career field as well as provide a place for her to improve her English proficiency. She continued working at the centre and hoped to open an ECE centre in the future.

Similarly, Simi, a registered teacher in her home country, was able to work as a reliever in the primary school and ECE sectors. She reported that she could see the broader context in the field of teaching in Aotearoa NZ and a wider opportunity in the early childhood education sector. She then enrolled in an ECE post-graduate diploma course. After the course, she obtained a full-time position as an ECE teacher. When the end of the research interviews was approaching, Simi became involved in a governing committee for a community-based ECE centre as an ECE expert.

Holly, with a bachelor's degree from China, was able to enrol in a business programme at the beginning of her settlement. There was no English proficiency required for the programme. Even though she soon changed her enrolment to an English language course, the initial acceptance was possible due to her previous qualification. She reported that the enrolment change was easy for her because she was already enrolled in a course. Holly also reported that she was living independently in China, and she commented that migrating to Aotearoa NZ was not much different because she was used to living on her own. She believed that previous experience and knowledge of living independently helped her to settle into a new home relatively easily.

Lucy was trained as a beautician in Japan and re-trained in Aotearoa NZ. The diploma programme she graduated from in Aotearoa NZ was more general and covered wider areas of beauty therapy than the qualification in Japan. The course offered nothing new to her. Her previous knowledge in Japan helped her to feel at ease about the course. She made similar comments during the second and third interviews about the casual jobs she had. Her casual work as a Japanese students' counsellor was not difficult because she had done it previously and she knew people who would be working with her. Her role as a chairperson for a Japanese school was relatively easy because she already knew most of the mothers from a Japanese volleyball team and a coffee group she belonged to.

In Jessica's case, as articulated in Section 4.1, a foundation course (Level four) after finishing a TESOL graduate diploma was easy for her. She said it was a repeat of

previous material but easier. At the same time, the TESOL course was something which led her to apply to a linguistics programme at a university later. While she was taking the TESOL course, she studied English grammar, and she found herself good at it compared to the others. That was one of many reasons why she thought of applying for the degree programme. She added that linguistics was quite similar to TESOL and that they were very much related.

As seen in the participants' stories, their previous qualifications and specific skill sets helped them to access their imagined communities in Aotearoa NZ. This indicates how previous experiences helped make the new experiences possible. Not only did their qualifications help the participants to enter communities, but their experiences related to new communities made them feel at ease about the new contexts.

5.2.2 Societal environments

Along with previous qualifications, the participants' stories included opportunities that institutional structures provided. Newcomers to Aotearoa NZ often gain training opportunities, such as free English language courses for immigrants. Such government systems offer the opportunities for local institutes to establish related courses. In this section, in relation to Asian migrant identity negotiation, I look into participants' training opportunities as affordances to access new communities. Then I present social and institutional services other than training which helped participants gain access to their imagined communities.

5.2.2.1 Training opportunities

The participants, as migrants in Aotearoa NZ, all reported having taken training courses. Such training varied from free English language courses to cultural workshops and further career training. These courses were often free of charge and facilitated the participants to access their imagined communities.

At the first interview, Holly reflected on her early years in Aotearoa NZ. The excerpt below describes her experience shifting from a business course to a more manageable English language course.

Yes, general skilled immigrant category. At that time, it was a bit easy, 1994 to 1996. That time it was not too hard. They didn't need to provide English assessment score. I came to NZ June 1996. My classmate was studying at Polytech, . . . studying foundation skill for business. . . . I said I had to change to the English class. Yes. At that time, you have to be on a waiting list to get into English class. Lots of people came to English class. I already enrolled in business. So I did get accepted without waiting. (Interview 1)

With her increased English language competency, Holly also mentioned that she did some interpreting work early in her settlement, but later she had a training opportunity to become a registered interpreter.

When I came to NZ, the second year, I did some interpreting job there. Once I started my family, I couldn't do it for ten years, about. . . . And yes in that time, the first time you do it you don't need any qualification or certificate, you just do it. And later in the past few years, you need qualification or certification something like that. So yes, because I am attending some classes like immigration office, they have WorkTalk. . . . Yes, you also get the information, because of the interpreting services under the multicultural trust, related to it. Before that, I attended the class and now . . . Finally last year, last September, I went to the class and signed in the multicultural trust. So I work for them as a contract interpreter. (Interview 3)

Similarly, Lucy recounted her training opportunities which were available to her because she was a migrant in Aotearoa NZ. A few examples are shown in the excerpts below.

I wasn't doing anything at that time. I was kind of free. The migrant resource centre, the lady offered me why don't you start this or that, few courses. (Interview 2)

I have been to taking WorkTalk. It finished last week, and it was only for four weeks. And it helped me how to approach the company or other styles of job. (Interview 3)

Mia also reported participating in training courses mainly focussing on English language learning and ECE. In 2007, she enrolled in a nanny certificate course which could transfer to the second year of an ECE programme at a different institute. However, she could not continue the programme when she realised that her language competency was not sufficient. She recounted the event as mentally and physically stressful because she was a language learner.

During that time, I hoped to learn to write when I enrolled in the programme [nanny certificate programme]. . . . I should have gone to study English first. The reason I enrolled there was that if I finished the course, I could transfer to the second year at [a tertiary institute]. That was the condition. It was valid only for a year. Back then it was a reasonable decision. I didn't realise the level of my English. (Interview 4)

Mia was studying English in 2013 when she began to participate in the research. She was taking the last level of the English Foundation programme, Level 6 at a tertiary institute, which was free because of the grants for immigrants. Emily and Jessica also mentioned taking free English courses. For Emily, it was one-to-one English lessons and for Jessica, it was a free English course at a community centre. As for careers, Simi was re-trained as an ECE teacher at the beginning of her settlement. Lucy also re-trained as a beauty therapist. In these ways, the participants all indicated that taking training courses offered them opportunities to access their imagined communities.

5.2.2.2 Social and institutional services

The social services that were integrated with the training courses, as described above, provided opportunities to the participants to learn about future possibilities in Aotearoa NZ. The possibilities led the participants to continue learning formally and informally. According to Jessica, the ongoing learning was possible due to support from benefits such as a student allowance. Mia similarly mentioned the social benefits they had access to. The student benefit allowed them to keep on studying for their imagined identities—competent English language users and career women with legitimate qualifications.

Moreover, Mia and Simi were able to work while they were studying. Simi, while studying for her post-graduate diploma, was able to work as a reliever and a part-time worker at primary schools and ECE centres. Like Simi, Mia was able to work part-time while she was studying full-time. Mia mentioned that her employer was very flexible with her shifts so that she could continue studying.

Several types of systems of social support in Aotearoa NZ aided the participants to enter new communities. For instance, when Lucy decided to stay in Aotearoa NZ when she separated from her husband, she received government support as a sole parent. Also, in a narrower context, there were stories related to local structures which allowed the participants to have a voice in their affairs. Jessica mentioned that she was going to write feedback to the tutor at the end of her course who she felt had disregarded and mistreated her. She said, “Usually, the course finishes, you write an evaluation on tutors. I will be hard on her, really.” (Interview 3). Simi also reported a similar story. She was able to write a reflection about the incident with the associate teacher who criticised her English. The institutional structure both Simi and Jessica were a part of enabled students to express their opinions. In this way, participants perceived their imagined communities as more accessible.

5.2.3 Community support

Participants often reported support and help from existing communities, both ethnic and “Kiwi” (Aotearoan New Zealander) communities. That support led them to feel a sense of belonging to the communities and facilitated their access to new communities.

5.2.3.1 Ethnic communities

Most participants reported that they belonged to some ethnic communities like a Chinese church and a Japanese mothers’ coffee group. Participants reported that they were invited to participate in those ethnic communities. Among the six participants, Emily’s stories as a recent re-settler highlighted the welcoming support from ethnic communities.

Emily mentioned her family was invited to a Chinese church and soon after to a Bible study group. At church, she was encouraged to become a Sunday school teacher. The offer, which was recounted as something special, was not closely related to any previous experiences and skills Emily had. She reflected on the event below.

Before I never did this [Sunday school teacher] work. When I arrived here, other Sister asked if I wanted. I said, "I never did it, but I can try". . . . I didn't even thinking of getting a job. I was not seeking it, but it was given to me.
(Interview 2)

As seen above, the job was *given* to her. Later, there was an opportunity to attend Sunday school teacher training at a discounted price, which she attended. She was also invited to become a volunteer teacher at an ethnic holiday programme.

Mia also recounted stories related to the support from ethnic communities during her early years in Aotearoa NZ. Her family took over a business, a café, from a Korean owner. She was also invited to join a Korean church. She recounted that her family missed Korean food very much, but there was no Korean supermarket in her town. A member of the church would buy groceries for her during the week, and she would get them on Sundays when she was attending church. Later, Mia began studying to teach Korean to non-Korean speakers in an online context, an opportunity through a Korean school, which was introduced by a friend who was living in the United States. Involved in Korean language teaching, she was given opportunities to work in wider communities such as a Korean school regional association. To Mia, the Korean school was significant in terms of her identity formation. Her imagined community was closely related to the Korean school.

Like Mia, Lucy was also involved in a Japanese school as a chairperson. She had been newly appointed by members whom she knew through other Japanese ethnic groups such as a Japanese volleyball team. Lucy also reported that she acquired a lot of casual work through the members of her ethnic groups. During her involvement in the research, she worked as a waitress at a Japanese restaurant, a counsellor for Japanese cultural exchange students and a house cleaner.

Holly commented that she briefly lived with a Chinese friend when she arrived in Aotearoa NZ. Through the help of people from her ethnic groups, she managed to enrol in a programme at a tertiary institute. The excerpt from Holly's recount below illustrates her difficulties as a newcomer and the importance of support from her ethnic groups.

The first week I came to NZ, I stayed in Auckland for a week in my friend's house. My classmate applied for a course in Hamilton. So I needed to make phone calls to go to Hamilton, to buy tickets. I can't. I don't speak English. I don't know where to look for. . . . When her [Holly's friend] boyfriend gave me the yellow page, I looked at the phone book and didn't know what to do and where to look. Long time. And her boyfriend saw me. He made the phone call and booked a bus. Now a Chinese friend, I don't know him, but he is from the University I am from, same school, senior. He came to meet me at the bus station. That kind of thing scares you. You don't know how and the first time. . . . (Interview 1)

Holly described the experience as somewhat frightening. However, she managed it with help from her ethnic friends. Having lived in Aotearoa NZ for more than 17 years, Holly became a person who helped others in her ethnic group.

5.2.3.2 “Kiwi” communities

Along with ethnic groups, the participants' stories included support from mainstream community members, “Kiwis” (Aotearoan New Zealanders) who helped them access their imagined communities. Mia mentioned her gratitude to Aotearoa New Zealanders in general at the first and the second interviews.

Mia's volunteer work at an ECE centre was introduced to her by her Aotearoan New Zealander neighbour, who lived near her café. The husband, Chris (pseudonym) was familiar with Korea and Korean culture, so both families became close and maintained a friendly relationship. When Mia was seeking an opportunity to work, Chris' wife introduced her to the nearest ECE centre. The volunteer work there led her to secure a paid job at the same centre. The work

also enabled her to seek work when she moved to a bigger city. She reported that a reference letter from the ECE centre was very valuable. The excerpt below illustrates her feelings and thoughts when she recounted a series of events in relation to her first volunteer work in Aotearoa NZ.

We thought they pitied us [when the ECE centre offered her a job]. They thought that I was working hard, except for the language and they could teach me through even though the language barrier. But we didn't think like that. Later when we moved here at the end of 1999, they wrote me a reference letter. I went to [a tertiary institute] with that reference. The tutor told me that I could get any job at kindergarten with that reference letter. It was the best reference letter. Even today, I could not understand every single sentence. When I left, not only kids but the parents cried. They were really good to me. I really am thankful. (Interview 1)

Mia was grateful for the support. She felt that she was supported by Aotearoa NZ communities even though she did not have good English language skills. At work, Mia was understood by co-workers and her employer. She described the experience:

Also, teachers understand that English is my second language. If they have not considered that, I could not have worked there. Even my boss understood the fact very well. So I am thankful for the Kiwis. They understand and cover my mistakes and not blame me for that matter. They know that I make mistakes not because I don't know about teaching kids but because I use English as a second language and have an accent. It is all about different accent and culture difference. That's why I could stay in high spirit. If people kept scolding me and pointing out mistakes, then I couldn't have been like that. (Interview 2)

Mia attributed her continuing positive outlook to the support from her colleagues and employer.

Simi had an incident at her teaching practicum, described in Section 4.6, in which she was regarded as a deficient language learner by her associate teacher. She

recounted that the incident affected her practicum negatively because her associate teacher did not interact with her for a whole week during the two-week practicum. With the support from her supervisor on her programme, Simi was able to meet with the associate teacher and clear the air. The following recount shows how Simi thought of Aotearoa NZ communities after the event.

She [one of the lecturers in her course] gave my assignment to the same associate teacher to mark. I didn't know anything about it. So when she came into the class to give our assignment, I was thinking, "Oh my God. I am going to fail on this assignment because she already has this opinion about me." Believe me! Out of 60 marks, I got 55. And she specially called me up said that she was happy to read my assignment. So I said, "Thank you so much." I was really relieved. . . . I was nervous about how she would give the report. I was apprehensive about that she would not give me a good report. That was all out of our hands. But I had the support of my university supervisors. That was the confidence also there. He knew me. He was one of my lecturers . . . That way I find New Zealand is quite supportive. They are very welcoming. If you are good in your work, they will appreciate your work. They will stand by you. That is good. That's quite, if you wanted to settle down, you get some responsibility, and that is good. But individually there will people who have different attitudes. People are different. Generally, I like people here. (Interview 2)

The excerpt above illustrates how Simi critically reflected on the events which included her emotion, the process, and the outcome. She reported the support and fairness that she felt positively influenced her identity formation as an ECE teacher and her overall perception about people in Aotearoa NZ.

5.3 Constraints on entering communities

In this section, I present the constraining factors that the participants reported in their stories. The participants faced challenges when trying to enter their imagined communities. Locally, the participants were involved in more than one community,

and their multimemberships often challenged them or prevented them from entering the communities they hoped for. At the same time, social and institutional services were identified as constraints. In the wider context, one identified constraint was the normative cultural and social practices in Aotearoa NZ. The normal practices in Aotearoa NZ communities were not perceived as the norm by the participants. The other was the English language learner identity in the *English world*. The language learner identity was viewed as the biggest hurdle to some participants.

5.3.1 Multimembership

Participants reported that challenges to belonging to imagined communities were due to their roles and responsibilities in their families. Becoming a wife, ex-wife and mother created a range of constraints for the participants to enter new communities. As seen in the discussion on identities in their new home, identifying themselves as mothers seemed to be the most important identity to some participants. Holly, Emily, and Lucy expressed the view that their most important identity was being a mother. They described themselves as mothers who were happy raising children and who prioritised their children. Often the decision to migrate was for the benefit of their children as seen in each participant's narratives (Sections 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.5 and 4.6) and Section 5.1.2.

Motherhood required much of their time. Often Holly felt overwhelmed as seen in the excerpt below.

I also have my own children. They go to school. After school they have lessons. Last Friday I was so busy from this place, go to this place, and go there . . . all that. (Interview 3)

Motherhood also greatly influenced the participants' plans for the future, providing a possible timeline for entering their imagined communities. Both Emily's and Holly's imagined communities had a time frame such as after their "children are all grown up". Emily mentioned that she was an accountant, and she would like to find a job when "my little daughter grew up" (Interview 1). Holly also

commented that she might be able to do further studying and full-time work when her children no longer needed her care.

Other communities the participants were involved in also became constraints to entering their professional communities. Holly mentioned that she sometimes had to turn down interpreting job offers due to her commitment in the many communities she belonged to.

I had a couple of times [of interpreting job offers]. Because of a guest staying with me, so I turned some appointment down, also because of the church meeting, Tuesday and Friday church meeting. I also can't do in the afternoon because of picking up my children. Not much these days. (Interview 4)

Mia also commented how busy she was during the week due to her multiple commitments, saying that "The thing I am short of is sleep." (Interview 6). She studied full-time and worked part-time. At the same time, she belonged to a Korean school. She commented on how stressful it was for her to juggle everything. The excerpt below shows her struggle as a breadwinner, an English language learner, and an unregistered ECE teacher.

My husband does a cleaning job, making the minimum wage, it is covering only his spending money. My husband, he is the king of curiosity [a cynical expression]. He has to buy whatever he wants to buy. He spends more than he earns. You know it is not much, my part-time work and student allowance. The basic, insurance, two cars, and car insurance, only insurances themselves are over 500 a month. Can I say that I love insurance? Anyway, I have six different kinds of insurance. All together, we spend 2,000 a month, without spending. You know, I can't make much. I told you that my wage scale was ceased on 20 dollars. And I do lots of volunteer works, so I spend a lot. . . . Financially it is difficult. (Interview 5)

Mia had to study full-time to achieve a higher proficiency in English so that she could have a chance to enrol in an ECE post-graduate programme. However, her commitment to multiple communities and the responsibilities in those communities seemed too overwhelming for her to pursue studies.

Mia's imagined community was closely related to the Korean school; it was a centre which combined a Korean school and an ECE centre. She commented that the centre would make it a sustainable Korean school with fewer financial struggles. For her, her imagined community made sense since she had experience in the ECE sector both in Korea and Aotearoa NZ. At the same time, she was a Level 2 registered Korean teacher. The centre she was hoping for was something closely related to both her past and the present (see Appendix G-2 for Mia's past, present and future identities).

The complexity of Mia's multimembership was shown through her stories and statements about her imagined community. She reported that she had to pay the price along the way to the journey to her imagined community. There were struggles evident in her stories. Her commitment to working for the Korean school meant that she did not have much time for her family on the weekends. She said, "There was no Saturday for my family for 13 years" (Interview 1). However, the commitment to the Korean school was something that she thought of as "a way to pay it back to NZ [things she was appreciative of, living in Aotearoa NZ]" (Interview 1).

5.3.2 Layered contexts

Societal environments provided opportunities for participants to access their imagined communities, as seen in the previous section (Section 5.2.2). However, the affordances could also be recognised as constraints. Multi layers of context in the participants' everyday lives were presented in their narratives and the changes in regulations and laws negatively influenced the access to their imagined communities.

In Mia's case, her Korean ECE registration was transferred to Aotearoa NZ in 1999. However the regulation changed in 2003, and she was asked to show her language proficiency, and she did not clearly understand the registration process. The manager of the centre and the parents tried to help Mia obtain registration under the new regulations. The manager contacted the registration office to find out possibilities and advocated on her behalf. The parents wrote reference letters to

support her case. However, all those efforts were in vain. Mia explained that the government regulation was greater than the local support, as seen below.

Even two years ago, it could have been possible, but now it is impossible unless I get 7.0 [IELTS]. My case is a bit different. I have an ECE certificate from Korea and transferred to NZ, and I worked part-time at [a town in the Waikato region]. At 2001, I worked full-time and 2003 the law changed. For ten years from 2003 to 2012, from Kindergarten to tertiary teachers, all teachers who were not educated in NZ have to have IELTS 7.0 each band or get an NZ certificate. . . . It is unfair for me because I have an NZ certificate. . . . The change in 2003, the government had full support for teachers who were registered and subsidized teachers' wages. So I had to do it [register]. If I knew that information before, I could have done it. My boss rang NZQA [New Zealand Qualifications Authority] to help me to register, and they said no. Then she wrote a letter explaining everything; they said no. And children's parents wrote reference letters, but didn't work. . . . Anyway, she wrote me a reference letter. NZQA said law is law, and I had to follow. It is an NZ style. . . . I was a full-time teacher and became an unqualified teacher with qualification. . . . I agree to the requirements to become teachers, but it is very difficult for people from places that English is the second language, and especially who are not young. (Interview 4)

The excerpt above shows how the ECE teacher registration regulations influenced the way Mia viewed herself. She was a qualified full-time teacher one day and the next day she became an “unqualified teacher with qualification”. She accepted the regulation change. However, she also argued that it would be almost impossible for someone who was an adult language learner to gain the expected language proficiency.

The language proficiency requirement to access imagined communities did not seem to align with her perceived competence at work. The participants attended English language classes, but Mia, as an adult learner, did not feel that the class

met her expectations. The following excerpt indicates the limitation of language courses for Mia.

You know, how much we can learn at school being a middle aged mum, just having fun, making jokes and etc. School English was helping me little so I went to volunteer at this kindergarten where I work right now again to learn English. (Interview 1)

Similarly, Jessica mentioned being an adult language learner. For Jessica, the curriculum of the Level 4 foundation course, which she was assigned to, was not necessary or worthy. The class offered nothing new to her, someone with a qualification at Level 7. She commented at the second interview, “Why do you have to learn a baby language when you already speak like an adult?”

Jessica’s competence in the English language was challenged by the institutional system. The identity assigned to her by the system limited access to her imagined communities. She reported her frustration saying that she was not content with the curriculum and institutional practice. The excerpt below shows her emotion.

How to write an essay, how to use APA. How to do an introduction about the body. . . . Gosh. It is like, every tutor requires a different style of APA. In the first class, writing lecturer, I found that usually when you do APA referencing, you write the first author, year, and title. The second line you indent. You don't space the line. [Demonstrating by drawing] . . . No, not usually we don't have space. I ask her; we don't do spacing in between. She said “We do here, double space” . . . I haven't seen this style. I have been using APA referencing over a year [in a TESOL course], and we always do this. (Interview 3)

As articulated in Section 4.1, Jessica was not happy with the class, and she resisted her placement. However, she reported that she had to finish the level 4 foundation course successfully. She was worried that if she failed the course, she would have problems with Study Link [Government student benefit]. Financially dependent on Study Link, she was apprehensive about the regulations of the benefit. She mentioned that it “clearly stated that if you don’t pass [the course of study], you will have a limitation of borrowing money” (Interview 6). Such was the complex

relation between the local context of classroom practices and wider global system forces like a governmental student allowance and a further student loan that challenged Jessica's identity formation.

5.3.3 Social and cultural practices in Aotearoa NZ

The identities like Asian migrants and language learners discussed in Section 5.1, reflect certain dominant discourses. This section describes how the dominant discourses associated with the participants' identities were perceived as challenging. One was the practices in communities they found different which resulted in feelings of unease. The other was the generalised views of the participants as Asian migrants. Both influenced the way the participants perceived social interactions and accessibility to their imagined communities.

5.3.3.1 Normative practice

The participants' stories included challenges caused by differences in normative practice. Some stories were about not being understood by others as well as not understanding the others' behaviours. In Mia's case, at the first interview, she narrated long, detailed stories about her husband and herself being questioned as "child abusers." Her husband was accused of child abuse by parents at their children's school. According to her husband, he only "disciplined" a child by holding the child's arm while talking to him about bullying his son. Mia also had a similar experience at her work. One aspect of her normal practice as an ECE teacher was of concern to her colleagues. When she was volunteering at an ECE centre, she cleaned up children who came in from playing outside. According to her, it was a natural and ordinary practice for adult women to wash young children whether the adults were volunteers or part-timers. However, she was challenged:

One day, . . . Children were playing outside, sand with water; one boy came into the bathroom. Back then I hardly spoke any English. He was so wet and dirty. I asked him if I could wash him. And I washed him and sent him out. Another boy came in, and I washed him. . . . There was a girl, and I asked her if I could wash her, and she nodded. Then the teacher was rushing in panic.

She asked me if I was washing her, “Did you wash them?” She told me not to, and she was in panic. She said that the person who volunteered could not wash children. I didn't understand and told her that I was a mother, “Why not? I am a mum. They are only 3-4 years old. Why not?” She said, “Sexual abuse,” which I understood. I was so shocked. Nonsense! In Korea, there were students coming in for volunteers at my work, and they used to wash the kids. There were no concerns about it. I stressed that I am a mum and a qualified preschool teacher. She understood, and the principal asked me to come with my husband who could translate. Oh, I did understand the word 'sexual abuse' then. I was just frustrated by the fact that I was not allowed to wash the children. (Interview 1)

As seen in the excerpt above Mia was very confused with the normal practice in Aotearoa NZ. She could not understand the reason for the practice as seen in the comments like “why not?” and “nonsense.” She compared this newly discovered practice to the one in South Korea arguing for the rightness of her practice. Later she understood the underlying reasons and accepted the practice as reasonable and normal. Similarly, she mentioned another practice which was not understood at work which was going to work even though she was sick. For her, a case of diarrhoea did not give her the *right* to call in sick. She commented that it took a while for her to fully understand the practice.

Mia also felt that she could not fully belong to the “Kiwi” community due to cultural differences. At work, at the ECE centre, she commented that she made many mistakes due to her English competency. Often, the mistakes became the subject of gossip among colleagues even though they said to her it was okay and understandable. Those events made Mia lonely at work, and she felt like she did not belong to the group of colleagues, as seen below.

My job is a kindergarten teacher and if you ask me about the sense of belonging, if I am with children I have one hundred percent sense of belonging, but with Kiwi teachers, when I interact with them, often I feel sad. Do you know that they gossip a lot? Is it one of Kiwi women's characteristic?

It is a kind of culture. So, if I make a mistake, we Korean just tell the person straight away, and that is done, but here in front of me they say it is okay and smile and as soon as I turn around, we have 11 teachers, they talk about me. I understand it is their culture, but whenever it happens, it makes me really sad. Most of the mistakes come from language, and I am the senior there, I have been there the longest. Children understand my English well. I am so happy when I am with children. But with teachers it is hard. . . . I cried a lot at the beginning. . . . (Interview 1)

As seen above, Mia identified herself as a senior teacher, but she could not feel a sense of belonging among the teachers. She reflected on similar situations in Korea and claimed that it was the cultural differences between the countries which resulted in sadness and loneliness.

Jessica commented on the feeling of being different and lonely as well. Jessica was in a class where the majority of students were young recent high school graduates. She was very uncomfortable in the group due to the many differences she recognised. A few incidents, as seen in the excerpts below, are examples of the unease she felt. The first is a recount about Jessica's classmates' overall behaviour which annoyed her greatly.

Because most of them [classmates at the Level 4 course] are teenagers, right after high schools. They are not really, they are okay, but they are different. It is difficult to communicate. . . . It is so noisy. It annoys me. . . . We had to prepare a presentation. . . . Oh gosh, everyone was texting, talking, and texting. It was really annoying . . . , but every one of them was texting. It was very annoying . . . in my opinion, we have to talk about what we were going to do first, and then talk about other things. They just talk and talk other things. And then the last minute, they started to talk about the actual thing. I kind of have a feeling I am too old for this class. Just annoying me. One boy, he always drinks some kind of drink, the bottle, a can or whatever, he leaves on the table. "Put it in the rubbish bin!" I really want to say. Oh, God! I don't

want to boss around. But it is really annoying me. Just basic things you have to do, they don't do it. (Interview 4)

The second one was about the greeting practices among her classmates. She could not understand her classmates being indifferent towards each other outside the classroom. Confused, she inquired about the behaviour to her classmates, but she could not get a reasonable answer as seen below.

They [classmates] don't say, "Hello" when you meet on the street or in class. . . . It is a bit strange for me. I don't understand. When in the classroom they start talking, playing together, they seem like they are best friends. And then when they are outside of the classroom, they just, don't even say, "Hello." That's why I asked "Why you guys do that? In the classroom you're like best friends, now you don't even say hello." They can't explain why. For me it is uncomfortable. I don't expect them to treat me like a best friend. But at least just, "Hello" at least. It is really uncomfortable. (Interview 5)

The practice was uncomfortable and "a bit strange" for her. This subtle difference such as greeting practices among classmates made her feel that she did not belong to the class. She said, "I don't expect them to treat me like a best friend," but she wanted to be recognised as a classmate at least.

5.3.3.2 Being Asian migrants

As well as experiencing differences, the participants' recounts included events when they were stereotyped by mainstream society. The experiences of being categorised as Asian migrants by other members of society influenced their perceived chances of accessing imagined communities. This element seemed to be highlighted in Simi's experiences. At the second interview, Simi recounted the incident regarding her English language use during her ECE practicum (see the excerpt in Section 4.6). According to Simi, the associate teacher heard her wrong. However, the teacher generalised in her report about overseas teachers' language problems and the importance of language to children's education. Simi expressed frustration because not only was she wrongly accused but also stereotyped. This event disturbed her greatly because Simi considered herself as having good

language skills. Even though Simi rejected the assigned identity as a deficient English language learner, she claimed that she was viewed as a group, not as an individual.

Lucy similarly recounted stereotypical assumptions about the migrant group she belonged to. She narrated stories indicating the difficulties in getting a job in Aotearoa NZ. Two examples are presented below. The first excerpt includes her perceptions of stereotypes and prejudices about employing migrants.

Half of them had really high skills. They are not going to start from low levels. I think that is the problem, finding a job. Some said, "You are overqualified. We can't afford to hire you." Some company says, "You are okay, but your English is not comprehensive." Something like that. Because [we are] immigrants. If they have work permits, it is okay. But they don't like work permit. [People with] permanent permits, it is easier. If you have only work permit, it is a bit difficult. Hiring you is a kind of hassle. [Only] one year contract. (Interview 3)

The second is a story of another immigrant: Lucy used it to increase the accountability of her perception. Even though he was a university graduate in Aotearoa NZ, the journey to secure a job was difficult due to his unfamiliar name in mainstream society.

And also the other guy, he is from Iraq I think. He had no interviews. He applied for 360 jobs, to get this job. Yes, he got this job . . . after 360 applications. He came here when he was in high school, and he graduated from a [university]. His English is fluent. Writing and reading, everything is quite above, better than Kiwis. But he said when they see his CV they can tell his nationality, he is not a Kiwi because of his name. It is a real disadvantage, he said. That is interesting. They don't want to hire the other nationality. Some people will discriminate. "I don't like Chinese or Japanese." . . . So it is so difficult to be here, being the last candidate [for them to consider]. (Interview 3)

As seen above, Lucy found it “interesting” that an unfamiliar name is “a real disadvantage” when applying for a job. She mentioned that “People will discriminate,” and “It is so difficult . . . being the last candidate.” The excerpts above are not from Lucy’s direct experiences but her interpretation of another’s story of difficulties getting a job in Aotearoa NZ. “Being different” would make it difficult to belong to the mainstream society as she had been trying to get employed in a “Kiwi” salon. Thus, being different was perceived as a great challenge to access imagined communities.

5.3.4 Language learner identities

Many of the participants’ narrated struggles were directly or indirectly related to English proficiency. Five of the participants reported that they had had English learning experiences in classroom settings as previously presented in Section 5.2.2, which afforded participants access to imagined communities. Even with formal study, many expressed difficulties with the English language. Stories included perceived challenges to obtain English proficiency and also imposed identity as English language learners in social interactions.

5.3.4.1 Perceived language learner identities

Participants reported discomfort living in an English language world. They were emotionally stressed and physically exhausted because they had to communicate in English and they had to prove their English proficiency to enter new communities.

In Mia’s case, she reported this feeling at the sixth interview. As briefly mentioned in Section 4.4, describing Mia’s identity trajectory as a language learner, a significant event narrated in August 2013 indicates her discomfort. During the sixth interview, Mia was telling me how much she was appreciated as someone resourceful and trustworthy while in Korea—she was viewed as a successful Aotearoa NZ Korean. However, the following excerpt described her distress at being a language learner:

I feel that I belong here, but there is a bit of frustration that I feel. It doesn't have the same feeling as I feel in Korea. I feel that I am two percent short, probably more than two percent. So, not completed. . . . Yes, that is right. It is the language. (Interview 2)

Mia recounted many similar stories of feeling incompetent due to her language learner identity. One significant story was about a job offer she received at the ECE centre where she volunteered. She did not comprehend the offer until the employer asked her to bring her husband to the centre so that they could sign the contract. Because Mia had not understood the offer, her employer asked a Korean lady to deliver the message (Interview 1). She saw herself as a competent ECE teacher, but her struggle in English made her feel the opposite because “the teaching is through language” (Interview 2). She said that she was a teacher with “a crippled leg” [a Korean expression to imply that a person has a permanent disadvantage] (Interview 4).

Mia's language learner identities were in opposition to her successful and respectable identities such as ECE teacher and Korean school principal. She doubted her abilities to perform the roles and the possibilities to construct a future identity. This shows in her comment at the first interview, “How could I do it with my English?”, when she was asked to open an ECE centre for migrant children by Korean mothers.

Mia also reported challenging incidents due to her perceived lack of competency in English. One was an incident that happened during a regular New Zealand South Korea Friendship Society (NZSKFS) meeting of which Mia was a co-founder. As a co-founder, she had been performing the Korean greeting at every meeting. However when the other co-founder, a Aotearoan New Zealander, asked another member to do the greeting both in Korean and English, it left Mia without any responsibility or duty. The person appointed was the one with competent English skills. The second incident happened at a Korean school meeting. During the meeting, Mia was accused of being incompetent as a head of the school by a group of teachers and parents. Even though the meeting was in Korean, she mentioned

that all members of that group who challenged her had competent English skills and were recognised as legitimate members of Aotearoa NZ society with professional jobs. She perceived those events as challenges to maintain the identities like principal of the Korean school and a chairperson of NZSKFS due to her being incompetent in English.

Other participants similarly attributed the challenges they faced to their English competency. Holly mentioned that she could not apply to be a member of the board of trustees at her children's school because her English was "not good enough" (Interview 2). She also changed her enrolment to an English language course from a business course because she realised her lack of English proficiency (Interview 1). Jessica perceived that the failure of her application for an ECE programme was definitely due to her lack of English skills (Interview 1). Such perceived English language learner identities were seen as major obstacles to access their imagined communities.

5.3.4.2 Imposed language learner identities

The participants also reported that they were viewed as English language learners. This was highlighted in Simi's recount about the interaction with her associate teacher discussed earlier (Sections 4.6, 5.2.2.2, 5.2.3.2 and 5.3.3.2). Imposed language learner identities affected their identity negotiation in two ways.

First, comments made by others influenced the way participants viewed themselves. For example, Emily recounted a story that her instructor at Sunday school teacher training had asked her to repeat after him when she could not remember the Bible story just told by him (Interview 7). Emily also commented that she was dependent on her children when it came to English, which was similarly reported by Mia. When Mia went to see a doctor, her son accompanied her because it was an important appointment for her, which her son had initiated. Mia's dependency on people for English language was narrated throughout the interviews. At the beginning of Mia's life here, people asked her husband to accompany her to any important meetings, for instance, the meeting to sign a contract.

Second, institutional structures imposed language learner identities on the participants as well. When Mia wanted to register her ECE qualification again, which was mentioned previously, she was asked to submit a satisfactory result of English proficiency. She became a language learner. This was similarly reported by Jessica:

Because if you want to get a job like, even teachers, whatever, you have to have qualification, yes, um, English is not my first language. They always ask for IELTS 7. It makes it stressful. (Interview 1)

The entry requirement to gain any qualification for non-English speakers led participants like Jessica and Mia to internalise the label of language learners. They themselves recognised they needed certain levels of language competence to enter their imagined communities. However, at the same time, the effect of their actual language needs along with imposed labels as deficient become blended together in social interactions, so that they also felt unworthy and diminished as people in their attempts to join the imagined communities.

5.4 Response to affordances and constraints

Previously in Section 5.1, I looked into participants' perceptions of available identities and imagined identities. To enter imagined communities, the participants recounted stories that included enabling factors such as previous knowledge, community support, and societal environments (Section 5.2). On the other hand, there were constraints which challenged the participants' access to imagined communities, such as multimembership, complex layered contexts, social and cultural practices in a new home, and language learner identities (Section 5.3). In this section, I illustrate how the participants responded to those affordances and constraints.

5.4.1 Constraints as opportunities

Some stories included turning challenging factors into opportunities as the participants took on the challenges as opportunities to learn new skills. In Jessica's

case, a future career with a legitimate qualification was her imagined identity. She reported that she had been working at a supermarket, and she could have kept working there. However, she said that she had to think of her family's future. She needed to learn English, so she went back to school for further training for a TESOL diploma. Her subsequent unsuccessful application to an ECE programme allowed her to consider other options. She applied for a degree programme at a university and was accepted. Jessica faced challenges, yet she dealt with them by enrolling in other courses and programmes.

Holly told me a language learning story from her early days in Aotearoa NZ. She faced challenges due to her English proficiency in her initial enrolment in a business programme and shifted to a language course. Her English improved, and she was working as an interpreter at the time of the interviews. She mentioned at the third interview that the interpreting job was stressful but without the work she would not have had any opportunities to learn English. She considered the job as an opportunity to learn further.

Employment as an interpreter had not been her imagined identity during the early settlement period. She wanted a job at a trading company. However, she faced limited job opportunities in the trading sector. She attended an interpreter training course and became a contract interpreter. She reported that it was similar to her original career choice in terms of helping and bridging the gap between Chinese and Aotearoa New Zealanders.

Mia wanted to learn English as soon as she arrived in Aotearoa NZ because she could not communicate in English. She volunteered at an ECE centre to learn communicative English as seen below.

And teachers there used simple English to children. To learn English, I did volunteer work there. At the . . . preschool, I carefully listened to teachers. I volunteered for eight months, from April to December. (Interview 1)

Working as a volunteer helped Mia to be familiar with English language use in the setting. At the same time, it was an opportunity to demonstrate her skills as an

ECE teacher to the manager, colleagues, students and parents—the event was described in several sections and also will be examined further in Section 5.4.3.2.

Another incident also indicates how Mia took challenges as opportunities. At work, Mia had to call an ambulance due to a back injury. She commented that she took it as a learning opportunity for the children at the centre. She concluded that “children learnt lots about the ambulance on that day, real situation education” (Interview 6). After the incident, Mia recounted another story that happened at work as well, which could be said to be a similar example. At work, she felt that she was misunderstood after being accused of dishonesty (as previously described, a colleague told the employer that Mia failed to truthfully fill in her timesheet). The complaint led to several disagreements in the toddler team. Then it was suggested that Mia work on the preschool team for a few days a week. The shift was positive for Mia because she was respected there as skilful and resourceful. The new team wanted her to become a regular staff member, assigning her more responsibilities. She reported that “Preschool teachers really like it [her origami class and a music class]. You know I do work well, and I am good at tidying up and cleaning” (Interview 7). She was not discouraged when faced with these challenges. She admitted that the shift was also a great opportunity to “see how preschool is running” (Interview 7) for her imagined community, running an ECE centre and a Korean school.

Simi faced a challenge at her first ECE programme practicum, which was described in several earlier sections. She feared that she would be unable to finish her first practicum successfully. The following excerpt is Simi’s recount on the event.

She checked my reflection. And I told her I was happy to have a meeting with her because I didn't feel comfortable as she stopped communicating with me. And then we had a meeting, and I told her. I had come here to learn from you. It was my first practicum in NZ. And this kind of experience is not good for me. I don't learn anything. I am here to learn. I said I heard a lot about you, and they said you were very good at actual work and everything. If you

don't communicate with me, I would not be able to learn anything. I would not be able to get benefit from you. (Interview 2)

After the meeting, she was able to finish her practicum successfully, and she continued her journey to becoming an ECE teacher. Simi faced a challenge which could have jeopardised her successful completion of the ECE programme. Yet, she took it as an opportunity to express her reactions and her expected outcomes from the practicum. The stories above show how the participants took constraints as opportunities and moved forward to their imagined communities.

5.4.2 Seeking support

When the participants faced challenges, they would seek support from the people and services available. Many of their stories included sharing their emerging challenges with others. They looked to their friends/in-group members or the people they perceived as decision makers and influential to enter new communities. They also looked for social services such as free language courses provided for immigrants.

5.4.2.1 In-group members

The participants mentioned that they talked to people when they encountered challenges, which could be about child-rearing or the feeling of isolation at work. Such cases were reported in all of the participants' recounts. The participants also asked for help when they needed support.

Particularly, Mia indicated how much the members of her ethnic communities, including her family, helped her life in general. For example, Mia asked her fellow church members to buy Korean groceries during the week as she could only travel to town on Sundays. When Mia enrolled in a certificate course at a local college, she said that her son, who was in high school, had to help her throughout the course. She also mentioned that her son came to a doctor's appointment to support her because of the language barrier. She commented that there were people she could talk to when she needed emotional support as well, stating, "If I

tell them any upset stories, then they listen to my stories, and the bad feeling goes away” (Interview 2).

Similarly, Jessica mentioned the effect of talking to people to gain support for her judgements and feelings. She felt that she was mistreated by a tutor at school, and she talked about it with her classmate. They agreed about the tutor, which consoled her so that her feelings seemed justified. Jessica also shared midwife experiences with other mothers, for example that her midwife made her feel that she was only being viewed as a mother, not a person. When Jessica was talking about her sickness to her midwife, the midwife stopped listening to her, insisting that she needed to feed her son. Jessica talked to some mothers who had the same midwife, and she could confirm they concurred.

Like Jessica, the participants often faced differences in beliefs and values, which puzzled them and sometimes emotionally distressed them. One example is from Simi’s recount about differences in raising children. Simi shared a story about different discourses in educating children between her home country and Aotearoa NZ. She was concerned about too much freedom given to children, which resulted in truancy and a lack of respect to adults. She talked about the importance of boundaries for children and young adults. As seen in the following excerpt, she could only have her opinion confirmed by the agreement of the older generation in Aotearoa NZ.

Children should know their boundaries, that they cannot cross the boundaries. But complete freedom, I don't think it is good as well. That is what I feel. I also have a discussion with people, and I have said that there should be boundaries. . . . But here older generation they say that they should be some kind of boundaries. Now they have no respect for older people, but in our culture there is. (Interview 5)

Simi had her own view about raising children which did not align with the mainstream discourse. She challenged the dominant discourse, and her view was supported by an older Aotearoan New Zealander, a member of mainstream

society in Aotearoa NZ. The second example was about support from her team members and parents on meal time rules at work.

In the preschool, we do have behavioural issues like children don't listen, they are not sitting down. We as a team, we have a plan, even like food eating. Most of the centres, what they do is, if children don't want to eat food, they throw in the bin. We tell them, "You try it if you don't like it that is fine, but you have to eat half of it." . . . No, they are not written. It is an understanding between us. . . . If they don't eat lunch, they don't get pudding. If they don't finish it off, they will miss out afternoon tea. The parents know it. Everybody knows it. (Interview 5)

Simi reported that she recognised her own value could be implemented in her work practices, and she initiated it. The meal time practice at her work was not a written rule. However, her view was supported by other members in her work community: colleagues, parents, and children. As in Simi's story, when the participants faced challenges due to different discourses, they often sought support from people they were familiar with—in-group members.

5.4.2.2 Decision makers and influential people

The participants also reported stories of seeking support from influential individuals and decision makers. Simi talked to her programme supervisor when she had a problem at her first practicum. She recounted that her supervisor urged her to write it in her reflection (Interview 2). When Jessica's application to a programme was rejected, she talked to her previous TESOL tutors. They tried to learn the reasons for her unsuccessful application. Jessica also went to see the programme administrators and school administration staff for further information. Similarly, when Mia was facing a problem in registering to become an ECE teacher, she talked to her employer who contacted the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) to seek information and to support Mia. Also, a few parents wrote reference letters to help her to register.

As a Korean school principal, Mia faced challenges whenever there were complaints received about the use of facilities in the host school on Saturdays. Mia wanted to build a Korean school, and she knew it was an expensive project, and she didn't have financial resources. Mia reported asking the Prime Minister and a city mayor for support for a piece of land. She also looked for investors from South Korea. In terms of resources and a curriculum to run the school, Mia asked Korean national assembly members for support, and she signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with a university in South Korea. Like Mia, participants reported that they sought support from people, but not necessarily from the circle of people they knew.

5.4.3 Reflection

When faced with challenges, the participants reported that they used introspective strategies. For instance, Holly mentioned quite a few times that she tried not to think negatively of any incident. The following excerpt was Holly's response when asked how she overcame feeling disregarded at her work.

I reflect on that. I just try to think or understand why they say this thing; they needed someone before, now they don't need someone to interpret, mainly I just ignore. The best thing which works for me is that I don't let this thing get to me. Sometimes, why do you say or attitude towards me? I don't think this kind of thing much. It is okay. (Interview 4)

In this section, I illustrate such reflective practices shown in the participants' recounts. First, the participants reported that they acknowledged differences between their discourses and the dominant discourses (an identified constraints on entering communities in Section 5.3.3). Second, while reporting an event, the participants linked it with other experiences, an indication of the ripple effects of affordances and constraints. Last, the participants sometimes reported that there was no positive option available.

5.4.3.1 Accepting differences

When participants faced challenges, they often looked back to their past experiences, critically reviewed the challenges, and found the best way forward for them. Holly went back to her home country when her husband obtained a job in China. She mentioned that she realised she did not want to live in China. She said, “Here slow and relax[ed]. There, it is very competitive. I also went to work for the original company. I could not do the same job anymore” (Interview 1). She experienced both ways and could see the differences which led her to decide what she preferred. The excerpt below is one of the examples of her understanding of the differences between her home country and the new home, Aotearoa NZ.

I think, everything, every person and every place, there is good sides, even China has good things. Here is the same, they have they have a good system, social welfare, they look after people who are poor, situation, when they are sick, there is a system to look after them. But the other thing, because of the system, too kind or too good, so people are just lazy, even asks for more, they ask for human rights. You know in jail, prison, they ask some, what they call, go to the jail to, they can ask for a lady to go to the jail too. (Interview 5)

In the excerpt above, Holly could see differences and knew where she felt more comfortable. Mia also mentioned that it took a while for her to understand certain social practices. To her, calling in sick was not a good practice for a responsible employee. After a number of years of learning the reason through confrontation and persuasion, she later learnt to understand the different social and cultural practices.

Different ways of thinking here, using relievers and if I am sick, I spread germs to children. But it took me several years to realise and accept that concept. At the beginning, I went there even when I was sick, the first year. I was absent for only two days. Do you think I was not sick? I had diarrhoea, and it just happens in my tummy and what is wrong with that? That was how I thought. The boss yelled at me not to come [to work] several times. After a

few incidents like that I understood, it was English but also the culture; I couldn't get it. (Interview 4)

The excerpt showed how differences in discourses were accepted by the participant. The participants like Mia and Holly reported that they understood the differences as seen in the two excerpts above. However, the participants still struggled with the dominant discourses as seen in the statement, “What is wrong with that?” from Mia’s recount. They understood and accepted the differences, but it did not mean that they were comfortable with them.

5.4.3.2 Ripple effects of constraints and affordances

The participants often commented on their interpretation of an event. When they faced constraints to enter their imagined communities, they responded that they were the result of deeper or more serious constraints. For example, Mia reported that many challenges she recounted were rooted in one reason, her lack of English competency. When Mia’s responsibilities were removed from the committee she had initially established, and when she was blamed for being an incompetent leader at the Korean school (described in Section 4.4), she concluded that the reason for those incidents was her English competency.

Mia’s language learner identity affected the way she rationalized other negative incidents as well. One incident with the police, which was described in Section 4.4, changed her view about NZ, which had been considered home. Mia first mentioned how much she loved being a “Kiwi”, but then it changed. She even thought about the possibilities of moving to other countries such as Australia or the United States. The following recount of a conversation with her husband reflects on the unpleasant incident with the police officer who led them to feel like second-class citizens with limited rights in Aotearoa NZ.

My husband and I were talking about that incident and made a conclusion that there is nothing we can do because of English. This kind of incident is something we have to just bear because of English. My husband also had one incident something like that; he said: "if this kind of thing happened in Korea,

I would go nuts, there is no doubt I would do something about it." I said, "of course." Even we have something we feel unfair, make no claims or complain. We have a limitation. (Interview 4)

At the time, Mia reported unsettled feelings of resentment because of the incident. According to her, she sacrificed her career and financial stability for their children by immigrating to Aotearoa NZ. However, her children were also disregarded, which was previously illustrated in Section 4.4. She stated, "I really tried to raise them [the children] not to be like me [treated like a migrant with limited English]. But they were disrespected and disregarded the same way I got. That makes me crazy." (Interview 3).

On the other hand, the participants also reported that affordances often rippled out to further affordances. Such cases are evident in Emily's recounts. She belonged to a Chinese church, and she became a Sunday school teacher. Later she had an opportunity to attend training which she recounted as valuable in terms of learning English and the different teaching and learning methods in Aotearoa NZ. In Mia's case, a neighbour helped her to get volunteer work at an ECE centre, and she obtained a part-time job. The reference from the ECE centre offered opportunities for volunteer work in a different city and later on, a full-time job. Such initial affordances led to more opportunities for some participants to access their imagined communities.

5.4.3.3 Acceptance and resignation

Some challenges such as regulation changes often made the participants feel that there was no option available. There was no negotiability so they had to accept it. When Jessica was placed in a lower level course after being declined for an ECE programme, and when Mia could not register as an ECE teacher, they both mentioned that there was nothing they could do about it.

It is just a nightmare for me. Returning from level 7 to level 4, and I have done whatever I could do. There is nothing I can do more. I am stuck. There is no solution. (Jessica: Interview 3)

My boss rang NZQA [New Zealand Qualifications Authority] to help me to register, and they said no. Then she wrote a letter explaining everything. They said no. And children's parents wrote reference letters, but didn't work. . . . NZQA said law is law, and I had to follow. (Mia: Interview 4)

As seen above, Jessica and Mia both claimed that they did all they could do, but there was no other option but to accept the decision.

5.5 Reflections: Beyond the complexity

This section includes the summary of Sections 5.1 to 5.4 and my reflection on the themes identified in these sections.

The findings sections focused on presenting themes from all the data in relation to identity negotiation processes. The themes indicated that the participants' identity negotiation included imagined identities, and challenges and affordances to enter their imagined communities. Their imagined identities were linked to legitimate memberships in Aotearoa NZ society like careers as listed in Section 5.1. Access to their imagined identities was eased with the factors described in Section 5.2. At the same time, the access was challenged in many ways, and the challenging factors are described in Section 5.3. The participants responded to the challenges and affordances in various ways as described in Section 5.4.

Reflecting on the themes, I noticed a noteworthy difference between membership and a sense of belonging which I examined in the literature (Section 2.1.1.3). The participants negotiated their identities to gain membership in desired communities. However, the negotiation did not stop even after acquiring membership. A sense of belonging was closely linked to their identity negotiation rather than membership. This review is discussed in Section 7.2.

Another salient feature in the participants' identity negotiation processes was the importance of people. Social interaction and relationships were noted in affordances, constraints, and responses. People were one of the affordance factors that allowed the participants' access to imagined communities. Yet they

could also become constraints to access their imagined communities. In addition, the participants sought support from others to respond to these constraints and affordances. The aspect of interactions and relationships is discussed in Section 7.3, which also argues for the importance of a dyadic relationship.

The other puzzling element in the participants' identity negotiation, I found, is language learner identities. The language learner identities were limited identities for them to overcome to enter their imagined communities. The limited identities were both imposed by others as in Simi's case and assigned by themselves like Mia's case. One unsettling aspect of the identities was that the participants readily attributed their negative experiences to language learner identities. I discuss this aspect in relation to a sense of self in Chapter 7.

Chapter 6 Relationships in narrative research

In Chapter 4, I described each participant's individual journey. In Chapter 5, I outlined the factors which afforded and constrained participants from accessing their imagined communities in the process of identity negotiation. While the previous two chapters drew directly from the data generated by the participants, this chapter turns the focus onto the outcomes of the data generation process—I examine the outcomes of the interaction between the participants and myself during interviews.

I did not initially anticipate or plan for the interactional relationships to be formally included in this thesis. However, I noticed that there was extraneous small talk and stories during the interviews. They were often significant even when they seemed to be outside of the participants' main narratives. The interviews were not only conducted through direct questions. Much of the interchange of the interviews was like conversation between two people. Corbin and Morse (2003), who examine the complex issues of unstructured interviews, state that less structured interview processes can resemble natural conversations such as a conversation with a friend. The interactional aspect of the small stories and comments seemed important to include as I began to closely examine the data from an interaction perspective. According to Potter and Hepburn (2005), the reporting of interviews needs to include the researcher and also the interviewees as interactions between them need to be considered. As one possible response to these issues, they suggest that reporting outcomes should include interactional features even if they are not the topic of the study.

In qualitative inquiry, the relational aspect through interviewing is related to the relationships constructed between interviewees and interviewers. Josselson (2013) and Clandinin (2013) highlight the relational aspect in research which involves narrative inquiry, and they point out the importance of this relationship. Relationships constructed in the interview settings were also apparent in the present narrative inquiry.

The outcomes I present in this chapter arose through the interactional relationship between the participants and myself. I refer to myself as Gina rather than the researcher (see Section 3.4.2), indicating that I took part in the conversation as a participant of sorts. Three themes were identified as important features of our interaction: mutual disclosure, reciprocal relationships and the legitimisation of each other's stories. In many ways, the themes were interconnected. For example, my shared stories in disclosure were part of the reciprocal exchange and also part of legitimising the participants' stories. However, I describe each outcome separately so that I can clearly present how each looked in the data and what my interpretations were in relation to the effects of the small stories and comments.

6.1 Disclosure

Disclosure seemed to serve as a starting point for developing a close relationship in the research practice. As seen in the discussion of research methods, the in-depth interviews focused on significant events that the participants experienced. Initially, the participants seemed to have difficulty deciding what to talk about. When I felt their indecision or uncertainty, I shared a significant event that had happened to me. My self-disclosure seemed to provide a sense of security to the participant that both of us were equally vulnerable. At the same time, my self-disclosure seemed to be used as a strategy to ease the tension and distance between the participant and myself. Sharing my story, which was sometimes very personal, seemed to balance the power issue and helped the participant feel more comfortable with me. This self-disclosure seemed necessary and helpful.

In the case of Emily, my marginalised stories seemed to deepen the conversation between us, and they provided Emily with a sense of security to share her stories whether they were positive or not. Emily appeared to have a positive attitude towards life. She initially mentioned this: "Actually, it [Living in NZ] is okay." (Interview 2), and "I think everything is good." (Interview 5). Also, her stories often ended with a statement like how much she appreciated her life. However, those statements were not elaborated on when I asked her to tell me additional stories.

I assumed that she expected the question/answer format of a traditional interview. She also might have thought that good migrant stories were what I wanted to hear during the interviews. This assumption seemed to be present in other interview relationships, as illustrated by Mia's comment in the second interview.

You can ask questions in relation to the way you want to conclude your writing. . . . I am wondering [if] my interview is going to the way that is very different from what you have in your mind . . . if there is a possibility I would like to answer the way you want.

Since I had this overt conversation with Mia about her assumptions, even after the explanation of the interview processes, I felt that I should tell my stories first to model the story telling and ease the tension. During the third interview with Emily, I began the interview with the statement, "I don't know if you [have] had any similar experience. I had a bad experience today." Then I told her about an incident that day when I felt mistreated as an Asian woman. She commented that I should not keep those emotions in me, as they would harm me. She said that I would "always feel sad" if I did. Then she told me stories which were opposite to mine, detailed stories of her new identity as a Sunday school teacher. Gradually she told me both positive and negative stories in relation to her identity negotiation. In this way, I found that self-disclosure of both positive and negative events helped me to obtain a comprehensive description of the participants' experiences.

Along with self-disclosure during the interviews, my story sharing in the written responses after each interview seemed to provide a sense of security and a sense of power sharing (Lee et al., 2015) for the participants. This may be a valuable effect of story sharing. For instance, at the last interview with Simi, she indicated that she appreciated my story sharing, and she felt secure to tell her stories.

I think you were really open. You did share whatever you thought about your family and problems. I appreciated that because you didn't have to do that. I think you were pretty open and straightforward about things. You explained me exactly what was required of me. So I was comfortable talking to you. You know, I have this confidence in you that this information I shared with

you will be only with you, nobody else, so that the confidentiality was there.

I have enjoyed working, being a part of it. (Interview 8, Simi)

At the same time, story sharing seemed to have ensured that the participants' stories were heard and appreciated, as seen in Simi's comments like "you were really open" and "I appreciated that."

My responses played a role in generating story sharing by indicating that I was interested in further elaboration in the next interview. One example is shown below in my fourth response to Jessica:

I just remember a few things from our talk which I thought would be very good to discuss further in the next interview. . . . I think those experiences you have are very valuable and so, if you could, maybe we could talk about one of them next month. (Response 4: Gina to Jessica)

My response worked to signal to Jessica that I wanted to hear more, and that I wanted her to elaborate. This response became a starting point for the next interview with her.

The excerpt below is part of a response to Lucy. Lucy mentioned her participation in a workshop in order to improve her job searching skills in the second interview. She also mentioned that she had begun her new role as a chairperson at an ethnic language school. Both, I thought, would be interesting in terms of my research aims. So I reminded her and myself to talk further about them in our next interview session.

It would be nice if you could share any story related to the workshop next time or if you have any other episode in relation to your role as a chairperson.

That would be great. (Response 2: Gina to Lucy)

In the third interview, Lucy shared stories related to the workshop and being a chairperson.

In sum, my disclosure as an insider to some degree helped me to develop a relationship with the participants. Mutual disclosure seemed to provide a sense of

power and security to the participants so they could open up and share stories that were rich with detail about their experiences.

6.2 Reciprocity

The stories shared during the interviews included the exchange of information and narratives which were thought to be supportive and helpful to the other party. The exchange helped to construct friendly and caring relationships. The iterative interview process as described in Section 3.6 (see Figure 3.1) resulted in more than just gathering research stories. The participants and I had similar identities, Asian migrant mothers, and English language learners. I also shared my own stories. Corbin and Morse (2003) similarly note that many interviewers who seek stories which may be sensitive to the interviewees often share their own stories.

There was an information exchange that naturally happened, an ongoing exchange between the participants and me. As mothers, the participants actively shared information regarding how best to raise children. Mia and Simi both had two sons who were older than my children and they often provided me with advice. Simi strongly suggested that children should have boundaries. Mia focused more on the importance of extracurricular activities for children, especially music and sports for boys.

What might be termed wisdom from experiences was shared by participants through relevant story sharing as we were all Asian migrants living in Aotearoa NZ. They seemed like wise elders passing down attitudes and advice about life, particularly in matters of parenting, to a member of a younger generation. Simi and Holly especially showed me ways to deal with stressful events and emotionally upsetting situations. I recognised this when reflecting on their stories. The excerpt below is my response after an interview with Simi. Simi shared her journey as a mother, and I recognised what I learnt from her attitude to life.

I was re-reading your stories about your older son's journey. And I could see that your principles in life such as being honest, responsible, and do[ing] right

things also helped you and your son go through [a] rough time for his life choices. (Response 7: Gina to Simi)

The excerpt below is from an episode when Simi was mentoring a provisionally registered teacher at work. During the final reflective interview, I commented that I had learnt from her stories when dealing with conflict situations at work. In responding to my comments, she told me the following story.

The most important thing is I tell people at work. . . . You know young people are very drastic in their views. She [a provisionally certificated teacher whom Simi was mentoring] is very strong in that. She is very negative, lots of negativity in her. So that's what I told her. See I know she has a good potential, quality. . . . "If you want people to listen to you, you don't want people to ignore you. If you are very negative, people will ignore you. Not listening to you. . . . If you are not happy here, you should leave. Go find places where you are happy. If you are working here, you have to make it a pleasant working place for you and other people around you." (Interview 8, Simi)

Through this story, Simi showed me a way to manage conflicts successfully like her use of the word "positive." Maintaining a positive attitude, as she said "come with smile" to work, enabled me to negotiate well with difficult people.

Similarly, Holly mentioned that "We [Asian migrants] should do something to help this country [Aotearoa NZ]." In her use of the pronoun we, she signalled our mutual affiliation. She argued that migrants should be more involved in their new home because they have skills and diverse cultures to share with the host country.

I think we can say that we can contribute to this country. We just don't come here to enjoy the environment; we should do something to help this country. You know, Chinese people and other country people also have their good things, their skills, and they can commit themselves to this country. (Interview 2, Holly)

Holly acknowledged changes in her views as a migrant, and she shared her thoughts that migrants had resources to share with their host communities. She encouraged me to be more involved in Aotearoa NZ communities and also invited me to join the local tennis club. Like Mia and Simi, Holly positioned herself as someone who was able to give advice to me, advice from a considerate and experienced older person to a younger person.

In the case of heritage language maintenance, all of the participants agreed on the importance of nurturing their heritage language for their children. They offered suggestions to me so that my children could learn and maintain their Korean language skills. Four of the participants used their heritage language as the main form of communication at home. Interestingly, Jessica and Lucy had family members who did not share their first language. Lucy advocated her heritage language at home policy to her son, and she played an active role as a Japanese language teacher. She communicated only in Japanese with her son. On the other hand, Jessica indicated that she tried to interest her son in the Korean language through his extended family in Korea. (As mentioned in Chapter 5, Jessica had an urgent need to improve her English proficiency even at the cost of her son's Korean language learning.)

As language learners, the participants sought strategies to improve their language skills. The following conversation, during the second interview with Jessica, indicates that Jessica was seeking the best way to learn English vocabulary from me. She was a language student in order to enter a degree programme, and I was doing an English medium doctoral study. For Jessica, I might have been seen as someone who is somewhat close to being a competent language learner.

J: Yes, by the way, how do you learn, memorize vocabulary?

G: Memorising vocabulary?

J: Memorising vocabulary is hard for me.

G: It is also hard for me.

J: Because it is so hard. I found the word and oh yes, then next day the same thing, I have to find it again.

(Interview 2, Jessica)

Jessica and I both shared information about online vocabulary learning and talked about the pros and cons of the resources. As in Jessica's opening to our conversation above, she sometimes requested advice on English language learning.

Both the participants and I implicitly and explicitly sought information and support while sharing our stories. The narratives were interwoven with requests and replies, advice, and personal experiences. This points to a complex and multifaceted relationship building between the participants and me. The exchange helped to develop our relationships.

6.3 Legitimation

Legitimation is the third feature which was evident in the data presenting the interactional relationship between the participants and me. Participants often confirmed my interpretations of their identity trajectories from the shared stories, and I also confirmed the storied identities of each participant during their interviews. Reflective interviewing highlighted the legitimation of the participants' identity trajectories. The reflective interviews were conducted so that I could offer my interpretation of the participants' shared stories—I summarised each participant's narratives in relation to their identity negotiation journey, as described in Chapter 3.

The excerpt below is from the conversation between Simi and me as I shared my interpretation of her stories in the reflective interview session (see Appendices from I-1 to I-3 for further details).

G: Now, it makes sense how your life has been, a year with me. You told me about a bad experience at the beginning [but] you had support from other people, you were being heard. From there, I think you had good experiences

and stories of being appreciated, being supported. But it is not just they are giving you that. [It's] because you gave them trust.

S: Yes, I gave them [the] opportunity to trust me.

G: Yes. . . . The fourth one [significant event] was being trusted by your manager. The sixth one was being acknowledged. It is not easy, and it is not related to work. But you were given a chance to change the shift and [be] accommodated by [your] manager. It is not just you feeling that 'Oh I am doing my best, and I should be appreciated.' But other people give [you] that power as well.

S: Yes, you get supported as well.

G: Yes

S: That is right. That is good. You are right about it.

(Interview 8: Simi)

As seen in the transcript, I summarised Simi's identity trajectories in a way that affirmed her positive identities while I reviewed her significant events. This affirmation was not one-way. Simi also confirmed my interpretation, which legitimated my identity as a researcher as seen in the excerpt below.

While I am talking to you, I realised I have grown in my field. I didn't think like that. But now I realized that you were writing it down my journey, I can see myself where I started and where I reached. (Simi, Interview 8)

The excerpt above indicates that Simi became aware of her identity negotiation process during the reflective interview session. Simi expressed her thoughts that she had not explicitly thought about her identity journey, and she added that the interview process helped her to understand it. She affirmed my interpretation and confirmed me as a researcher.

Another example of legitimation can be seen from my comment to Emily below.

How do you feel about being an important member of Sunday school?

It is another responsibility, but it [you said it] gives you joy, probably, give you a different feeling by called 'teacher' and young kids listen to you.

(Interview 3: Gina to Emily)

During the third interview, Emily told me stories of being a Sunday school teacher. That was considered significant in Emily's identity trajectory as seen in Section 4.3. Because she narrated the story with excitement as seen in Section 5.2.3, I interpreted her excitement and achievement in a way that reflected how the new identity was important to her.

Participants also added stories of others to confirm the shared story between the participant and myself. One salient example is Lucy's, first described in Section 5.3.3.2 (a migrant man's job search story). Lucy was talking about her involvement in WorkTalk (a programme offered to migrants to provide employment tips and strategies), and she mentioned that she was looking for a job at a "Kiwi" salon. The conversation went on to the topic of difficulties in securing employment as a migrant woman. I then also commented to her that it was difficult for me as well. She used an example of the migrant man's job search story in Aotearoa NZ to affirm the difficulties in getting a job as a migrant. The stories not only provided legitimate reasons for her struggles to find employment, but they also supported my stories of struggling in a new home because we both were talking about difficulties in securing a career.

Legitimation was achieved in many ways. I confirmed the participants' stories relating to their identity trajectories, and the participants also confirmed mine. At the same time, the participants added another's story to affirm *our* identity trajectories. This indicates that the interviews I conducted resembled natural conversations between friends in our supportive exchanges. I reflect on this issue in the section following this one.

6.4 Reflections

Drafting this chapter was difficult. As I mentioned earlier, the relationships developed in the present research seemed important to include. However, presenting the outcomes of the relationships challenged me greatly not only because they were beyond the scope of research I began with, but because they uncovered intimate aspects of research interactions where I, as a novice researcher, did not have any substantive prior experience of how semi-structured interview sessions would unfold and how to manage them. Even though I acknowledged the need to present this chapter, I questioned my interview skills: Have I failed to keep a professional distance? Have my passing remarks shaped the ways the participants narrated their stories? Is this *authentic* research? Drafting the findings in this chapter concerned me because adding this information could jeopardise my legitimate researcher identity and could increase my vulnerability.

When reflecting on the interviews, I could not entirely remain distant from the stories of the participants, especially when they shared personal and sometimes intimate stories. I listened to their stories and became involved in them through conversations. I was part of the interview interactions, which resonates with Josselson's (2013, p. x) statement that interviewing is an "interpersonal process." Similarly, Fontana and Prokos (2007) note that interviews are interactional conversations and the concept of neutrality, keeping distance, is likely "mythical." My involvement in the conversations also attested to the fact that I was emotionally responsive to the participants' stories.

The interviews were the outcomes of interactional conversations. I was involved in the conversation while trying to maintain a professional distance. Josselson (2013) stresses that a researcher's professional stance is an aspect of a researcher's "empathic attitude" (p. 96), and she also recognises the difficulty in maintaining the empathic attitude. Reflecting on the overall interview processes, I faced this difficulty many times. Chirban (1996) expresses similar sentiments about the interactional relationship when reporting longitudinal interviews with twelve participants, and argues that an interviewer should develop an "interactive

and relational stance” which will lead to “establish an appropriate professional posture and, significantly, understand more of the interviewee” (p. xii). To some extent, the journal writings, and my responses during the data collection as I described in Section 3.2.3 provided similar outcomes: establishing a professional posture and at the same time deep understanding of each participant’s journey, which I described in Section 4.7.

Empathic interviewing does not mean that researchers do not take a stance. Rather, as Fontana and Prokos (2007) argue, empathetic interviewing is related to positioning of interviewers in particular. The positions I took during interactions with participants as described in this chapter showed that I was an insider in many ways. Scholars like Bamberg and Georgakopoulou (2008) and Wooffitt and Widdicombe (2006) call for researchers’ attention to small stories to investigate positioning in interview interactions, often through conversation analysis. Although the present research does not include such direct analysis of conversations in narratives, I could see the interactional aspect in different ways: dyadic disclosure, reciprocity, and legitimation.

The relationships between the participants and me described in this chapter signal the way I discuss the findings in the following chapter, namely, that the process of identity negotiation is situated in relational contexts.

Chapter 7 Discussion

This chapter evaluates the findings presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 in relation to the theoretical and methodological framework established in Chapters 2 and 3. The findings consist of the narratives of each participant (Chapter 4), constituents of the participants' identity negotiation processes (Chapter 5), and features of relationships between the participants and me, the researcher (Chapter 6). As discussed in the literature review, I intended to examine the complex and dynamic nature of the participants' identity negotiation processes as language learners. To do that I used a narrative inquiry approach to collect stories from six Asian migrant women in Aotearoa NZ. The findings in Chapters 4 and 5 answered the research questions, and Chapter 6 described outcomes that resulted from the research design and methods used.

This chapter aims to theorise the overarching research question, which is contingent and complex: How do Asian migrant women negotiate their identities as language learners? I have critically examined the complexity in the findings (Section 7.1). The review of the findings in Section 7.1 suggests two discussion points in relation to identity negotiation. One is that dynamic and complex identity negotiation is situated in relational contexts. The other is that relationships in these contexts played a role in identity work. In discussion of the points, I will revisit some of the most pertinent stories of the participants for illustration.

In Section 7.1, I first assess the findings in response to each research question. In this section, I identify issues in relation to the literature (Chapter 2). In Section 7.2, I examine the outcome of the research and assess how the participants negotiated their identities in the relational context through their reported significant events and interviews with the researcher. In Section 7.3, I discuss how possible identities can be visualised through a dyadic relationship. In Section 7.4, I summarise the chapter.

7.1 Summary of results responding to research questions

This research set out to investigate Asian migrant women's identity negotiation processes in Aotearoa NZ. Five theoretically informed research questions were developed. In the following section, I briefly discuss the results. In doing so, I aim to provide a coherent account in order to ensure continuity across the research questions, the findings, and the discussion of key findings. Above all, this section highlights the emergent empirical issues identified in the findings to prepare the ground for the discussion points in Sections 7.2 and 7.3.

7.1.1 Research question 1

The first question was: What are the communities, both experienced and imagined, that Asian migrant women learning English participate in? As described in Chapter 4, participants reported on the communities they both experienced and aspired to. Imagined identities seemed to play an important role in the participants' identity negotiation process. This is in line with Norton's early study (Norton, 1997, 2000; Norton Peirce, 1995) on migrant women in Canada. Since then, a number of scholars (Early & Norton, 2012; Kawakami, 2009; Kinginger, 2003) have confirmed the importance of imagined identities of language learners and migrants. That is, migrants have imagined communities and identities in mind, and their identity negotiation is related to their imagined identities. In addition, the results of this research point to a close connection between the participants' imagined identities and their past identities, which has been under-explored in the literature. The connection is further developed in Section 7.2.3.

Unlike the emphasis on imagined identities in the literature of Asian migrants, in this study, others did not report imagined identities. These participants did not report explicit hopes, dreams or desires because they stated that they were content with their current status. These participants seemed to place a strong emphasis on their familial positions as mothers and wives. In contrast to previous studies of migrant women (Evans & Bowlby, 2000; Norton, 2000; Pio, 2005), which

stress the challenges of negotiating processes towards imagined identities, these participants appeared settled in their family roles. This point informs Section 7.2.2.

7.1.2 Research question 2

The second research question was: Are there significant events in the identity trajectories of Asian migrant women learning English? If so, what are they? These questions were answered in Chapter 4. Specifically, I identified each participant's significant events in Tables 4.1 to 4.6. The results resonate with the literature of significant events in identity work (László, 2008b; McAdams, 2001; McLean, 2008a) and the literature on Asian migrant women's stories (e.g., Li, 2011; Maehara, 2010; McLean, 2008b). That is, significant events are related to strongly positive or strongly negative individual responses to experiences such as achievement, recognition, and rejection. To the participants, the significance of an event was likely to be the result of perceived power issues, either gaining or losing a sense of power. This point informs the discussion, Section 7.2.2.

Two further points in response to the second question arose from the thesis research design (described in Chapter 3). The first point was that the process of recounting significant events (Johnson, 2002) played a role in shaping identities. The second point is that the significance of events reported by the participants was not stable—rather, the perceived significance of an event was changeable, while literature on significant events (Block, 2002; Flanagan, 1954; László, 2008a) often focuses on the static significance of one event. This similarly resonates with Nunan and Choi's (2010) statement, "There are many . . . incidents and events in an individual's journey but not all necessarily resonate with the learner at the time of the incident or on reflection upon it" (p. 6). This outcome informs Section 7.3.

7.1.3 Research question 3

The third research question, which is related to question two, was: What contributes to the significant events in Asian migrant women's English learning? This question was answered in Chapter 5. The results resonate with the literature (Brandt & Clinton, 2002; Heller, 2001; Wenger, 1999) in that the reported

significant events were related to the local and global environments, which are interconnected in the space and time of the event. For example, the changes in Mia's ECE teacher registration influenced how she perceived her experiences at work (Sections 4.4, 5.2.3 and 5.3.2). There has been an emphasis on the negative function of the local and global environment in the literature on migrant women's identity negotiation (Colic-Peisker, 2002; Evans & Bowlby, 2000; McKay & Wong, 1999). Unlike the literature, what appeared in the results of the present study was also the positive interaction of the local and global environments. Both the inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic community support, for instance, provided access to imagined communities (see Section 5.2.2). This informs Section 7.2.

7.1.4 Research question 4

The fourth research question was: What, over time, are the identity trajectories of the participants? Each participant's identity trajectory was described in Chapter 4. The trajectories were both positive and negative. In line with some prominent literature on identity (Barker & Galasinski, 2001; Bhavnani & Phoenix, 1994; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004; Wenger, 1999), much of the participants' identity trajectories were neither linear nor unidirectional. While some of them seemed unidirectional, such as Simi's ECE teacher identity described in Section 4.6, they were not necessarily linear. For example, Mia's ECE teacher identity was changed from non-registered to registered, and again to non-registered as described in Section 4.4. The participants' identity trajectories were a constantly changing, ongoing negotiation to obtain legitimate membership and a sense of belonging as language learners, which is well established in the literature on migrants (Cho, 2009; Norton Peirce, 1995; Pio, 2005). On the other hand, other participants in this study did not report explicit struggle. Furthermore, the participants' perceived sense of belonging did not appear to link directly to their identities as membership. As discussed in Section 2.1.1.3, membership does not ensure a sense of belonging. An example from the research was Jessica's English language learner identity: she did not feel that she belonged to the class community of her Level 4 foundation course, even though she was a top student in the course. This may point to the complexity of identity construction, illustrating that identities are constructed by

the dynamic interplay of events, emotions, situations, and participants, similar to the results of the third research question. This section informs Section 7.2.

7.1.5 Research question 5

The fifth research question was: What role does language proficiency play in the participants' identity trajectories? The role of language proficiency in the participants' identity trajectories was reported in Chapter 5. Participants identified the importance of language proficiency in their identity construction. This result is in line with the literature on migrants that demonstrates the strongly perceived influence of language proficiency in Asian migrants' identity negotiation (Han, 2012; Kawakami, 2009; Norton, 2000; Pio, 2005). Even though some participants reported that they felt they could achieve their imagined identities without becoming a competent language user, these participants perceived their identities as unstable and challenging. To the participants, perceived identities as struggling language learners seem consistent with Han's (2012) study in that the participants attributed their lack of belonging to their language proficiency. This part informs Sections 7.2.2 and 7.2.3.

In sum, I have revisited the research questions in light of the relevant literature. The following two sections discuss a number of central issues that emerged above in Section 7.1. Section 7.2 addresses how the conceptual framework that I began this research with can be re-examined to understand the participants' identity negotiation. Section 7.3 discusses the relational context of the interviews in which participants reify and visualise possible identities. Section 7.4 summarises the significant areas discussed.

7.2 Identity, sense of self-value, and strategic tools

As discussed in Chapter 2, understanding Asian migrant women's identity negotiation may need to begin with capturing individually different and significant experiences. Chapter 3 describes the attempts to capture these experiences through the participants' narratives. The results from these narratives highlight complex and contingent features of identity negotiation.

Understanding the complexity in the participants' identity negotiation processes starts with the review of the interaction between the participants and others in their recounts (as seen in Chapters 4 and 5) and also between the participants and me, the researcher (as seen in Chapter 6). In particular, examining the interview context (as will be seen in Section 7.2.1) has enabled me to add two important features to identity negotiation—relational contexts (R. Edwards, 2009), and self-value. To discuss the relationship between self-value and identity, firstly, I argue that contexts in the research are relational (Section 7.2.1). Secondly, in the relational context, the participants represent themselves in such a way that appears to increase their sense of self-value, and I argue that a sense of self-value is the leading force for the participants to negotiate their identities (Section 7.2.2). Lastly in Section 7.2.3, I examine the noteworthy ways that participants mediate their self-value, using strategies such as *diversity* and *hybridity* (adopted from Marginson (2014)).

7.2.1 Identities in relational contexts

This section establishes a foundation for the subsequent sections—7.2.2 and 7.2.3. I have verified the contingent and complex nature of the participants' identity negotiation processes (as summarised in Section 7.1). The framework I began the research with was identity negotiation in Communities of Practice (CoPs). Although CoP theory covers certain aspects of the findings, it has shortcomings, and thus is limited in helping us to understand critical features in the participants' identity negotiation processes. The shortcomings seen in the findings include the gap between membership and sense of belonging, which I questioned in Section 5.5, and the interactional aspect of relationships I presented in Chapter 6.

The examination of relational research contexts provides a clearer picture than the CoPs to understand the way the participants negotiate their identities. The findings suggest that the participants negotiated the same identity differently in various contexts. For example, Jessica in Section 4.1 negotiated the same identities such as a language learner identity differently in diverse social interactions. Her language learner identity was not limited to a language learning

classroom. She reported an incompetent language learner identity in interaction with an administrative staff member, while she established a good language learner identity in interaction with her husband at home. However, previously, Jessica was an incompetent language learner at home, who relied on her husband for English. The way Jessica negotiated her language learner identities was contingent on her relationships with others across different settings.

The work of imagined identities may influence ways to construct other identities. It is context dependent on where the practice takes place. As seen in Jessica's seventh interview (Section 4.1), Jessica's language learning not only took place in her classroom but also continued at home. She continued speaking only English to her son outside of the home. However, her English-only policy made her uneasy when she encountered a Korean shop owner who valued teaching Korean to the children. The former presents a *good* language learner and the latter shows a *not-so-wise* mother who prevents her son from learning the Korean language. This highlights how a short interaction with a shop owner appeared to influence Jessica's language learner identity as well as her motherhood. The context is not just a certain setting; it includes a relationship. This aspect is similarly seen in Section 2.1.1.2 in relation to complex identity negotiation in diverse contexts. Although relationships were not theorised in identity negotiation in earlier research, the experiences of migrant language learners include the aspect of relationships (Norton, 2000; Pailliotet, 1997).

Identities may be best understood in social contexts. The context in which the negotiation took place was fluid as well as relational. Contexts are not like "containers" (R. Edwards, 2009; Russell, 2009) and each context is complex—the dynamic combination of people, place, and information (Fisher, Landry, & Naumer, 2006). A number of recounts in relation to language learner identities guided me to this interpretation. They included Simi's recount involving an associate teacher early in her ECE teacher practicum (see Section 4.6), Mia's recount which involved a police officer (see Section 4.4), and also Jessica's stories seen in the paragraph above.

In Simi's case, a language learner identity was imposed by the associate teacher, but she contested the identity with the support from the programme supervisor. Also, she had a competent English language user identity with a professional background. Simi developed as a legitimate ECE teacher without taking on the language learner identity. Later she refused a job offer from the same associate teacher after she had obtained the qualification because she could choose from many available ECE centres.

When looking closely at the event, the associate teacher explicitly assigned a language learner identity to Simi. Even though Simi was confident in her English use, her ECE teacher identity work was challenged since she was denigrated by the associate teacher. However, she was able to reject the identity and construct herself as a competent ECE teacher. The role played by the supervisor bridged the power imbalance between Simi and the associate teacher.

On the other hand, a language learner identity was adopted by Mia to explain her interaction with the police officer (Section 4.4), which further marginalised her. Mia viewed herself as forever a peripheral member of Aotearoa NZ society. This kind of response was described in Section 5.4.3.2. The rather fleeting interaction with the police officer greatly influenced the ways Mia thought of herself, from a successful migrant to an Asian migrant and a language learner, even though there was no explicit reference to her identity in the exchange. In terms of the context, the incident occurred on a street familiar to Mia. Others were involved in the interaction: her grown children, who were educated in Aotearoa NZ, and a stranger, a Kiwi, who was supportive of the police officer. Her children noted that the passer-by was aligning himself with the power and authority of the police, not Mia. The police officer had the authority to issue tickets, since Mia caused a minor car accident. When her children requested information, they were silenced by the police officer. The dynamic interplay of people (an Asian migrant mother, NZ educated grown-up children, a passer-by, and a police officer), place (familiar public space), and information (traffic ticket issuing), during the brief interaction, showed the fluidity and dynamism of the context. The significance of the fluid and dynamic context greatly influenced the way Mia viewed herself.

7.2.1.1 Relational contexts in the research

As seen above, I have argued for the notion of relational contexts in creating an understanding of the participants' identity negotiations. From this angle, I bring back Mia's recount about her encounter with the police officer to point out the important aspect of interactional context in the research, the relational context of the research interview. As examined, the relational context in the story was complex. Yet, another context I discuss here is from the fact that the recount with the police officer was no longer significant for Mia after seven months. At the reflective interview with me, she viewed herself as a resourceful and valuable member of society.

Here, I point to two sets of relational contexts in the research illustrated through Mia's identity negotiation processes. One is a *reported relational context* in which participants narrate experiences with others, like Mia's traffic ticket incident. The other is an *interview relational context* in which participants interact with the researcher, like the example of Mia expressing resentment about living as a migrant.

The two contexts are not entirely separate. Rather, as seen in the Venn diagram below (Figure 7.1) both contexts overlap. The overlapping section of the interview context and recount context is created when the participants actively interpreted their recount and represented themselves to me, the researcher, to counter their negative interactions with others. Mia's claim that she was a resourceful member of Aotearoa NZ society illustrates this.

Figure 7.1: *Contexts in the narrative interview*

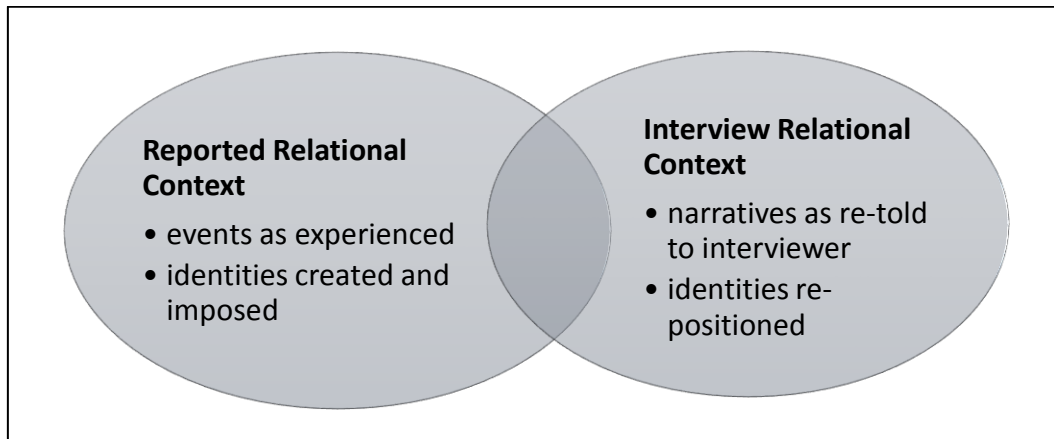


Figure 7.1 illustrates three indexical domains: the reported relational context, the interview relational context, and the overlapping negotiation domain. The domains of the participants' narratives are tightly interconnected, hence dividing them is challenging and sometimes not necessary or productive. However, doing so will facilitate and clarify the argument I present in this chapter.

I will elaborate these three domains using Simi's recount about the first day of her ECE practicum, as seen in Section 4.6. Example sentences from the second interview with Simi are selected. The recount context focuses on Simi's accounts of the interaction. She reported asking the associate teacher, "Are you preparing the morning tea? Is there anything I can help you with? Do you want me to cut the fruit or anything like that? . . . She said 'it is not fruits; it is fruit'." After that, she commented:

She was pretty rude, the way she said it. So I didn't understand. It was my first day, and I was nervous. I said, "I did say fruit." Anyway kept quiet because I didn't want to upset her. I didn't argue with her.

The comments above include Simi's interpretation and repositioning of herself in the interview context, different from the recount context. In the interview context domain, she showed her emotion, corrected the story, and implied that she was exercising tact and discretion.

The negotiation domain is shown in her subsequent comments:

I know the difference. I know when to use the word properly because I was teaching at a British school and I have experience, about 10 years working there and few years in India, and I studied in convent schools.

She claimed that she knew the grammar rules, and she was a competent English user. Simi was reporting the incident to me, the researcher. The story might have been interpreted simply as a report of her imposed language learner identity. However, she repositioned herself in the interview context as a competent English user, not a language learner.

Repositioning in interview contexts helps to construct identities as I signalled in Section 6.4. Mia's recount about the encounter with the police officer is also useful to illustrate this point. Mia's interaction with the police officer, as seen previously, may not have been the result of being an Asian migrant and a language learner, but in her perception, it was related. She explained that her negative emotions were not from the traffic ticket but from her lack of power as an Asian migrant and a language learner. She mentioned that she would not have described this negative experience and her perception of the interaction to other Koreans because she retained her passion and love for living in Aotearoa NZ. She claimed that she did not want to give a negative impression about Aotearoa NZ. The interview context was a space where she could express how she felt about the incident and reposition herself. At the same time, it was where she could regain her positive attitude towards living in Aotearoa NZ as a resourceful member of society (as seen in Section 4. 4).

As discussed above, positioning is a part of the identity negotiation process that is related to a sense of self-value. According to Deppermann (2013), analysing positioning is important to understanding the identity negotiation process in interaction. Individuals are positioned by others, and they position themselves in interaction with others, often unintentionally (Davies & Harré, 1999; R. Harré, Moghaddam, Cairnie, & Rothbart, 2009; Rom Harré & Van Lagenhove, 1999). Positioning in social interactions is seen in studies of discursive identity construction (Bamberg et al., 2011; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008;

Pietikäinen & Dufva, 2006), in which “speaking subjects in social context” negotiate their identities as a “form of subjectivity and a sense of self” (Bamberg et al., 2011, p. 177). In Mia’s recount above, she was telling the story to me. In doing so, she repositioned her identities which resulted from the perceived lack of sense of value and resulted in increasing her sense of value. I thus argue that the participants’ identity negotiation is tightly connected to their sense of self-value in both recount contexts and interview contexts. The link between identity and sense of self-value is discussed in the section below.

7.2.2 Identity and sense of self-value

In the section above, I have argued for a complex and dynamic notion of contexts that is relational, and for the identity negotiation of participants as positioning themselves within that relational context. This section discusses an important aspect of *self* in the participants’ identity negotiation in relational contexts which I have not explicitly dealt with in the findings (Chapters 4, 5 and 6). The focus on self will shed light on the individually different identity negotiation processes—the act of agency through positioning as discussed in Section 7.2.1.1. Informed by the findings and the examination of positioning in relational contexts, I see identities as socially constructed while self is individual and psychological and involves interpretations of the social interactions and constructed/imposed identities. In discussing this, first, I examine the relationship between identity as membership and sense of self-value, which are tightly connected. In other words, sense of self influences the participants’ identity negotiation processes. Second, I point to how self-value is presented in the findings to argue for the link between identity as membership and self-value.

7.2.2.1 Sense of belonging and self

From the participants’ narratives, I argue that the issue of sense of self-value needs to be addressed to understand identity negotiation processes. As part of the identity negotiation processes, participants were positioned, and they repositioned themselves to be valued in social interaction, as discussed in Section

7.2.1. Identity negotiation indeed includes self, which I initially examined in the review of the literature (Sections 2.1.1 and 2.1.2).

Before discussing self in identity negotiation, I would like to revisit the participants' identity negotiation processes as largely the outcome of the individuals' work to gain a sense of belonging to their imagined communities. In the literature review, Chapter 2, I pointed to the link between identity as membership and sense of belonging (see Section 2.1.1), arguing against the notion of membership naturally leading to belonging. The results of the research (the narratives in Chapter 4 and Section 5.3) were in line with that aspect.

I argue that a sense of belonging for the participants is complex and dynamic, and also individual. Moreover, the link between membership and sense of belonging is similarly complex. As Section 5.3.3 reports, participants perceived that dominant discourses and being Asian migrants in Aotearoa NZ were constraints to accessing their imagined communities. They were also considered as a hindrance for the participants to move from peripheral to core participation. I see these constraints as relating to a lack of connection with other members. Mia's experience of nearly being accused of child abuse when she cleaned up children at the ECE centre (as illustrated in Section 5.3.3) occurred because of the difference in practices between her home country and Aotearoa NZ. Mia felt disassociated from acceptable practice in NZ and from her co-workers when defending her actions that were considered to be vulnerable to accusations of child abuse. She could not feel that she belonged there.

The lack of connections due to cultural differences, which was illustrated in Section 5.3.3 and 5.3.4, verifies that obtaining membership does not directly link to the participants' perceived sense of belonging. Membership does not imply a sense of belonging. In other words, strong membership, full participation as a core member, does not necessarily coincide with a strong sense of belonging. The results of the present research attest to this. In particular, Mia was consistent in her opinion that she did not have a full sense of belonging at her work, even though she often claimed to be a core ECE member in the interview context such

as, “I am the senior there.” (Section 4.4). She reported experiences in which she did not feel that she belonged to the ECE centre. However, she also reported experiences which could be interpreted as those of a valuable member, like the comment, “I am the only one who can play the piano.” The seemingly paradoxical results, as discussed in Section 2.1.1.3, led me to focus on the possible explanation for the complexity in the participants’ perceived sense of belonging.

To the participants, the sense of belonging (discussed in 2.1.1.3 and 2.1.1.4) seems to be related to the judgement of self. Simi (Section 4.6) reported a strong sense of belonging at her work stemming from informal interactions like the comments that she was a trustworthy and competent employee. On the other hand, Mia (Section 4.4) reported stories to account for her lack of sense of belonging that she perceived as a language learner. However, she also provided a counter argument such as being better at certain skills. She increased her self-value as an ECE teacher in the interview contexts. Although she did not feel that she belonged to the ECE centre, she was indeed a legitimate member as seen in her comments about being recognised and appreciated, noted in Section 4.4. Being recognised and appreciated is about being valued by others. It seems clear that self-value is present in discussion about a sense of belonging. One’s sense of belonging and identity become strong when one feels valued, which can serve to counterbalance a limited identity.

Self is often mentioned in the literature on belonging and identity, and I argue that identity study should include the aspect of self. Anant (1966) suggests a link between sense of belonging and self and a sense of value, by saying that a sense of belonging is developed when a person feels valuable and indispensable in a social system. Jones and Krzyzanowski (2008) state that the sense of belonging is developed through rejecting negative information, which may distort or undermine positive self-image. Literature (Kawakami, 2009; Pailliotet, 1997; Ventegodt & Merrick, 2014) also suggests a link between self and identity negotiation. In the study of youth development, Ventegodt and Merrick (2014) argue that self comes before the social identity, and the quality of self-image is the source of all identity issues. This connection differs from Wenger’s (1999)

statement that identity is “an experience and a display of competence that requires neither an explicit self-image nor self-identification” (p. 152).

I signalled the lack of connection between self and identity in Chapter 2 and the results of the research confirm a strong relationship between the two, as seen in the examples above (Simi and Mia). Mia reported her limited identities to explain the lack of sense of belonging while re-positioning herself as a resourceful ECE teacher. Simi reported the language learner identity imposed on her, but she repositioned herself as a competent language user by reporting her background as a teacher in a British school. Self was presented in the form of a sense of self-value to confirm positive identities and refute negative identities. In the interview contexts, the participants repositioned themselves to increase their self-value. Their identities as ECE teachers were negotiated through positioning self in social interactions. Similarly, Sökefeld (1999) argues that the analysis of the ways individuals negotiate their identities requires a concept of self. A study of mature students’ identities (Britton & Baxter, 2001) recognises the role of self in identity negotiation processes, as follows:

Their experience of change [Identity negotiation] is dealing with the consequences of fragmentation and splitting. There is a strong sense, however, of a core self which can stand apart from these fragments and to some extent manage them. (Britton & Baxter, 2001, p. 98)

The importance of self as the core in negotiation seems to explain how individuals bring self forward to interpret any interactions and to make judgements about the interactions, and also how they choose over time to not see some events as significant that were in the past. Ventegodt and Merrick (2014) similarly point out that self-image comes before social identities and the role of self-image in the process of negotiation is crucial as “(social) identity, must happen through the experienced ‘me’ created by the self image” (p. 200).

Thus, recognising self and self-value is an important aspect in understanding identity negotiation processes. For example, Mia’s view on self as an ECE teacher often changed (see Section 4.4). When reporting experiences with co-workers, she

represented herself as an ECE teacher without linguistic resources, important for a legitimate ECE teacher. However, in the interview context, she maintained that although she lacked language competence, she was a good ECE teacher with many other qualities. The descriptions of self-value in the data follow.

7.2.2.2 Self-value

The term, *sense of self-value*, includes the social aspect of individuals. One feels valued or not valued in a particular relational context. Sarah Mercer (2011b) examines the self-concept of language learners, and the term includes a similar aspect of self-value that I employ here—in her view, self-concept refers to an “individual’s self-descriptions of competence and evaluative feelings about themselves” (p. 14). While discussing self-concept, Sarah Mercer (2011b) identifies two different forms of self-concept that function differently: core self-concept, and working and peripheral self-concept. She explains the difference as follows:

A person’s core sense of self is developed slowly over time based on experiences and as a more trait-like sense of self, it provides the individual with a sense of consistency and coherence across time and place. In addition, learners may also hold a “working” or “barometric” self-concept of the moment possibly representing more peripheral aspects of the self-concept. It is possible that it is this dimension of the self-concept which is most likely to fluctuate and be influenced by contextual factors and situational variables. (p. 77)

Like the statement above, in this section, I also consider that self is more or less stable across social interactions while sense of self-value, which I would like to discuss in this section, is dynamic and changing.

From the data, comments from the participants suggest that self-value was increased either by highlighting self in positive ways or by devaluing others in negative ways. There was a process of differentiating oneself from others when the participants lacked a sense of belonging. They had either strong self-value or

weak self-value when they lacked a sense of belonging. This will be further elaborated after the description of how self-value was displayed in the data (Table 7.1 following).

There were various ways that the participants tried to increase their self-value to contest their perceived negative identities or to increase the legitimacy of positive identities. My description of the negotiation domain in interviews in Section 7.2.1.1 showed how the participants repositioned themselves. From the data, I identified the ways that participants increased their self-value which included their roles or qualifications, positive personalities, valued skills, social connections, and the success of family members like their children. When Jessica (Section 4.1) was referred to a foundation course, she contested an incompetent English language user identity by commenting that she had successfully finished a Level 7 course. Her previous qualification should have accounted for her language skills. This affirmation of self-value through cultural capital was seen in Mia's claim that she was a senior at her work. Participants also brought up their personal qualities such as "being sincere and hard-working" from Mia and "being positive" from Simi. Lucy (Section 4.5) mentioned that she was accommodating when she contested an imposed incompetent chairperson identity. There were also comments about their personal skills which distinguished them from others such as Mia's (Section 4.4) comment that she was the only person who played the piano at work. The participants also increased their self-value by commenting that they knew influential and prominent people, such as Simi's (Section 4.6) comment that her referee for her new role as a governing member was an assistant dean at a university. Also, the participants mentioned the success of their children and partners as increasing their sense of self-value, such as Mia's statement that her children both became pharmacists when she contested her identity as an eternal language learner and a foreigner in Aotearoa NZ.

The table below shows the types of self-representation to increase self-value that the participants nominated to challenge their negative identities during the interviews.

Table 7.1: *Aspects of participants' self-value mediation*

Category	Examples
Job/Title/Qualification	"I successfully finished a Level 7 course." when contesting an incompetent English language user identity. (Jessica)
Personal qualities	"I am more like an easy going [person]." when contesting an incompetent chairperson identity. (Lucy)
Skills	"I am the only one who can play the piano." when contesting an incompetent ECE teacher identity. (Mia)
Social connections	"He is an assistant dean at the University, . . . then he asked me [to join] as an ECE expert." when increasing the legitimacy of a governing member identity. (Simi)
Success of family members	"In Korea, we wouldn't have made both of our sons to become pharmacists." when contesting her struggles in Aotearoa NZ—an eternal language learner and a foreigner. (Mia)
Diversity (see Section 7.2.3.1)	"For me, I feel that it is okay to have an accent, thinking of my age. And I have this self-respect that I know a lot more about teaching children. I have many years of experience. Other than that [English], there are nothing I am not better than other teachers. (Mia)
Hybridity (see Section 7.2.3.2)	"She [the travel guide] needs to be more flexible. If it is going well, such the way then it is fine. It is not necessarily you need to be this way and that way. 100%. She is old, and she was living like that all the time. Japanese, everything is organized, everything is in order, ABCDEF [a step by step manual], if [she] can't find A then see C, but she needs to check B first, that kind of person. If not, then she gets panicky and upset, even though it is not a big deal." when contesting an incompetent coordinator identity. (Lucy)

I have argued that the participants' sense of belonging is related to their self-value in Section 7.2.2.1. In that section, I examined how the participants responded to me during the interviews and negotiated the ways in which they gained a sense of value. In the interview context, the participants provided evidence. For example, Mia spoke about the difficulty she faced due to the lack of English competency at

work. However, she also added that “I could not speak, but I was creative and first of all I loved children. And I was the only one who could play the piano. The kids loved me” (Mia, Interview 1). I interpreted her comments as evidence that Mia validated her competent ECE teacher identity by providing evidence to increase her self-value, to gain a sense of belonging at her work.

The results suggest that a weak sense of belonging is related to a weak sense of self-value. My interpretation comes from the link between each participant’s narratives in Chapter 4 and the identified constraints in Sections 5.3.1, 5.3.3 and 5.3.4. The participants felt that they could not align with other members, whether with colleagues or classmates or with supervisors and tutors because of their limited identities such as their language learner identities. For example, Mia commented that “Most of mistakes come from language, and I am the senior there, I have been there the longest” (Mia, Interview 1, see Section 5.3.3). Mia was saying that a senior meant being an expert who should not make mistakes. Mia reported that her lack of belonging came from being a language learner who made linguistic errors.

A weak sense of belonging can also be related to a strong sense of self-value. Some participants who had a strong sense of self-value compared to other members displayed a lack of belonging to the community. The strong sense of self-value is seen in the narratives in Chapter 4 and Section 5.2 and some counter-comments in Section 5.3. For example, Jessica felt that she did not belong to her class, and she aligned herself with mature and knowledgeable students, which was seen by the comment that her assignment was shown to her class as an example. The evidence of a strong sense of value is shown in participants’ comments about their previous knowledge, which was indicated as a kind of affordance to imagined communities (Section 5.2.1). By commenting about their previous knowledge in the interview context, the participants provided a rationale for their lack of sense of belonging. Like Jessica, in order to gain a sense of self-value, the other participants used various strategies. I discuss them in the following section.

7.2.3 Diversity and hybridity

As discussed above, the participants distinguished themselves from others to increase their self-value in order to justify their perceived positive identities, to argue against their perceived negative identities, and to legitimise their belonging in desired communities. In the interview contexts, to increase a sense of self-value, the participants represented themselves in certain ways to positively negotiate their identities.

Among the aspects of the participants' self-value in Table 7.1, diversity and hybridity seem noteworthy. Diversity can be any combination of other aspects listed and described, and hybridity may be unique, an in-between way that migrants use to increase a sense of belonging as discussed in Section 2.1.1.4. For this reason, I discuss the two aspects as strategies (Marginson, 2014), and I also discuss how they are indeed part of identity negotiation.

In the literature on identity development of international students, Marginson (2014) proposes two sets of strategies that international students use to construct self formation: One is *multiplicity* and the other is *hybridity*. Multiplicity is defined as diverse and multiple ways of being when experienced in two different countries while hybridity is defined as the knowledge and experience of the co-existence of two or more different ways of being. The findings as seen in 7.2.2 resonate with Marginson's (2014) concept of strategies, and I adopt them as mediating strategies that the participants in the research utilised to increase their sense of self-value.

However, I find that the term *diversity* captures the participants' strategies more effectively than Marginson's multiplicity. Diversity not only includes individually different resources, skills previously obtained, or social connections, but also acknowledges the interconnection of those resources (Britton & Baxter, 2001; Hughes, 2010; Mullin, 1995). Diversity refers to a combination of past experiences, knowledge acquired or learnt from others, personal qualities, and social connection, which is strategically used in context. Hybridity refers to an in-

between knowledge based on the knowledge and experiences of a bilingual and multicultural self to increase a sense of self-value in context.

Each type of strategy is explained in the following sections. To discuss the strategies, I revisit the excerpts used in Table 7.1.

7.2.3.1 Diversity

My interpretation of diversity as a strategy comes from the result that the participants combined various resources to increase their sense of self-value to argue against a negatively perceived identity. As seen in Table 7.1, the example I used is from the second interview with Mia.

For me, I feel that it is okay to have an accent, thinking of my age. And I have this self-respect that I know a lot more about teaching children. I have many years of experience. Other than that [English], there are nothing I am not better than other teachers. (Mia, Interview 2)

By providing evidence of her qualities as an ECE teacher, Mia's quote shows that she was re-presenting herself to show that her perceived lack of belonging did not mean that she was an incompetent ECE teacher. She used personal qualities like "I have this self-respect." and her past knowledge and experiences like "I know a lot more about teaching children. I have many years of experience." These statements illustrate how diversity was a strategy that the participants utilised to increase their sense of self-value.

The participants' diverse resources were shown in the findings, Section 5.1. The participants used past knowledge, community support, and local and global structures to account for their self-value as worthy beings in society. For example, the participants often connected their previous experiences and knowledge to the present to either positively re-value self or provide evidence of self-value. As described in Table 7.1, Jessica contested an incompetent English language user identity by saying that she had finished a Level 7 course successfully. To further elaborate, I use Mia's case. Mia provided counter-information when she was reporting negative incidents at work. One example was the co-worker accusing

her of filling in a timesheet incorrectly, which was briefly mentioned in Section 4.4. While she was reporting the incident in the interview, she commented that she had the knowledge and qualities of a good ECE teacher: she hardly took sick days, and she did not hesitate to help others. She also mentioned her connection to her manager in private contexts. All the extra information Mia provided helped her to position herself in our interview as a person who was unjustly accused at work.

Diversity as a strategy also links to diverse identity trajectories the participants could pursue in various contexts. For instance, as seen in Section 4.2, Holly belonged to a church community, and she commented that she was a valuable church member because she supported many other members with her English skills. She enrolled in a training course and became an interpreter. As Marginson (2014) argues, in discussing the concept of multiplicity, identity negotiation takes multiple directions. Chapter 2 (Section 2.1.3) identifies the fact that Asian migrant women's identity negotiation processes as language learners may not be unidirectional toward a fixed destination. Diverse trajectories are apparent in each participant's narrative (Chapter 4). In particular, the summary of the results in Section 7.1 provides evidence that identity trajectories are neither linear nor unidirectional. For example, when Jessica's application to an ECE programme failed, she enrolled in a degree programme at a different institute because she had a TESOL qualification.

At the same time, diversity as a strategy may be connected to the fact that identity trajectories can be ephemeral. Jessica's narrative about becoming an ECE teacher can be interpreted as a short-lived identity trajectory. When her application was unsuccessful, and she was informed that the possibility of success was slim, she decided not to pursue her dream of becoming an ECE teacher. The unstable significance of such an event (discussed in Section 7.1.2) may also add to this momentary feature of identity trajectories (see significant event tables in Chapter 4 and each participant's narrative). For example, a significant event for Mia in May 2013 was the interaction with a police officer (Section 4.4). In the interview context, she presented her identities as those of a marginalised newcomer and an eternal language learner. She could not position herself as a competent language

user and a legitimate resident in the interaction with the police officer, and it greatly impacted on her self-value. However, the significance was no longer valid to her seven months later when she utilised a diversity strategy. For example, she had acquired more information about traffic rules, and had other experiences which confirmed that she was a resourceful migrant. Rather than the limited identity trajectories, Mia presented herself as a resourceful and valuable member at work and in Aotearoa NZ. There were positive recounts which increased her self-value, such as taking charge of some programmes in the preschool team at her ECE centre.

7.2.3.2 Hybridity

Hybridity as a set of strategies expressly involves utilising in-betweenness from the knowledge of diverse cultures the participants had experienced and diverse languages they had learnt. Hybridity in the present research seems to align with Bolatagici's (2004) claim that hybridity refers to an in-between knowledge based on the knowledge and experiences of a bilingual and multicultural self to create a new "indistinguishable category where origin and home are indeterminate" (p. 76). I first examine hybrid identities in the participants. Next, I argue that the participants used hybridity as a strategy to increase their sense of self-value.

Hybrid identities are evident in the participants' narratives. The participants often mentioned in-betweenness: Jessica was neither a competent language learner nor an unsuccessful student, and Mia was both a core member of the ECE centre where she worked and an ECE teacher with a lack of competence in English. Reporting both identities may seem to account for the lack of sense of belonging.

I have examined the link between hybridity and belonging in Chapter 2 (see Section 2.1.1). In that section, I explained that hybridity was used for migrants to gain a sense of belonging (Cervatiuc, 2009; Maydell, 2010), and hybridity was represented as migrants' imagined identities like bilingual and multicultural beings (Cervatiuc, 2009) and cosmopolitan individuals (Maydell, 2010). The unique entities for migrants, like being bilingual, were perceived as a valuable asset for the participants.

As seen in the narratives in Chapter 4, the participants' hopes and desires for the future signal an international outlook, as bilingual and multicultural beings. For example, Simi hoped for a retired life in both India and Aotearoa NZ; Mia hoped to run a multicultural Kindergarten in combination with a Korean school; Holly hoped to be a liaison between China and Aotearoa NZ. I have assessed what hybridity achieved in the participants' identity negotiation. The participants created and imagined themselves to be someone whose in-betweenness was highly valued when reporting their hopes and dreams. The results are in line with those in Cervatiuc (2009) and Maydell (2010).

The example below is from the second interview with Mia, which clearly shows the aspect of her bilingual knowledge which is different from other members of mainstream society.

I just think like that . . . I have something you don't have. Do you speak Korean? You only speak English. Even you don't know Māori. I speak better. You know Māori language is easier for us, Korean, than English people. So When I speak Māori, I do really well. (Mia, Interview 2)

As illustrated by Mia's comment, the participants in the study took on bilingual and multilingual identities to argue against any perceived negative identities. The extract above shows that Mia used her bilingual skills to contest an eternal English language learner identity and an incompetent ECE teacher identity. In other words, Mia's hybrid identity, a bilingual and multilingual self, was used to negotiate the negative identity imposed on her by saying that she spoke both English and Korean, and she was better at learning other languages than a monolingual speaker.

The use of hybridity as a strategy in this study is more complex than the mix of knowledge from two or more countries. In the example of hybridity in Table 7.1, Lucy negotiated imposed and inferior identities by constructing herself as a multicultural being to increase her self-value. To illustrate this, I revisit the extract below.

She [the travel guide] needs to be more flexible. If it is going well, such the way then it is fine. It is not necessarily you need to be this way and that way. 100%. She is old, and she was living like that all the time. Japanese, everything is organised, everything is in order, ABCDEF [a step by step manual], if [she] can't find A then see C, but she needs to check B first, that kind of person. If not, then she gets panicky and upset, even though it is not a big deal. (Lucy, Interview 7)

To contest an incompetent coordinator identity imposed on her by a tour guide, a sojourner from Japan, Lucy used her cultural knowledge of both countries, as seen above (also described in Section 4.5). She critically examined both cultures and created new knowledge to manage the negative event which harmed not only her sense of self-value but also her identities.

To sum up, hybrid identities were not only part of the participants' identities but also a set of strategies that they used to increase their self-value. The two extracts above from Mia and Lucy provide evidence. Their comments like "I have something you don't have" (Mia's statement in the excerpt above) reflect Marginson's (2014) statement that "hybridity is associated with a heightened reflexivity and a sense of cultural relativism" (p. 10). Mia recognised that she felt inferior to Kiwis because she could not claim herself to be a competent English language user. With this understanding, though, she was not a *bad* language learner: She was good at learning languages because she was confident that she was better at the Māori language than Kiwis, whose first language is English. Also, she highlighted that she was bilingual, increasing her self-value. In the interview contexts, the participants commented on their bilingualism, multilingualism and multiculturalism to counter a lack of self-value. The participants with limited language learner identities like Mia utilised hybrid identities as a strategy to gain their sense of self-value and to gain a sense of belonging.

7.3 Constructing possible identities

This section discusses the effects of the dyadic relationships developed in the interview context. Section 7.3.1 points to the research design to address how that relationship has developed to benefit both the participants' and the researcher's identity negotiation processes. Next, Section 7.3.2 argues that the dyadic relationship played a significant role for the participants to imagine possible identities, and to recognise themselves as bilingual and multicultural beings. Last, Section 7.3.3 assesses how this relationship in the interview context promoted the visualisation and construction of identities.

7.3.1 Dyadic relationships

In Chapter 3, the philosophical and methodological stance of my research design is the co-constructed nature of knowledge and experience in social interaction. Social constructionism (as discussed in Section 3.1.1) establishes the foundation that knowledge is co-constructed; while narrative inquiry (as discussed in Section 3.1.2) suggests that experiences are constructed through interaction with others. These frameworks shaped this research, as elaborated in Sections 3.5 and 3.6. Section 3.6.3 explains the ways I was involved in the data generation process through my responses to the participants and my personal journal writing during the fieldwork.

Chapter 6 discusses the outcomes of my involvement in the research process. In it, I point out that the relationship that developed from the process positively influenced the identity negotiation of both the participants and myself. Thus, it seems worthwhile to look at the relationship. As Section 6.1 describes, I developed partnerships with the participants through mutual disclosure, reciprocity, and legitimacy. As described in Section 2.1.1, my research design in Section 3.5 and 3.6 and the results in Section 6.1.2 suggest the features of relationships that developed between the participants and the researcher. The type of relationship was more than that of formal and distant relationships between the researcher

and participants—it was a caring relationship. My interpretation comes from the comments which display concern and support as seen in Section 6.1.3.

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) argue for the importance of that kind of relationship—a caring community in narrative inquiry research. Such a community between researchers and practitioners/participants is characterised by a power balance, caring for each other, and a feeling of connectedness. As a result, it further empowers participants to share their stories. The results of this research display those features of Connelly and Clandinin’s caring community (1990).

The relationship in the research was a dyadic relationship rather than a relationship in a community because it involved each participant individually and the researcher. Consequently, I describe it as a dyadic relationship with the features of the Connelly and Clandinin’s caring community (1990). I embrace the importance of the caring relationship with others, not just the relationship between the participant and the researcher, to discuss further implications of this kind of relationship. Its importance is identified in some of the migrant literature (Aguilera & Massey, 2003; Lancee & Hartung, 2012; Latham & Conradson, 2005; McLaren, 2003; Ryan, 2011). In a study of Polish migrants’ social capital, Louise Ryan (2011) shows that friendships are developed not only through sharing similarities like ethnicity, but argues that the nature of relationships and resources available is related to the development of friendships. Lance and Hartung’s (2012) study shows that friendship positively influences migrants’ transitions from unemployment to employment whether it is inter-ethnic or intra-ethnic. The participants in my research also reported similar experiences, as described in Section 5.2.2 and also in Section 6.1.3. For example, Mia was able to gain volunteer work through her neighbour, which led to part-time employment.

The relationships that developed in the present research appeared to play a significant role in identity construction, as seen in Section 6.2. Section 6.2.1 describes how I worked to provide positive feedback to participants in order to de-marginalise their negative identities through my responses. This effort may be interpreted as re-telling participants’ identities in a positive way. For example, I

acknowledged what they characterised as mundane roles as meaningful, such as Emily's role as a Sunday school teacher. This identity was linked to Sunday school teacher training in English and later to volunteer work at a school holiday programme as a teacher. Also, the participants confirmed my identity as a researcher through this relationship (Section 6.2.2). For example, they asked about the progress of the thesis. Both the participants and the researcher influenced each other's identity construction in the interview context. In this context, they could reflect on their identity negotiation processes (the result of this reflection is seen in Section 5.4.3). The following section examines the essential features identified in the process.

7.3.2 Imagination and possible selves

Imagination creates possibilities and possible selves. Chapter 4 illustrates the participants' imagined identities and reports their imagined selves with available choices. For example, Simi, who seemingly constructed her identities without much struggle, reported that she would go back to her own country, India, when her children no longer needed her direct care. She seemed to enjoy the idea of having two homes, India and Aotearoa NZ—becoming a bilingual and multicultural being—as discussed in Section 7.2.3. Such imagination emerged as important in the results.

Some participants, however, did not report any explicit imagined identities in Aotearoa NZ, as seen in Section 7.1. I will begin with the literature that can explain the perception of “no imagined identities.” The participants perceived their reality as a place with no other possible identities than mothers and language learners at the time of the research. László's (2008a) statement on narrative seems to explain the perceived lack of possibilities for the participants. László (2008a) states that socially constructed narratives are not merely their own personal narratives but that “the imagined possible worlds are all related to the outside world” (p. 12) and “culture informs all its members a set of possible story frames” (p. 8). In other words, people tend to notice and create possible selves that are available in their

social worlds. In this sense, the participants' imagined identities may represent what has or has not been available to Asian migrant women in Aotearoa NZ.

I would argue that possible identities can be created in social interaction, in particular in a supportive dyadic relationship, as seen in Chapter 4 and Section 5.4.1. Anderson (1997) argues that a collaborative relationship and conversation can achieve a mutual endeavour toward possibilities. She also argues that reality can be constructed through forms of social action, not through independent individual mental processes. She states that "our stories form, inform, and re-form our sources of knowledge, our views of reality" (p. 212) through "a reflexive two-way discursive process" (p. 213). The relationships which were developed in the research could well be interpreted as evidence of this collaborative conversational space.

7.3.3 Possibilities to visualise and construct identities

This section presents my interpretation of the role of the dyadic relationships. Kahneman and Krueger's (2006) concept of *remembering self*, related to the social context of the research, presents certain intuitive possibilities. Kahneman and Krueger (2006) studied the measurement of subjective well-being. They claim that remembering self is different from experiencing self: the latter is the part of you that lives your life; while remembering self is the part that evaluates the experiences you have, draws lessons from them and makes decisions about the future, which is similar to the two contexts identified earlier in Figure 7.1. The remembering self was what came to the fore in the narrative research, which gathered past experiences of the participants. Also, the research design which includes the reflective interview technique (Illustrated in Section 3.6.1) reflects the remembering self.

The significance of an event changes, as seen in Chapter 4 and as summarised in Section 7.1. For example, Mia described her encounter with the police officer as highly significant but after a few months, she mentioned that it was not significant anymore. Even though the participants reported that some events negatively affected their identities, their significance, during the final reflective interview,

was diminished or forgotten. Instead, they pointed out the positive events as the most significant in relation to their identity negotiation processes (Chapter 4). The participants' journey of remembering at the reflective interview session was positive which seems in line with Barkhuizen's (2008) outcome of collaborative narrative inquiry. With reference to Kahneman and Krueger (2006), this indicates that the participants were able to positively evaluate their experiences, which had not always been seen as positive. They were able to draw lessons from them and make decisions about the future. Sections 5.4.1 and 5.4.2 also deal with these trajectories.

I suggest that the possibilities in identity trajectories can be considered and examined in relationships. For example, at the last interview with Simi (Section 4.6), she commented that she could do something else other than ECE teaching with her expertise and experience by saying, "While I am talking to you I realised I have grown in my field . . . I want to do something . . . Yes, probably in different level." Early and Norton (2012) and Canagarajah (2004) argue for the socially created space, by addressing the importance of the classroom to promote the increased range of perspectives, possible worlds, and identity options. Similarly, Andrew (2013) shows how EAL students create possible identities through a community volunteering programme. Kehrwald (2014) discusses how Learner Development Activities, in which language learners participate, provide space for them to imagine their future self and opportunities for them to develop their sense of agency. Also, Hermans and Dimaggio (2007) argue for a dialogical relationship which can promote possible identities and further create new identities. That happens "when new positions are introduced that lead to the reorganization of the repertoire in such a way that the self becomes more adaptive and flexible in a variety of circumstances" (p. 53).

I argue for the dialogical relationship which plays an important role in identity construction. From a study of a migrants' social networks, Ryan (2011) argues what is considered a weak tie with a supportive manager or professional could be extremely helpful for migrants to access their imagined identities, while a strong tie with similar or lower socio-economic groups may further reinforce social

marginalisation. The relationship between the participants and me can be said to be a weak tie because the relationship was for a limited time of twelve months. This interpretation was confirmed by the participants' comments. For example, Holly mentioned that "it is really hard to talk to people, close to the group, background. You wouldn't feel secure, but we [Holly and I] don't have much benefit between us [That is, the information shared is confidential and is not something to gossip about]" (Interview 8). In fact, as described in Sections 6.1.3, the participants and I were actively involved in de-marginalising limited identities and promoting positive identities.

The dyadic relationship in interview contexts played a role as social validation. Section 6.3 can be interpreted as evidence that social validation in dyadic relationships was evident in the present research. Legitimation played a role in increasing the likelihood of positive identities. For example, Emily did not have any qualifications or experience in teaching (see Section 4.3), yet she was excited that she was offered the volunteer work. Later, Emily attended a one day Sunday school teacher workshop despite the fact that she had to rely on her colleague for English (Emily did not have enough English language proficiency to engage fully in the workshop). Further, at the eighth interview, she reported that she had volunteered to be a teacher at a community school holiday programme. Her identity negotiation was explicitly re-told and validated as positive during the interviews. As seen in Chapter 6, it appears that both the participants and I positively influenced each other's identity negotiation processes. Richert (2003) similarly argues that a relationship between two people can be critical in relation to a narrative change. Carroll (2014) and Sherman et al. (2013) also demonstrate how social validation helped to create positive identities. Thus, a dyadic relationship could be argued to be an important influence on visualising and creating new and possible identities.

7.4 Summing up

This chapter accounts for a close relationship between identity as membership and self, which is advocated by Cobb and Erna (1996). Section 7.2 argues that the

participants positioned themselves in the interview contexts to increase their sense of value while reporting negative experiences. When the participants experienced a weak sense of belonging, they strategically utilised diversity and hybridity to increase their sense of value in the interview context. The use of the strategies to position themselves has been interpreted as an important aspect of the interview context in the participants' identity negotiation. The process is indeed an effort to balance identity and self to gain both a sense of belonging and a sense of self-value.

Section 7.2 discussed identity negotiation as taking place in relational contexts—not necessarily in Communities of Practice. Section 7.3 discussed dyadic relationships in the interview context to argue that identities can be negotiated, and even possible identities may be discovered in the context. The participants and the researcher were able to utilise the strategies to increase their sense of self and, in the dyadic relationship, possible identities for the future could be constructed and visualised. Thus, this chapter accounts for the possibilities that can be created in relational contexts, which will be revisited in Chapter 8.

Chapter 8 Conclusion

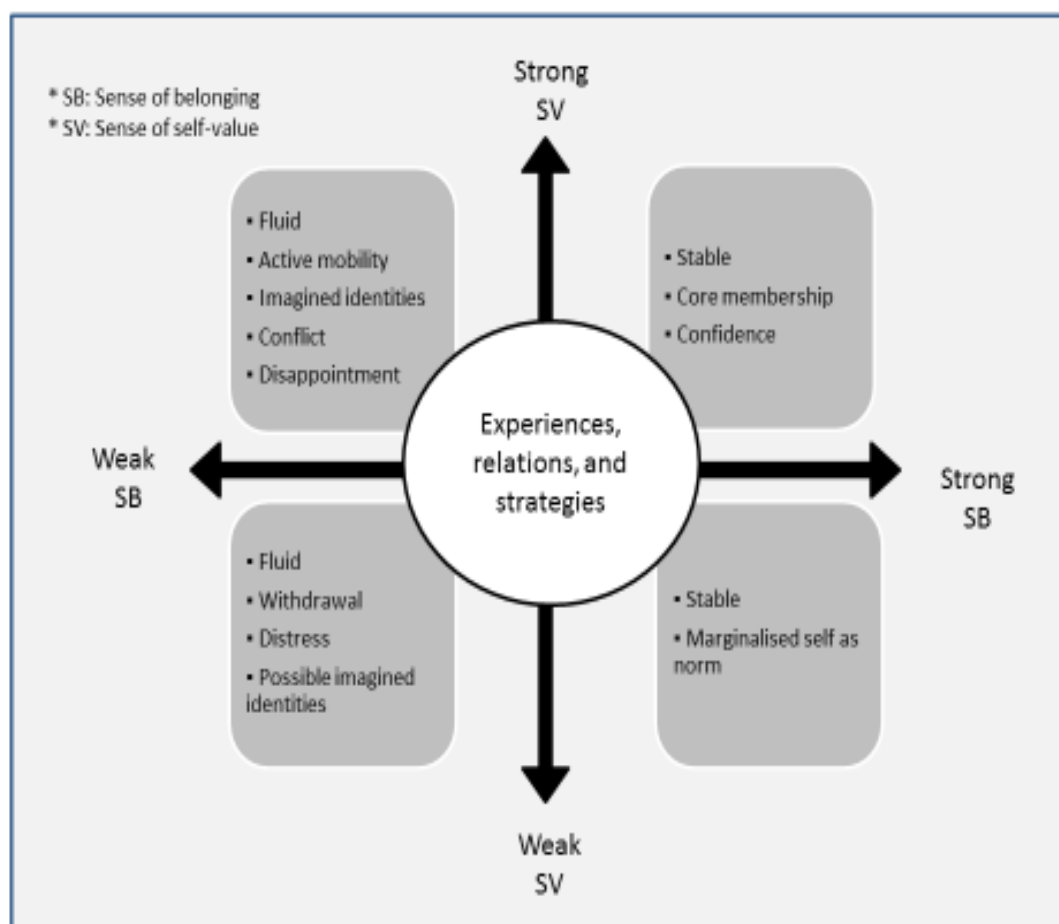
This chapter concludes the thesis by summarising the participants' narratives in relation to the discussion in the previous chapter (Section 8.1). Then I derive theoretical, methodological and pedagogical implications in three sections (Section 8.2). I also critically examine and identify limitations of the present research (Section 8.3). Lastly, I close the thesis with my reflections on the overall research journey (Section 8.4).

8.1 Summing up

The research aimed to understand Asian migrant women's identity negotiation processes as language learners in Aotearoa NZ. To do that, I used a narrative inquiry approach to gather significant events from six participants. Theoretical and methodological foundations of the research approach helped me to design the research process as collaborative, and I took this aspect in designing the research process as described in Chapter 3. As a result, the outcomes of the research included not only the participants' recounts (Chapters 4 and 5) but also the outcomes from the research practice (Chapter 6). In Chapter 7 I analysed and theorised the outcomes.

This summing up section draws together my interpretations of the research; it is the end result of my attempt to construct a cohesive and coherent model which can connect the research design, the findings, and the discussion. The model is to respond to the call for prototyping the qualitative data to contribute to a wider application (Dörnyei, 2012; Josselson, 2006). I recognise that Berry (2001) presents a model showing varieties of intercultural strategies used by immigrant groups and the receiving society. Here, I have constructed a figure that explicitly shows the close connection between a sense of belonging and a sense of self-value in identity negotiation as discussed in Section 7.2. Also, I have highlighted the participants' use of strategies like diversity and hybridity to increase their self-value in relational contexts as seen in Section 7.2.3. As a result, the Chapter 7 discussion informs the structure as seen in Figure 8.1 below.

Figure 8.1: *Belonging, self-value, and identity negotiation*



As seen in the figure above, the horizontal axis represents one's sense of belonging—the right end being a strong sense of belonging while the left end being a weak sense of belonging. The vertical axis represents one's sense of self-value—the top being a strong sense of self-value and the bottom being a weak sense of self-value. The figure indicates four sections, each of which includes a cluster of similar experiences. However, the boundaries may not be as clear as they appear in the figure. The centre of the figure indicates that the participants make use of the tools (Section 7.2.3) to increase their self-value in relational contexts. Using the strategies also indicates shifting positioning of the participants, which links to their identity changes.

The figure provides a framework to synthesise the outcomes of the participants' narratives. Each of the six participants' narratives was unique, as seen in the

findings (Chapter 4). Among their diverse stories, some were reported as significant and others less relevant, while some were positive and others negative. Each story in relation to participants' identities can be located in the figure.

I can locate some of Simi's stories in the top right quadrant (see Section 4.6). Simi was a qualified full-time ECE teacher, and she reported herself as a resourceful and reliable employee. Like Simi, individuals who sit in this section may be seen as confident core members in particular contexts. On the other hand, I can locate some of Emily's recounts in the bottom right quadrant—a strong sense of belonging but a weak sense of self-value, based on her stories of being a mother and a language learner (see Section 4.3). Emily reported that she was happy being a stay-home mother. However, she was silenced by her children. They asked her to speak neither Chinese nor English during school drop-offs and pick-ups. She said it was okay, and she interpreted this as her children being embarrassed with her distinctive Chinese language or "funny" English accent. I see the story and comments as evidence that Emily had accepted her marginalised self as the norm.

The top left quadrant indicates the combination of a strong sense of self-value and a weak sense of belonging. I can locate recounts from Lucy, Holly, Jessica, and Mia in this section. For example, Lucy was very disappointed when she could not get a job, because she recounted that she successfully finished the job interview and that the literacy and numeracy test was "easy." She attributed it to being Asian. Jessica was upset in a Level 4 course, arguing that she was wrongly placed. However, rather than accepting the imposed identity, she constructed herself as a model student. Later, she enrolled in a degree programme. It seems that active movements to construct new identities were evident in this location, which was associated with conflicts, disappointment, and yet strong imagined identities.

The bottom left quadrant indicates the combination of a weak sense of self-value and a weak sense of belonging. I can place several participants' recounts in this section. For example, Holly realised she was a mere language learner when she was taking a business course, and she voluntarily changed to a language course. Among Mia's recounts, the encounter with a police officer led her to feel

marginalised as an eternal language learner and a foreigner. This incident negatively affected both her sense of self and sense of belonging in Aotearoa NZ. This quadrant explains some degree of movement to construct new identities to resist the negative disposition of self which is associated with negative emotions like withdrawal and distress.

The centre of the identity negotiation model in Figure 8.1 represents relational contexts in which experiences are shared, relationships may be built, and strategies may be used. As articulated in Sections, 7.2 and 7.3, I point to the relational contexts in which the participants negotiated their identities. Relational contexts in narrative research include recount contexts and interview contexts. In the interview contexts, the participants and the researcher shared stories and responded to each other, utilised strategies to contest negative identities, and visualise and construct possible identities. These contexts provided time and space where marginalised identities could be reconstructed, and imagined identities re-shaped. For example, Emily was a mother without other possible identities at the beginning of the interviews. However, she became a Sunday school teacher, took a course in English and volunteered at a school holiday programme. At the last interview, she hoped to have part-time work. She constructed an imagined identity even though it was not explicitly developed.

To sum up, I have described an identity negotiation model from the framework of the discussion in Chapter 7. Using this model, I have tested the structure against the participants' stories, and I was able to locate each story in the figure. Although preliminary, it provides a starting point to understand how these participants negotiated their identities.

8.2 Implications

Drawing on Figure 8.1, I present implications of the research in this section. In Section 8.2.1, I identify theoretical implications for identity theory. In Section 8.2.2, I consider methodological implications of the research methods for narrative research. In Section 8.2.3, I suggest pedagogical implications for teaching and

learning English as an additional language (EAL) to adult migrants. The implications are followed by suggestions for further research.

8.2.1 Identity theory

The theoretical value of this research is the empirical evidence which adds to and to some extent contests Wenger's identity theory, which was the starting point of my research. Reflecting on the theoretical gap identified in the literature (Chapter 2) and the discussion (Chapter 7 and Section 8.1), I present three theoretical implications of the research.

One theoretical implication is the empirical evidence of *self* in identity negotiation. Often self is conflated in Wenger's identity theory as discussed in Section 2.1.1.1. The research not only explicitly confirms the close link between identity and self (as discussed in Section 7.2), which differs from Wenger's (1999) claim that identity is a display of competence that does not include self, but also shows evidence of roles of self in identity negotiation processes.

Understanding the work of self in the research has shed light on the way people decide to construct new identities and negotiate their negative identities. The literature of identity and self takes different paradigms: Self is rather psychological while identity is social. However, as Clancy and Dollinger (1993) find, empirical research on personalities and identities shows a great overlap between the two. Cobb and Yackel (1996) also argue for an emergent theory which considers both psychological and sociocultural views. Recently, self, using a positioning model, is addressed in the study of identity work in narratives (Bamberg, 2011, 2012b; Bamberg & Georgakopoulou, 2008). The outcomes of this present research add a dimension to this emergent theory because, as discussed in Chapter 7, self was tightly linked to identity work in social contexts and the sense of self-value played a role in identity negotiation processes.

Another implication for identity theory is that the research sheds light on the interviews as relational contexts in which identity negotiation takes place. Traditionally, identity study has either focussed on individuals' stories (cf.

Kinginger, 2003; Norton, 2000) or discursive talk with others (cf. Cohen, 2012; Deppermann, 2013; Labov, 1997), aside from interview contexts. Recently, scholars (Bamberg, 2012b; Clandinin, 2013; Josselson, 2013) have discussed the relational aspects of narrative research. While Bamberg (2012b) specifically looks into the positioning that story tellers take in interview contexts, Clandinin (2013) and Josselson (2013) stress the importance of the relationship developed between interviewees and interviewers which influences the research outcomes. The research adds to this relational aspect in narrative research. In particular, the research empirically shows how the relationship influences the identity negotiation processes of both interviewees and interviewers.

Lastly, a further theoretical implication could be drawn from Figure 8.1, the identity negotiation model. Traditionally, the study of identities seems to focus on individually different negotiation processes to understand the complex relationships between structure and agency (H. Y. Kim, 2014; Maydell, 2010; Norton, 1997). The model I have developed from the discussion of the findings indicates the endeavour to understand the general process of identity negotiation by prototyping: a system to apply to a broader understanding of identities. In that sense, the model is noteworthy, in that identities are actively negotiated in relational contexts when the participants perceived a lack of sense of belonging, whether they had high self-value or low self-value. The model thus sheds further light on the seemingly loose and complicated identity theories.

From the implications above, I would like to suggest three directions for future identity study. The first would be further study on the connection between self and identity from different perspectives. The link between sense of belonging and sense of self in the research has provided an opening for further conversation about the link to identity study. The second is the interview context. Identity study should take into account the interview context and the relationship between the interviewer and the interviewee. Further research about how the relational aspect unfolds in narrative interviews may also be worthy of examining. The last, maybe the foremost, is further exploration and development of the identity negotiation model guided by Figure 8.1. Different researchers may take different stances and

interpretations, and the model can become a starting point to both widen and deepen understanding of identity negotiation processes.

8.2.2 Narrative inquiry

The research design of the present study has two methodological implications. Firstly, the iterative narrative inquiry process described in Chapter 3 made it possible to see the overall process of identity trajectories of each participant. It was evident that the ongoing interview process to some extent uncovered the complexity of identity negotiation processes, which were unveiled in the findings (Chapters 4, 5 and 6). In particular, Section 7.1.3 highlighted the unstable significance of narrated stories, and the iterative interviews made it possible for the outcomes to emerge from the data. Iterative interviews provided an in-depth elaboration of the participants' experiences, which were sometimes different from their representation in earlier interviews. Subsequent to questionnaires and role-plays, an in-depth interviewing method used in Kim's (2014) study also revealed a similar outcome.

Secondly, the data generation process of reflective interviews and the researcher's story sharing can respond to critiques of narrative research. I firstly show the shortcomings of narrative research briefly below, and then I illustrate how the research methods I used can deal with the issues.

There is a concern about whose voice is being presented when writing the results of narrative research. A researcher is interpreting and presenting the gathered stories, and the result cannot be assumed to be only that of the participants (Flick, 2014). A power imbalance exists between interviewees and interviewers (Boman & Jevne, 2000; Karnieli-Miller et al., 2008). Often, the power imbalance is overlooked while conducting and reporting qualitative interviews (Kvale, 1996; Lasser & Gottlieb, 2001). The present study, which includes reflective interviews and the researcher's involvement in the research process, helped reduce the power issues and showed how both the participants and the researcher shared stories and information resulting in and from sharing power (as discussed in Chapter 7). To be specific, story sharing helped to neutralise power imbalance (Lee

et al., 2015). That is, participants were empowered to use strategies to increase their self-value during the interviews, and the researcher played a part in their identity negotiation. These research methods indicate that narrative research has the potential to investigate power issues that have not previously been vigorously investigated.

Another concern is what is considered data and what is not when analysing and reporting. One of the main concerns of narrative research is that researchers do not account for the effect of interview contexts. Researchers often solely depend on the data produced by participants, disregarding the interactional outcomes during the interviews. Rosenthal and Fischer-Rosenthal (2004) address this issue:

The *interactive* [italicised in the source] production of text by speakers and hearers, . . . is neglected in a one-sided concentration of the interviewee, just as it is quite wrongly presupposed that there is a ready-made pre-existing story in this person's head which needs only to be delivered. (p. 260)

Story sharing in the research process enabled the iterative interview process to be a mutual conversation between participants and the researcher. The results in Chapter 6 identify the relationships that developed during the interviews and show how the relationships were presented in the data. The findings, as well as the discussion about the interview context in Chapter 7, respond to the concern above.

In relation to data interpretation, there is a concern about the trustworthiness of the researcher's judgement and interpretations (Flick, 2014; Greenhalgh, Russell, & Swinglehurst, 2005). The research design, including ongoing confirmation of the researcher's judgement by the participants, can provide one way to deal with this challenge. The reflective interview method used in this research highlights this confirmation process and indicates a way to manage the validity criticism.

There has also been concern about knowledge from narrative research: the understanding of the patterns that cohere across the differences from diverse narratives. Narrative inquiry resists and opposes knowledge which is "a globalised,

homogenised, impoverished system of meaning” (C. Fox, 2008, p. 341). However, the results of narrative inquiry face criticism for their similarity to case studies and the difficulty of applying them to wider contexts. I noted this concern related to narrative inquiry in Section 3.1.3, and I developed a prototype. The prototype responds to the call for “collective sense-making” to develop shared meaning (Greenhalgh et al., 2005, p. 447) and the need to “build a knowledge base out of these proliferating [narrative] studies” (Josselson, 2006, p. 5). The prototype as a research outcome is presented in Section 8.1, which was possible due to the research design that included iterative in-depth interviews, story sharing, and reflective interviews.

To sum up, the present research showed possibilities for managing the central criticisms of narrative research: power issues, presentation of reality, validity of narrative outcomes and knowledge from narrative research. Each method in the research offered an opportunity to do so and each can enable future narrative inquiry to be applied in broader fields of research.

8.2.3 English as an additional language (EAL) teaching and learning

The present research has pedagogical implications for teaching and learning English as an additional language (EAL) for adult migrants. Pedagogical implications are three-fold, and suggestions for further research are considered.

The first implication comes from the importance of self-value in one’s identity negotiation. In EAL contexts for migrants, language learner identities are limited identities in that migrants perceive that they need to overcome their language learner identities to enter imagined communities (see Chapters 4 and 5). Language learner identities influence the English language learners’ sense of self-value, which consequently influences their sense of belonging. Traditional paradigms of EAL education mainly focus on teaching and learning the target language in classroom. However, the discussion (Chapter 7) and subsequently the conclusion (Section 8.1) suggest that the learning of English for migrants impacts their self-value, and lack of self-value negatively impacts on their language learners’ identity

construction. The connection between learners' sense of self and their successful identity negotiation is similarly shown in other studies of learners (E. Edwards & Roger, 2015; MacIntyre, Noels, & Clément, 1997; S. Mercer, 2011b). In particular, in a study of language learners' self-concept, Sarah Mercer (2011b) points out that a negative language learning experience may influence self-concept, language learning outcomes, and consequently, identity negotiation. This point, in line with my findings, suggests that the recognition of self-value in identity negotiation processes should be assiduously taken into account in EAL pedagogy.

The second implication is that relational encounters influence language learners' self-value and sense of belonging. This implication is drawn from the participants' recounts (section 7.2) and the importance of a dyadic relationship identified in constructing possible identities (Section 7.3). As summarised in Figure 8.1, the context of identity negotiation is not necessarily a stable or clearly defined relational context. For participants in the present research, encounters may have seemed irrelevant and momentary in relation to the language learners' identity negotiation because the interaction occurred outside the direct learning context. However, social interactions had significant impacts on the participants. Many stories which influenced the participants' identity negotiations were not necessarily situated in long and stable relationships with other people. Contingent and seemingly insignificant encounters with others were recounted as significant, which can be best described with Mia's encounter with the police officer (first described in Section 4.4). Scholars (Bouchey & Harter, 2005; Crossan & Gallacher, 2009; S. Mercer, 2011a) stress a critical role for educators, classroom teachers and administrators with whom students have contact. It suggests that educators and administrative staff should be mindful of the implications of their encounters with adult EAL learners. It is vitally important to recognise students as persons with resources and knowledge not only as learners, which was evident in Jessica's recounts with administration staff as described in Section 4.1. Similarly, Ushioda (2009) argues for a focus on the relational contexts of L2 language learners: "a focus on the persons, rather than on learners as theoretical abstractions" (p. 220). This stance should be an important element underlying pedagogical approaches

to EAL learners. Future research could focus on contingent encounters in educational settings and how those encounters affect identities and the self-value of language learners.

The third implication, related to the first and the second, comes from the strategies articulated in Section 7.2.3—diversity and hybridity—which can be used in the curriculum for EAL students. Troyna and Siraj-Blatchford (1993), Varghese and Kanno (2010) and Shuck (2006) acknowledge the structural constraints for EAL learners to access their imagined communities. For instance, in their study of the challenges that first-generation immigrant and refugee EAL students face in accessing four-year college education in the U.S., Varghese and Kanno (2010) argue that “even relatively privileged, academically oriented immigrant students who manage to be admitted to major four-year public institutions, . . . experience hardship in accessing higher education because of their ESL status” (p. 323). The literature argues against over-emphasising the linguistic needs of EAL students and calls for a shift to a wider approach that can address social, cultural, linguistic resources. In this sense, scholars (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2013; Kelly, Daiwo, & Malasa, 2011; Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 1992) provide pedagogical approaches which connect household knowledge with classroom goals, followed by an exchange of knowledge between the students’ families and the teacher. Here, the teacher becomes a knowledge seeker rather than a knowledge bearer. The strategies identified in the present study can well inform how teachers can incorporate them in EAL classrooms as a pedagogical approach. As an example of empirical evidence in an EAL context, Andrew (2013) reveals that volunteering in local communities like a police station helped the EAL students and the community members to acknowledge the students’ social and cultural capital. At the same time, the students could see possible identities and represent them to their learning communities. Researchers could take the implications above as guidance for future research, which could include designing curricula that respond to self-valuing strategies and investigating the implementation of the strategies in the classroom.

8.3 Limitations

Although the research was carefully prepared, conducted and analysed, I am aware of its limitations and shortcomings. Firstly, limitations of the present research need to be acknowledged in the data analysis and the interpretations of the findings, in particular in Chapters 6 and 7, and Section 8.1. I am conscious of the fact that in Chapter 6, the relationships that developed between the participants and myself, did not directly answer the research questions that I began with. It was an additional set of findings from the research practice which I could not disregard in relation to the objective of the research—identity negotiation processes of Asian migrant women as language learners—and the methodological choice I made, a narrative inquiry. The chapter (Chapter 6) influenced the way I interpreted the overall findings from the research, as seen in Chapter 7 and Section 8.1.

The relationships that naturally developed in the research were not anticipated when designing the research. As a novice researcher, I did not anticipate any significant role in the identity negotiation processes of participants, even though the literature on narrative study and identity study (Barkhuizen, 2011; Clandinin & Connelly, 1989; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990; Norton & Early, 2011) presents the complexity of relationships and how narrative practice itself influences the negotiation of both participants' and researchers' identities. At the same time, I did not expect my own identities would be influenced by the stories and comments from the participants. I was rather naïve in that I thought I could be objective and emotionally and professionally distant in the practice as my role was thought to be collecting stories, and I was not greatly concerned with how I would position myself in the interactions with people who were going through similar identity negotiation journeys as Asian migrant mothers. However, very quickly, the recounts of the participants resonated with my own and, as I argued in Chapter 6, I was inevitably involved in the conversations. A research relationship of Josselson (2013) was noted in my study. According to Josselson, the outcomes of interviews are related to the “interpersonal process” (p. x) between interviewers and

interviewees, the research relationship. The relationship was indeed significant in understanding identity negotiation processes as discussed in Chapter 7 and Section 8.1.

Relational interview contexts deserve further study, and Miller (2014) argues for interview conversations as Discourse. Reaching the end of analysis and subsequently interpreting the data, I came to acknowledge and understand that the narrative interview was not only about collecting stories. Thus, I suggest that future study may benefit from designing research that also investigates the relationships among participants and researchers in contexts. Further, future interview studies of Asian migrant women as language learners may focus on emotional aspects in relation to the research relationships, as Josselson (2013) argues, that “the research encounter is filled with affect—both the researcher’s and the participant’s” (p. 33). Also, the ethics of narrative interviews deserve further exploration when studying the research relationships because the relationship is a “human relationship” (Josselson, 2013, p. 105).

Secondly, regarding the relational aspect above, I consider another shortcoming of this present research: the aspect of similar identities between the participants and the researcher. I was an insider and the relationship that developed during the research was also an outcome of realising similar identities between the participants and me. Also, one of the similar identities I considered significant was language, in particular as someone who used English as an additional language, as presented in Chapter 1. Reflecting on the relationship between Mia and me, Mia used Korean throughout the study. Our common first language, Korean, could be construed as potentially favouring my relationship with her over others. The research, however, shows that additional dimensions of identity figured in insider/outsider attributes. I could also connect to other participants not only because they shared the same language and similar culture, but because we shared similar identities and similar related experiences. They included experiences of unsuccessful job applications, similar marital status, marital issues and raising children. When the participants narrated their stories, I was inclined to respond to them with empathy. There was a feeling of connection. This

multidimensional aspect of identities can inform future research with respect to the notion of insider identities.

8.4 Reflections

This chapter so far has summarised the thesis. This section includes closing comments with my personal reflections about the four-year Ph.D.. research journey.

I began the journey in 2012. As presented in the introduction, the motivations of this present research do not solely lie in the emergent issues of identities and Asian migrants in Aotearoa NZ. My personal and academic journey also influenced my choice of topic, Asian migrant women's identity negotiation as language learners. Because the topic was related to my personal inquiry, I was conscious that the inquiry might only have been driven by my personal journey. However, as I was collecting data, I realised that many of the participants' stories resonated with my own. Some of their statements have echoed throughout my writing journey as motivation and also as moral obligations. One of the participants' comments was that other people should know their stories. The one-year data collection journey confirmed to me that my initial inquiry in the present research topic was indeed the inquiry of many people, and it deserved to be a topic for thesis research.

In addition to the fulfilment of moral obligations as a researcher, by completing and presenting the outcomes of the research to a wider audience, I have been influenced by the research process. Firstly, my identities were shaped and reshaped. In particular, when reflecting on the research process, my identity as a researcher stood out. For example, I was no longer a community support worker: I decided to quit part-time work to put more time and energy into the study. Also, participating in publishing journal articles and presenting papers were part of my researcher identity. Neither was compulsory, but they consolidated my researcher identity. The data from my journal writing showed the trajectory of my researcher identity (as described in Section 4.7). It indicates that the research process itself

involves a series of identity transformations as one plans future research, enacts research practices, and completes a thesis to become a researcher (Franken, 2012, 2013; Ketter & Hunter, 2003; Subedi, 2006).

Secondly, my worldview has been influenced. My own view on identities was in line with identity study which focuses on agency as examined in Section 2.1.2.3: Individuals' identity formation/construction and reconstruction is the result of agency, while acknowledging the influence of powerful social forces such as social and institutional structures and dominant discourses. Even though there are structural influences on identities, the outcome results from one's response and decision-making when an event occurs.

In particular, I noticed the role of people in social interactions. As seen in the discussion (Section 7.3.1), dyadic relationships were important to both the participants' and researcher's identity negotiation processes through sharing and confirming possible identities. Positive dyadic relationships may increase the possibility of de-marginalising each other's limited identities (Chapter 6). Throughout the writing process, I could account for what was happening in the participants' identity negotiation in interview contexts by looking into my research practice. The salient factor was the importance of social interaction which had figured less in the literature review (Chapter 2). The importance of others like passers-by, friends, and tutors in social interactions, whether the interaction was fleeting or longer lasting, was evident in both affordances and challenges to identity negotiation (Chapter 5). The effect of others in Chapter 5 and the dyadic relationship as discussed in Chapter 7 prompts me to be mindful in every interaction. In sum, my reflection in this section resonates with the statement of Smart (2014), "I have been transformed by empirical research and my own life enriched and altered by all my encounters" (p. 147).

As a final comment, I will try to answer the query which was on my mind while drawing up the discussion and conclusion (Chapter 7 and Section 8.1). My supervisors often inquired of me why I interpreted the data in the ways I presented in these sections. I could not answer while I was writing them up. Now, at the end

of the writing of this thesis, I recall Holly's comment, which seems relevant and answers the question itself. I would like to finish this thesis with her words:

Even you talk about your problems will help me. . . . When you share your story, I learn from you and can help people. . . . Also, I learn things. You learn [a] lesson. . . . You gain more wisdom from other people's lessons. (Holly)

This thesis, I hope, will also help others. We all have stories to tell and we all learn from the stories of others when reflecting on them. Like Holly's statement, I hope that my story, this thesis, will empower those whose stories may resonate with the participants' stories in this research. At the same time, I hope this thesis will be a story that anyone can learn from. As stated in the introduction, there has been a lack of understanding towards the increasing population of Asian migrant women and their lack of sense of belonging to their new home. This thesis may help members of mainstream Aotearoa NZ society to hear what Asian migrant women have to say, and to understand their struggles and the ways that they deal with these struggles.

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Appendices

Appendix A-1

INVITATION LETTER

Date: xx/xx/xxxx

Hello. My name is Jinah Lee. I am doing my Ph.D. study at the Department of Arts and Language Education, Faculty of Education at the University of Waikato under the supervision of Dr. Judy Hunter. This letter is to invite you to consider participating in my research.

As you know, over the years, there has been a significant increase in the Asian women population in New Zealand. However, there seems to be little understanding of how we experience living in New Zealand and using English as an additional language. Therefore I am conducting my research on the topic: Asian migrant women's identity negotiation as English language learners: Significant events towards imagined identities.

Participating in my research is voluntary. If you decided to join, you will be a part of my research for a year. There will be an initial interview to start and a final, reflective interview at the end of the year. During that period, you will email me a brief story of your experiences once a month for the first six months. We will also have a follow-up interview after you send each story. We will have eight interviews in total. Each interview session may last about one hour and we will find a mutually convenient time and place for each interview. If you feel uncomfortable with any questions, you have the right not to answer. If you wish, you can decide to withdraw from participating in the study at any time, but I will keep any stories you have sent and transcriptions you have approved. With your permission, the interviews will be audio recorded to facilitate collection of information, and later

transcribed for analysis. Shortly after each interview, you will receive a copy of the transcript of interview by email. And also, you will recount in writing or voice recording. You may do it in your own language and it will be translated. When it is translated, you will be able to confirm the translated recount on the following post-recount interview session. You will receive all the data you provided in written form, so that you can confirm the accuracy, and add or clarify any points that you wish to make up until data analysis commences.

All information you provide is completely confidential. Your name will not appear in any thesis or report resulting from this study. Data collected during this study will be retained for 5 years in a locked office or password protected computer. Only the researcher and supervisors associated with this project will have access to it. There are no known or anticipated risks to you as a participant in this study. If you experience any distress that cannot be dealt with, there is a list of available counseling in the area of Waikato you can refer to in the following page.

If you have any questions regarding this study, or would like additional information to assist you in reaching a decision about participation, please contact me at 02102501013 or by email at jl431@waikato.ac.nz. You can also contact my supervisor, Dr. Judy Hunter at 07 8384466 ext.7712 or email jmhunter@waikato.ac.nz.

Throughout the course of the year, if you have any comments or concerns resulting from your participation in this study, you can directly contact me or my supervisor as above. I am looking forward to speaking with you and your participation in this project.

Yours sincerely,

Jinah Lee (Ph.D. Candidate)

Appendix A-2

PARTICIPANT'S CONSENT FORM

Research title:

Asian migrant women's identity negotiation as English language learners:

Significant events through imagined identities

I have read the information presented in the information letter about Jinah Lee's study at the Department of Arts and Language, Faculty of Education at the University of Waikato.

I have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, to receive satisfactory answers to my questions, and any additional details I wanted.

I understand that the transcripts from each interview and recount may be included in the thesis and/or publications that come from this research, with the understanding that the quotations and my identity will be anonymous.

I understand that I have the right to:

- Withdraw from the research at any time
- Receive the transcribed data from interviews and voice recorded recounts, and the translated recount when applicable
- Remove, modify or add to any information I provided during participation

This research has been reviewed by, and received ethics clearance through the Human Research Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato. I was informed that if I have any comments or concerns resulting from my participation in this

study, I may contact Dr. Judy Hunter, the chief supervisor, at 07 8384466 ext. 7712 or email jmhunter@waikato.ac.nz.

I consent to:

☐ Participating in 8 interviews and 6 recounts and sending my recounts by email or voice recording

☐ Having interviews audio-taped and transcribed

☐ Having my voice-recorded recount transcribed

☐ Having my recounts translated into English if applicable

Participant Name: _____ (Please print)

Participant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix A-3

Counselling Services Available (Waikato Area)

Name	Services	Contacts
SHAMA	General coping stress and information	www.shama.winet.org 07 843 3811 27 Beatty Street. Hamilton
WebHealth	General	http://waikato.webhealth.co.nz
Family Court	Abuse in relationship	http://www.justice.govt.nz/courts/family-court/what-family-court-does/counselling
Family Works	Family and child counselling	www.familyworks.org.nz 07 858 4413 email: waikato@northern.familyworks.org.nz
School Guidance	Guidance and counselling for school children	Schools children attending
Salvation Army	Welfare Addiction and others	07 839 2242/ 07 834 7000 http://salvationarmy.org.nz/centres/nz/waikato/hamilton/
Anglican Action	Religious	07 856 5820 http://2cu.co.nz/waikato/listings/101575-anglican-action
Kaoru Tsukigi	General	07 839 1051

Appendix B-1

Initial Interview

The following questions will be used to guide the interview.

- Could you share something about your life back in your 'home' country?
- What made you decide to come to New Zealand?
- How did you feel about moving to another country?
- How did expect your life in New Zealand to be?
- Could you tell me about yourself?
- Could you tell me your general feelings about living in New Zealand?
- To what extent do you feel any connection or belonging, to New Zealand?
- What would you say about your life in a couple of years from now?
- Where are the influences of your past in relation to where you are now, and where you are heading in the future?
- In what ways do you hope others will contribute to where you would like to be in the future?

Appendix B-2

Prompted Recount

I am interested in your experience as an Asian migrant woman learning English. I would like you to think about an event (incident, moment, or episode) that happened recently. By voice recording or in writing, please tell me about a recent specific moment or an experience when you felt you belonged or you did not belong here in New Zealand as a migrant English language learner. This is to be an event that you remember fairly clearly with possibly in more detail than other events. There is no set length, but please include as much detail as possible.

- Here are some questions to think about and include in your story:
- What were you doing?
- Where and when did it happen?
- Who was involved?
- How did it happen?
- What was the outcome?

Appendix B-3

Post-recount Interview

The following questions will be used to guide the interview.

- Thank you for sharing your experience with me. Could you read it to see if there are any mistakes in translation? (if translated)
- In your recount, you said that _____, can I say that it means _____?
- Sorry but I did not understand this part (or word). Could you tell me what it means?
- Your story was about belonging to the community of _____. Could you tell me more about the community?
- Could you tell me if the event has affected you in how you view yourself?
- Why do you think you had such an outcome from the event?
- Does your story have to do with being an English language learner?
- If so, how do you think it is related?
- Can I say that your story tells me that you belong or do not belong to the _____ community? How do you feel about it?
- Would you tell me if the feeling has affected you in how you view yourself or the community?
- How do you feel about the outcome of the event?
- If you think the event is related to the fact you are an English language learner, how does it make you feel?
- You said _____, how does it make you feel?

Appendix B-4

Reflective Interview

The following questions will be used to guide the interview.

- Reflecting on the past five months, has any community you belonged to changed?
- Do you have any stories to share with me?
- Was there any change in terms of your identities, sense of who you are and how you belong in _____?
- You shared six different significant events with me. What is something that stands out in the stories you have told me?
- Would you say that your stories are connected? If so, how are they connected?
- Could you tell me how your stories are related in terms of you being a language learner?
- What do the stories tell you about how you view yourself and others?
- I wrote my story after reading yours. Do you see any points of connection?
- What do you think of my story in relation to your story?
- Could you tell me how you feel about reading my story?
- I was thinking _____, what do you think of it?
- Could you say something about this memo I wrote?
- Would you like to add more to any of these?
- You said that _____, can I say that it means _____?

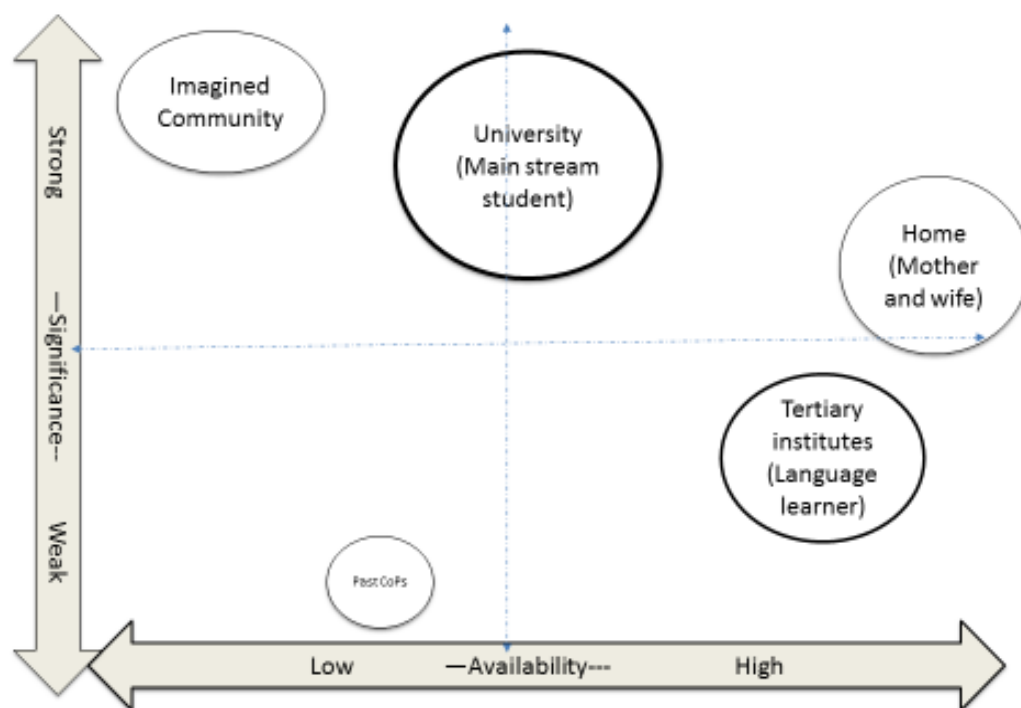
Appendix C

Actual fieldwork process

Name	Simi	Jessica	Mia	Lucy	Holly	Emily
Origin country	India	South Korea	South Korea	Japan	China	China
Interview 1 (Word count)	17/02/2013 (2064)	14/02/2013 (2606)	02/03/2013 (6594)	05/03/2013 (3500)	11/03/2013 (2092)	12/03/2013 (1664)
Response	21/02/2013	21/02/2013	18/03/2013	11/03/2013	21/03/2013	21/03/2013
Interview 2	28/03/2013 (2849)	08/03/2013 (4894)	06/04/2013 (3306)	14/05/2013 (5083)	24/04/2013 (1437)	15/04/2013 (2369)
Response	04/04/2013	26/03/2013	11/04/2013	23/05/2013	30/04/2013	18/04/2013
Interview 3	02/05/2013 (2856)	05/04/2013 (3642)	13/05/2013 (6151)	12/06/2013 (4982)	27/05/2013 (3380)	20/05/2013 (1781)
Response	10/05/2013	11/04/2013	20/05/2013	16/06/2013	09/06/2013	23/05/2013
Interview 4	30/05/2013 (2867)	03/05/2013 (1697)	11/06/2013 (4571)	10/07/2013 (5719)	24/06/2013 (2870)	18/06/2013 (2495)
Response	10/06/2013	09/05/2013	16/06/2013	19/07/2013	01/07/2013	27/06/2013
Interview 5	27/06/2013 (1940)	24/05/2013 (8957)	02/07/2013 (9070)	07/08/2013 (5487)	29/07/2013 (3353)	15/07/2013 (2836)
Response	08/07/2013	09/06/2013	11/07/2013	21/08/2013	05/08/2013	22/07/2013
Interview 6	24/08/2013 (4599)	21/06/2013 (5645)	19/08/2013 (6714)	08/10/2013 (2454)	26/08/2013 (2805)	19/08/2013 (2259)
Response	05/09/2013	01/07/2013	28/08/2013	25/10/2013	09/09/2013	29/08/2013
Interview 7	29/09/2013 (3362)	15/07/2013 (5605)	11/09/2013 (3796)	25/11/2013 (5492)	01/10/2013 (3526)	16/09/2013 (2445)
Response	25/10/2013	22/07/2013	24/09/2013	5/12/2013	25/10/2013	24/09/2013
Total word count	20537	33046	40202	32717	19463	15849
Interview 8 (Word count: N/A)	15/03/2014	23/12/2013	06/03/2014	14/03/2014	04/03/2014	06/03/2014

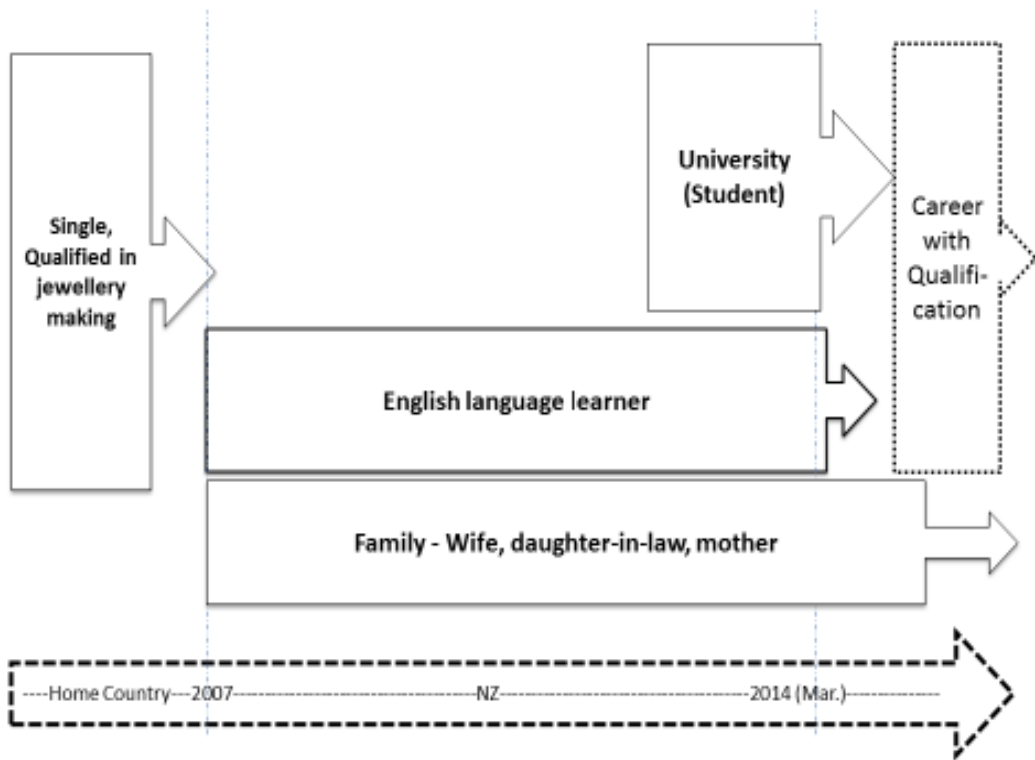
Appendix D-1

Jessica's sense of belonging



Appendix D-2

Jessica’s past, present and future



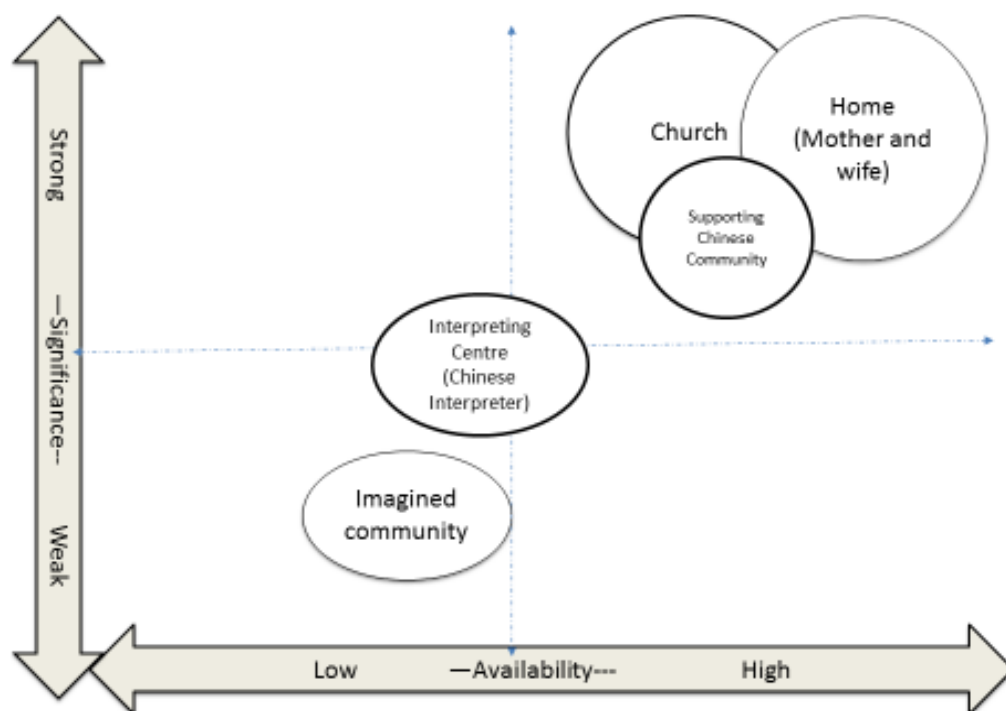
Appendix D-3

Table 4.1: Significant events recounted by Jessica

When	Significant Event	Background	Interview session
February 2013	Being rejected and referred to a foundation course at a lower level than her qualification	ECE programme application	First
March 2013	Being given no reasonable answers about her placement	Conversation with administration staff of ECE programme	Second
April 2013	Being treated badly and not being listened to by a tutor	Writing class	Third
May 2013	Replying to her husband's comments on her persistence in speaking in English while interviewing	Conversation with her husband a few months earlier	Seventh
May 2013	Being ignored by a woman she knew	Encountering an acquaintance in public	Fifth
June 2013	Being accepted to a degree programme at University		Sixth

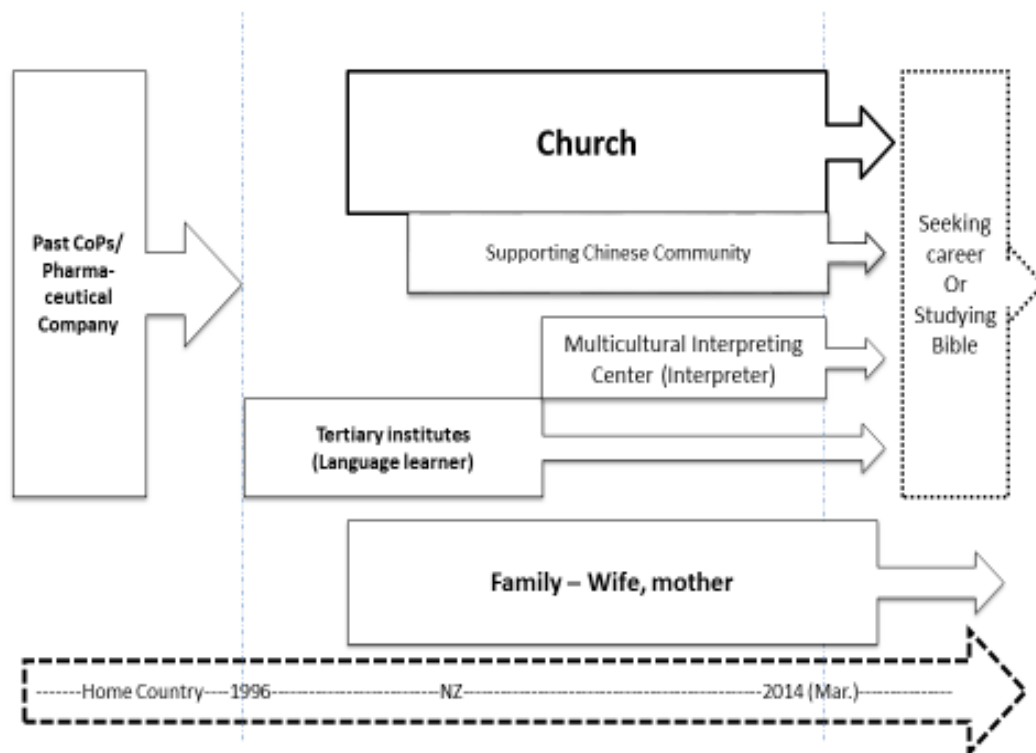
Appendix E-1

Holly's sense of belonging



Appendix E-2

Holly's past, present and future



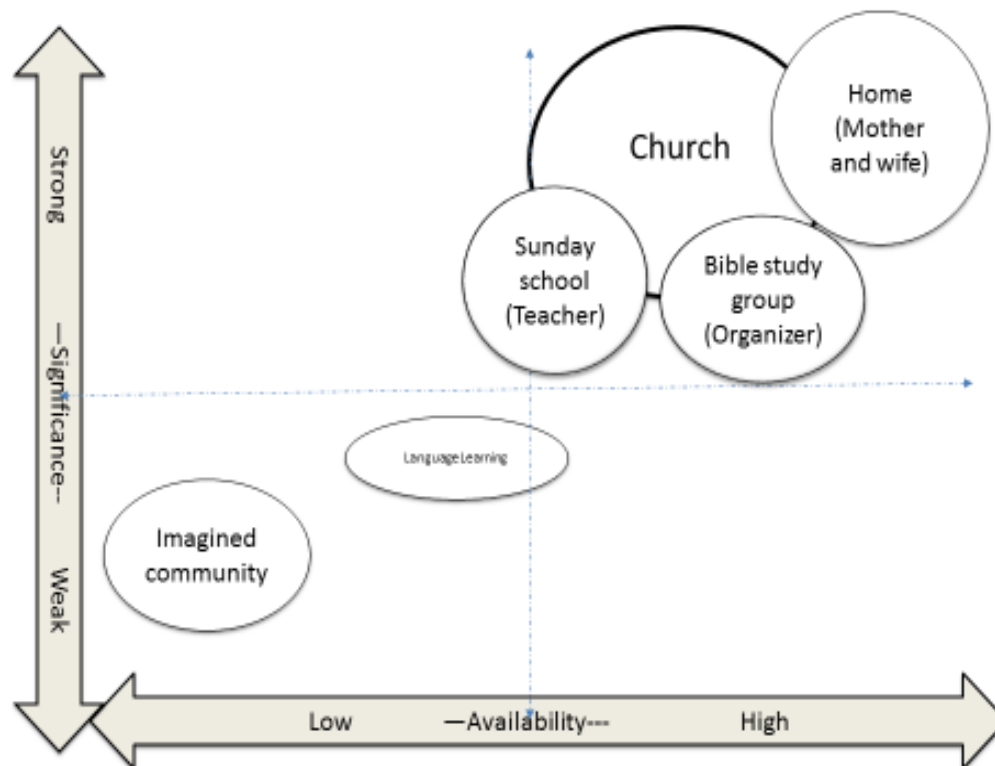
Appendix E-3

Table 4.2: Significant events recounted by Holly

When	Significant Event	Background	Interview session
Early days of migration	Changed enrolment from Business to English language voluntarily	Early stage of immigration	First
A few years prior to the interview	Joined a tennis club, which was a turning point in her viewing life in NZ	Conversation with mothers at her daughter's school	Eighth
Early days of interpreting job	Being told that she was not needed	At hospital to do interpreting job	Fourth
February 2013	Actively involved in a petition against the marriage amendment bill	Information from a brochure at church	Second
May 2013	Helped a Chinese lady who couldn't communicate effectively in English	People asked her to help others who were in need	Third
August 2013	Sister and niece were baptised	At church on Wednesday only for her sister and niece	Sixth
October 2013	Bought a juicer with her own money from casual work	Waited a few years to buy a juicer for her family	Seventh

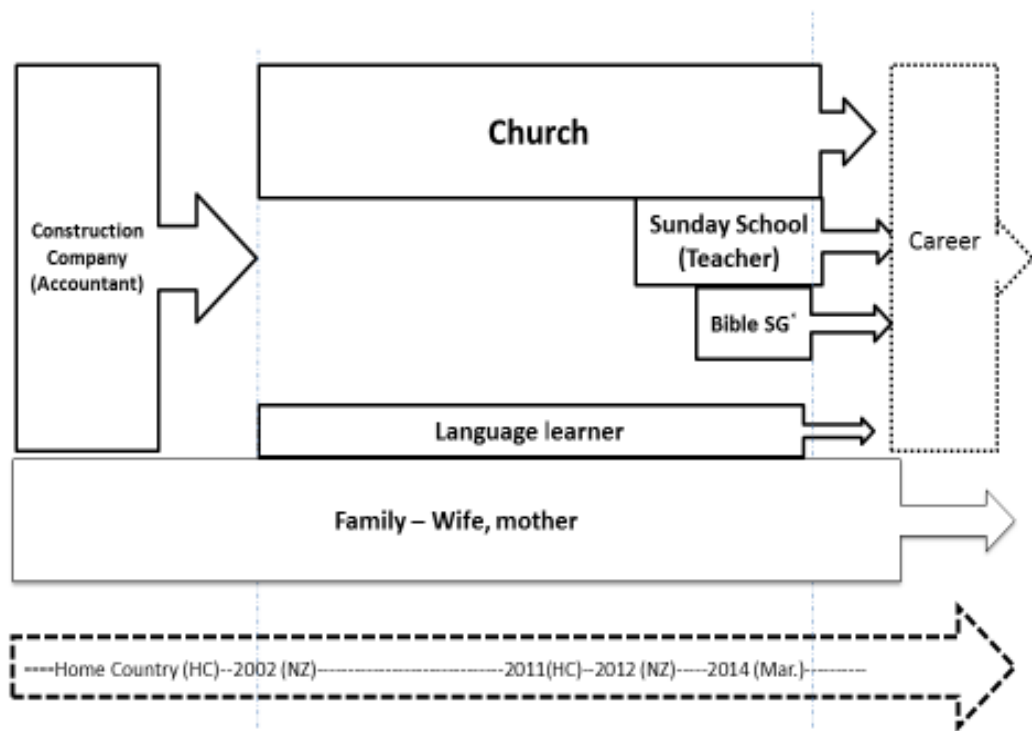
Appendix F-1

Emily's sense of belonging



Appendix F-2

Emily’s past, present and future



*Bible SG: Bible study group

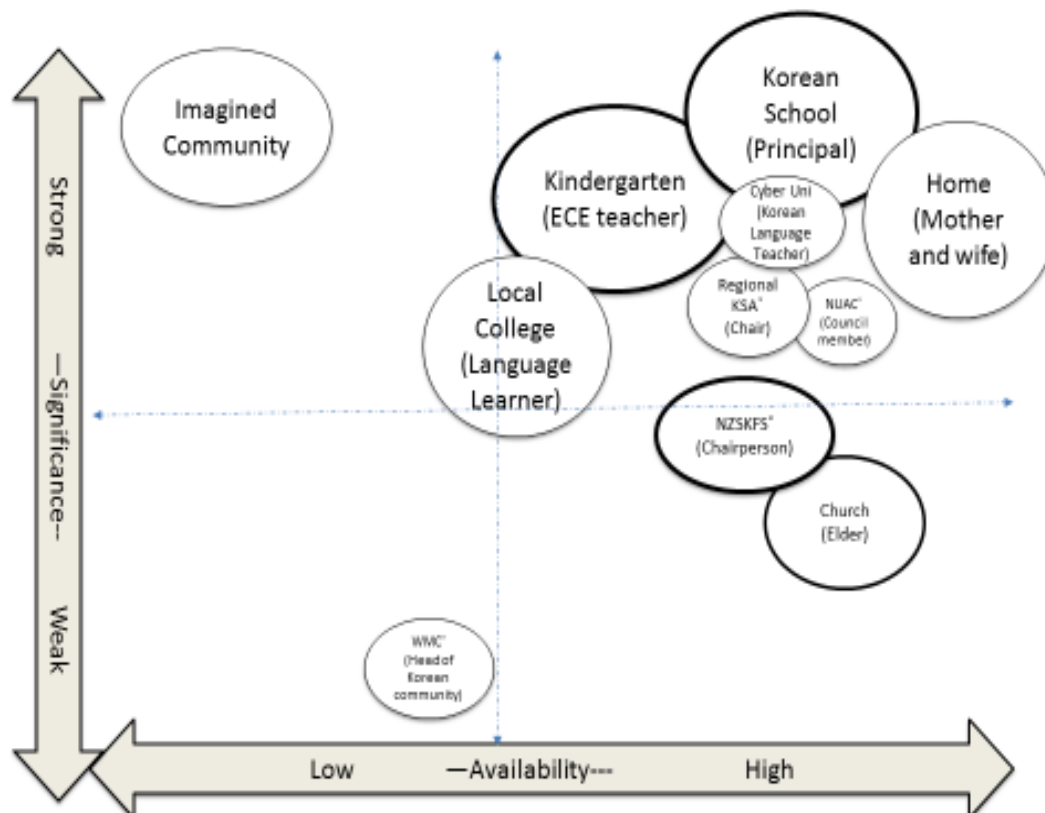
Appendix F-3

Table 4.3: Significant events recounted by Emily

When	Significant Event	Background	Interview session
A year prior to the interview	Being hurried and wanting not to be seen near school	School run	Fifth
A few months prior to the first interview	Being offered an opportunity to be a Sunday school teacher	Conversation with Sisters (Church members) at church	Second
May 2013	Making a paper flower with students	Sunday school lesson	Third
August 2013	Setting up a Bible study group at home which became successful	A Bible study group	Sixth
September 2013	Being offered an opportunity to attend training and learnt new teaching methods	Sunday school teacher training in English	Seventh
January 2014	Volunteering at a community school holiday programme	Chinese community member rang her for volunteer work	Eighth

Appendix G-1

Mia's sense of belonging



*KSA: A Korean language association

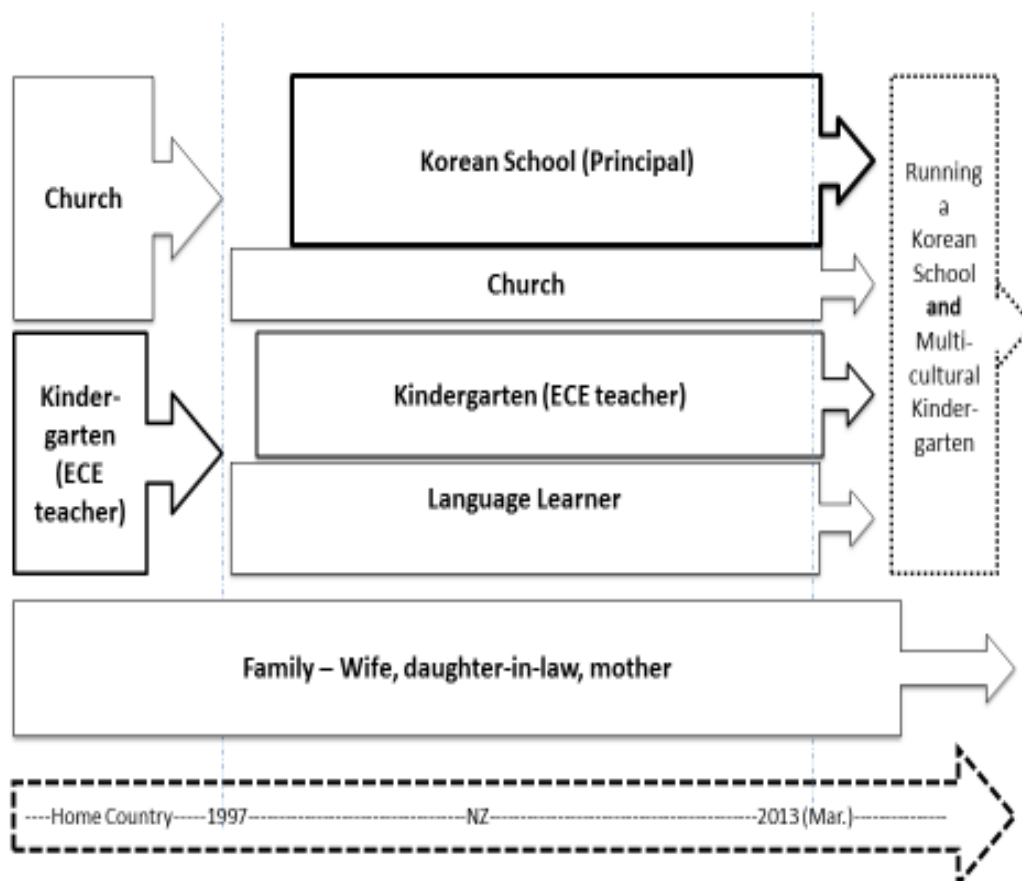
*NUAC: A Korean unification association

*NZSKFS: A New Zealand and South Korea friendship society

*WMC: A regional migrant centre

Appendix G-2

Mia's past, present and future



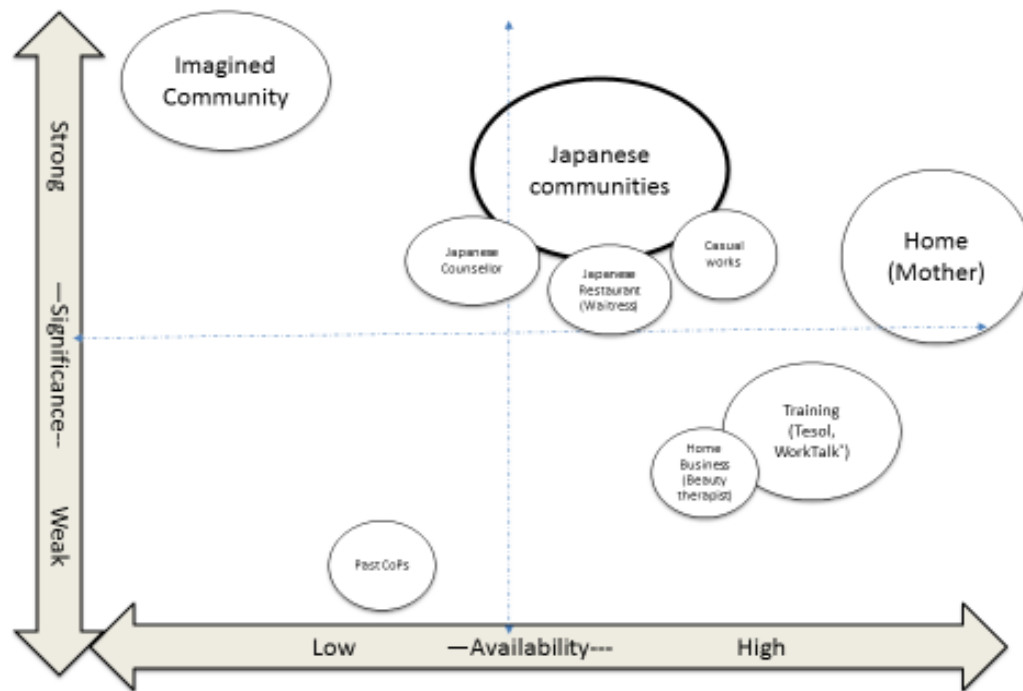
Appendix G-3

Table 4.4: Significant events recounted by Mia

When	Significant Event	Background	Interview session
Early days of settlement	Being offered a job as a qualified teacher despite the language problem	Early years of immigration	First
April 2013	Voicing complaints which were not possible previously	Conversation with the host principal	Second
May 2013	Being issued a ticket by a police officer	An incident with the police	Third
June 2013	Considering failing a language course intentionally	Conversation with a classmate	Fourth
July 2013	Realising that she was taken advantage of at work	A new teacher asking for a ride	Fifth
August 2013	Realising that she was going back to the English world	Conversation in a plane	Sixth
September 2013	Being appreciated and recognised for her skills at a new team	Becoming a member of a preschool team	Seventh
March 2014	Feeling of being taken advantage of in her own community	At a meeting for a Korean school day trip	Eighth

Appendix H-1

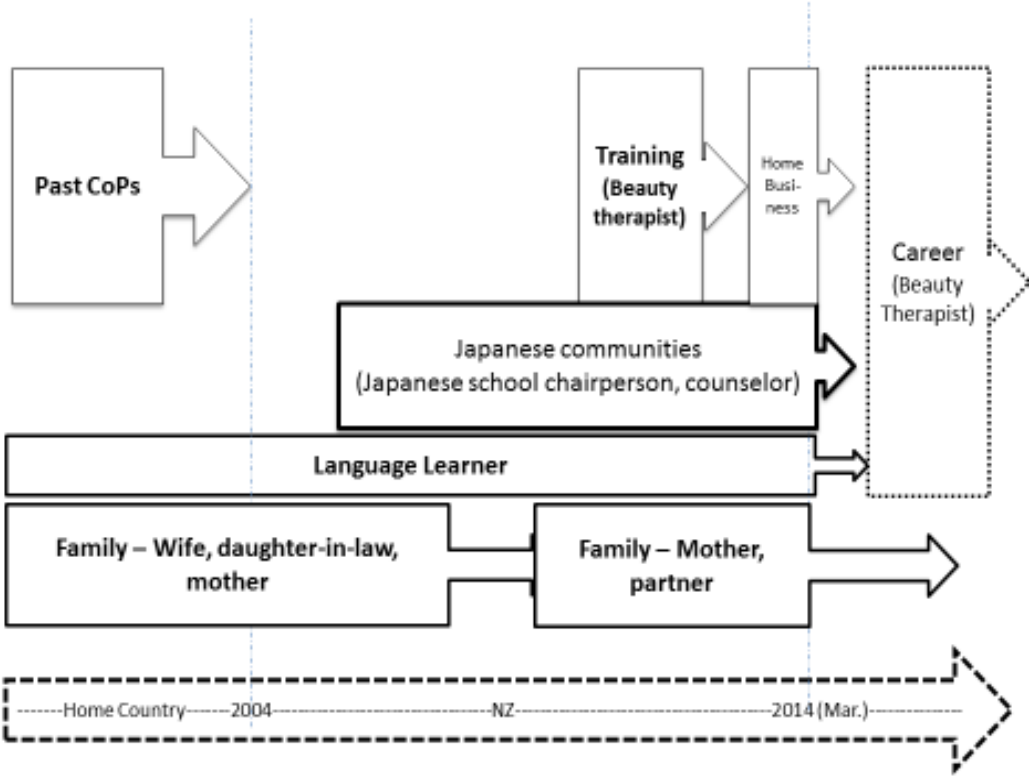
Lucy's sense of belonging



*WorkTalk: A program organised by a regional migrant resource centre

Appendix H-2

Lucy's past, present and future



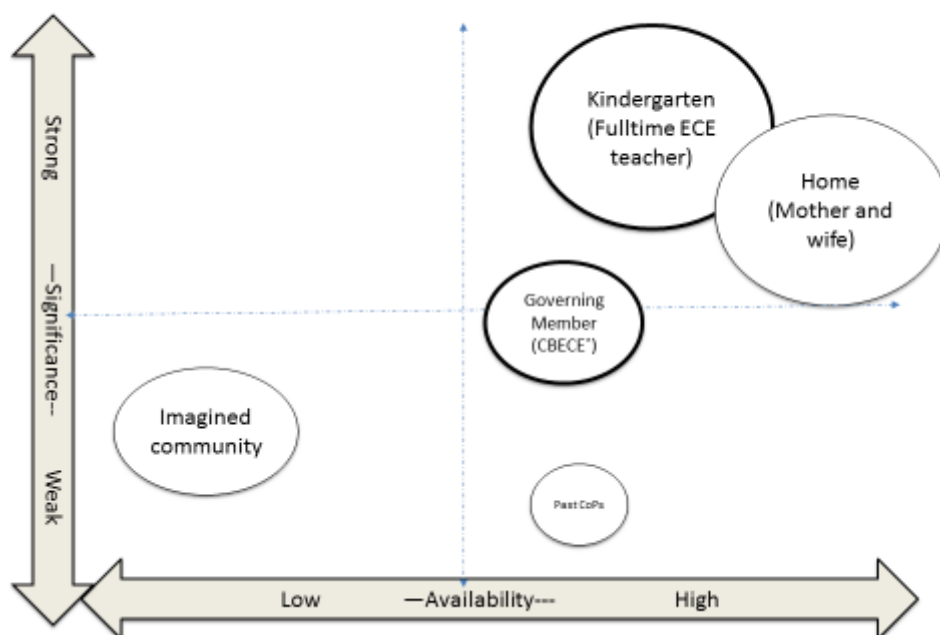
Appendix H-3

Table 4.5: Significant events recounted by Lucy

When	Significant Event	Background	Interview session
A few years prior to the interview	Feeling a lack of support when her son was sick	Flight from Germany to Japan with her son	Fifth
Prior to the first interview	Looking for a job but was not successful	NZ qualification as a beauty therapist	First
January 2013	Failing employment as a census lady	Successful interview and test	Third
February 2013	Being nominated as a chairperson for a Japanese school committee	Set up a new committee	Second
October 2013	Being hospitalised	Ongoing health issue	Sixth
November 2013	Receiving a complaint from a travel guide	A day trip as a counsellor	Seventh

Appendix I-1

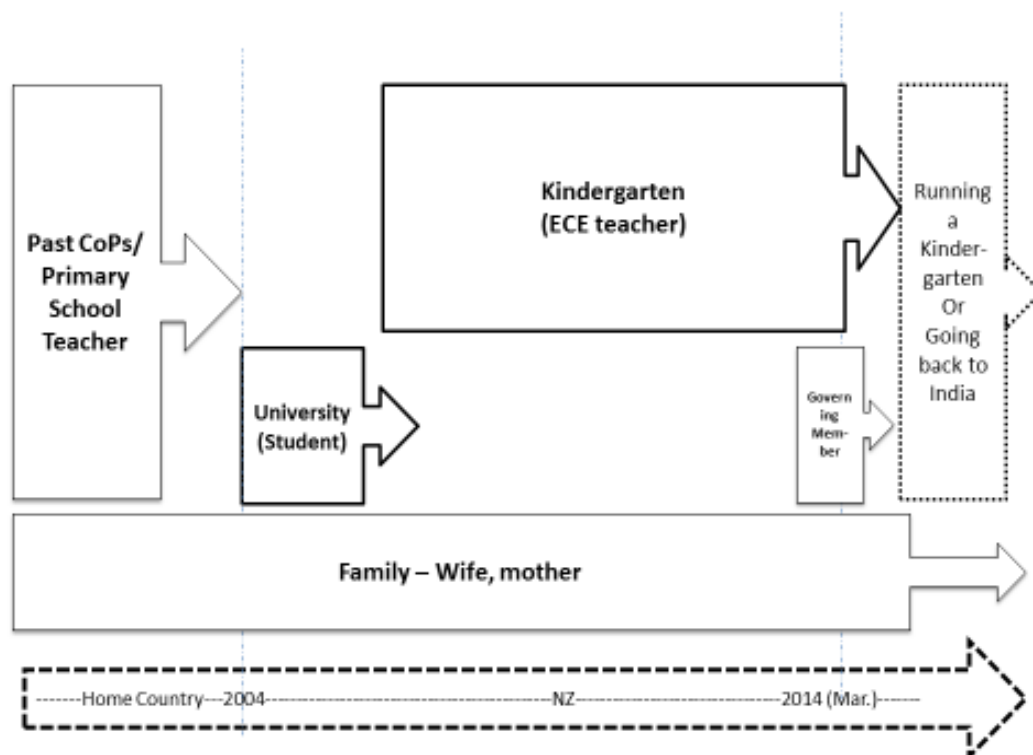
Simi's sense of belonging



*CBECE: A community-based ECE centre

Appendix I-2

Simi's past, present and future



Appendix I-3

Table 4.6: Significant events recounted by Simi

When	Significant Event	Background	Interview session
Early days of settlement	Being told by an associate teacher that she was not using English correctly and received it in writing as a form of reflection	First day of practicum at an ECE centre at an early stage of settlement	Second
Early stage of settlement	Obtaining an ECE teacher qualification	Decision to study even though she was a registered teacher	First
April 2013	Looking into the details of the trip and informing the teachers and centre	Colleagues had no interest in her idea about a day trip	Third
May 2013	A confidential matter being shared by her manager in relation to running the centre	An issue at the centre	Fourth
August 2013	Manager initiated to change her shifts due to the practice of her religion	Ramadan period	Sixth
January 2014	Becoming a governing member of a community-based ECE centre	Community-based ECE centre opened in Hamilton	Eighth